

## **SBC LTER Safe and Inclusive Fieldwork (SAIF) Plan**

This plan outlines SBC LTER's commitment to fostering a safe, inclusive and healthy work environment for all participants, address harassment and support NSF's policy (Chapter II.E.9 of the PAPPG, NSF 23-1). SBC's field research provides enriching field experiences that are crucial for principal investigators, researchers, and students alike. We actively work to maintain a supportive environment that ensures all research conducted on and off campus is safe and inclusive for all participants. All SBC personnel are expected to abide by our Code of Conduct and all [UCSB Workplace policies](#) including the UCSB Sexual Misconduct and Abusive Conduct in the Workplace policies and the Codes of Conduct for Faculty and Students. These policies, as well as our Field Safety Manual, are available on the SBC website.

### *Field setting*

SBC field research is conducted in the coastal ocean and on the shoreline of southern California, primarily in the Santa Barbara Channel. We use small boats and scuba diving to access our subtidal and coastal field sites in one day trips. The UCSB Dive Safety Officer (DSO) and Boating Safety Officer (BSO) provide rigorous, initial and continued training and certifications to SBC participants in all diving and small vessel operations. Both our diving and boating programs require annual refresher training sessions covering important topics including field first aid, CPR, oxygen administration, boating safety and laboratory safety. SBC LTER identifies some unique challenges of our field research including, but not limited to: limited communication services, small working spaces on boats, lack of toilet facilities on small boats or at certain field sites, and sometimes harsh ocean conditions. Conducting research on small research vessels in small groups of 2-5 persons can be a daunting experience.

Fieldwork provides an engaging collaborative environment in which the SBC LTER strives to include all participants equally while also recognizing their unique needs. To adequately address these challenges, prior to conducting fieldwork all participants are informed of the procedures and conditions to expect during fieldwork, their role within a collaborative team, and personal items they should bring including water, food, and clothing. All participants have access to additional communication pathways prior to and during all research activities conducted in a field setting. Each UCSB vessel is equipped with a VHF marine radio, GPS locating device, personal cell phones as well as both visual (flares and flags) and audio (horns) emergency signaling devices, and all participants are trained and have equal access to communication gear while conducting research from our research vessel. A list of emergency contact numbers is accessible to all research team members. To foster inclusion, all field participants have access to the contact information of fellow participants. To allow all participants and particularly new participants to prepare and ask any questions in advance of the fieldwork, the lead boat operator or field lead contacts all team members. The SBC LTER establishes clearly defined roles for each research participant on a daily basis during field research. Privacy is of utmost importance and respect is shown to all participants in terms of using the toilet while on board our research vessels so all participants may feel safe and

comfortable to do so. Options for onboard toilet use are made clear to all participants and communication about needs for breaks is emphasized.

#### *Inclusivity plan*

SBC nurtures an inclusive off-campus or off-site working environment by requiring that all participants review the [UCSB Workplace Conduct Policies](#) website. This site clearly defines resources and standards relevant to all levels of faculty, staff, students, and volunteers including UC wide policies and procedures related to abuse, discrimination, harassment, violence, threat management, and whistleblower protection. Our plan starts with educating our leaders in the workplace by training them to be empathetic, practice inclusive communication, delegate well, give feedback respectfully, and resolve conflict fairly. The SBC LTER strives to create a safe space using frequent check-ins to build trust and facilitating open dialogue that gives all participants a voice. All faculty and staff associated with the SBC are annually required to take the [online UC training](#) for Preventing Harassment & Discrimination and for Abusive Conduct in the Workplace to equip them with the tools to recognize and understand the reporting needs for situations including harassment and discrimination and other inappropriate conduct.

#### *Expected Behavior*

All participants will be made aware of SBC's policy and commitment to fostering a safe and healthy work environment. All participants are expected to treat each other with kindness and consideration while respecting a diversity of views and opinions. To do so, participants are expected to use effective and open communication, critiquing ideas rather than individuals, refrain from discrimination, and follow the highest level of professional and ethical behavior. Additionally, all participants are expected to contribute to a safe and welcoming environment where no one feels hesitant to disagree. SBC participants should practice inclusive behavior, through frequent check ins, and care for the mental and physical well-being of all project participants.

#### *Consequences and Reporting*

The SBC LTER has a zero-tolerance policy for any form of abuse of any person, including but not limited to verbal comments related to gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religion, or national origin, inappropriate nudity or sexual images in public spaces or in presentations, or threatening or stalking any participant. Violation of these policies, depending on the circumstances and nature of the incident, can result in being reported following policies and procedures outlined by [UCSB Workplace Conduct Policies](#), [Faculty Conduct Code](#), or [Student Conduct Code](#). Issues of harassment, discrimination, or bias will be reported immediately as required by University policies. If any SBC participant would like to seek external counsel, the UCSB Workplace Conduct Policies site lists all available campus resources. The SBC LTER will provide all participants with our Code of Conduct and access to University resources where participants can feel comfortable discussing any matters with an external source.