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Study Title: Strategies for managing and leading fieldwork successfully as a graduate student

Version 2.0

## Survey Invitation

**Text below will be distributed to an email listserv.**

\*\*Apologies for cross-posting\*\*

Successful fieldwork requires a broad set of skills and can be critical to completing a graduate degree, regardless of the program or specialty. While training and resources exist for many of the data collection and risk management aspects of fieldwork, few resources exist to prepare graduate students for the interpersonal aspects of field campaigns.

Our lab is distributing a survey to collect advice, strategies, and perspectives on leading fieldwork as a graduate student. In this research study, we will distribute this survey widely to the natural science community and synthesize the answers in a communications paper. We are purposefully targeting all types of experience: from individuals conducting fieldwork to PIs supervising individuals leading fieldwork.

Fieldwork can encompass anything taking place outside the lab: from urban ecology to remote field expeditions.

A few other notes:

* The survey is voluntary and should take 15-20 minutes to complete fully.
* The survey is anonymous, and answers will be aggregated so no individual response will be included in the final paper but please also take care not to include identifying information in answers (i.e., specific locations, study systems, affiliate groups, etc). **Answers that include identifying information will not be included in the paper.**

The survey is linked [here](https://forms.gle/g5z2Ufh6Mai6HSDP8). Please feel free to forward widely!

This research study has been through IRB review: our COMIRB # is 21-4595. If you have questions, you can contact COMIRB (the responsible Institutional Review Board) at [comirb@ucdenver.edu](mailto:comirb@ucdenver.edu).

Thank you in advance for your insight and time! If you have questions or would like to talk about this endeavor in more detail, please contact [katherine.hayes@ucdenver.edu](mailto:katherine.hayes@ucdenver.edu). More information about this project is available at our [website](https://gradfieldwork.com/).

## Survey Introduction

**Text below will be included at the top of the survey.**

This survey was developed to gather strategies and advice for graduate students leading fieldwork. The survey is voluntary and should take 15-20 minutes to complete fully.

All responses are anonymous, but please take care to withhold any identifying information.

Possible discomforts or risks include loss of confidentiality. There may be risks the researchers have not thought of.

Every effort will be made to protect your privacy and confidentiality by restricting access to answers to the research team and protecting with a password.

This research study has been through IRB review: our COMIRB # is 21-4595. You may have questions about your rights as someone in this study. If you have questions, you can contact COMIRB (the responsible Institutional Review Board) at [comirb@ucdenver.edu](mailto:comirb@ucdenver.edu).

If you'd like to follow up with questions or concerns, please contact [katherine.hayes@ucdenver.edu](mailto:katherine.hayes@ucdenver.edu). More information about this project is available here: [website link here, in progress].

## Survey questions

* *Background questions*
  + What stage of your research career are you currently in? [Graduate student, faculty member, postdoc, other]
  + How many years of experience do you have leading a field crew for at least 3 weeks in the field (cumulative) per year?
  + How many years of experience do you have conducting fieldwork not as a team lead?
  + How many years of experience, if any, do you have supervising fieldwork (e.g., as a PI with graduate students who are themselves leading fieldwork)?
  + Where has the majority of your fieldwork experience taken place? [Remote regions, semi-remote (e.g., wildlands near cities), urban areas, a mix of areas]
* *Action Questions*
  + **Before the field season**, what are 2-3 specific actions a successful field crew leader takes to promote physical safety?
  + **Before the field season**, what are 2-3 specific actions a successful field crew leader takes to promote safe and productive interpersonal interactions?
  + **During the field season**, what are 2-3 specific actions a successful field crew leader takes to promote physical safety?
  + **During the field season**, what are 2-3 specific actions a successful field crew leader takes to promote safe and productive interpersonal interactions?
  + **After the field season**, are there any actions a successful field crew leader takes?
  + How, if all, do you change your strategy for leading volunteers vs undergrad/grad students gaining experience vs paid assistants (non-students)?
* *Reflection Questions*
  + Think about a field season you had that was successful. Without giving identifying details and in less than five sentences, what leadership traits and/or actions made it successful?
  + Think about a challenging field experience. Without giving identifying details and in less than five sentences, what made the situation difficult?
  + In general, what advice would you give to incoming graduate students leading a field season for the first time?
* *Exit Questions*
  + Are there specific resources (e.g,, online readings, workshops, etc.) you recommend for new field crew leaders?
  + Are there specific resources/policies/processes at the department, lab or program level that you recommend to help support new or existing graduate field crew leaders?
  + Are there other strategies to leading fieldwork successfully that you’d like to mention that have not been addressed above?