

## Plankton Ecology Lab Statement

The following **Equity, Justice and Inclusion Statement** is a living document that evolves as our lab increases our understanding of these issues and as new lab members join us.

As members of OSU's *Plankton Ecology Lab*, we are constantly inspired by the diversity we see and measure in the ocean. Planktonic organisms are fascinating, with a variety of forms, adaptations, and life cycles that each contribute to a huge, complex underwater ecosystem. We recognize that, like the planktonic ecosystems we study, research teams are more resilient and productive when they are diverse<sup>1</sup>. Moreover, we believe that the make-up of our scientific communities should include all groups. This is necessary to achieve justice and equity in the production of scientific knowledge.

In our lab, we believe that diversity must be actively pursued and maintained. Science is not, and has never been, an equal-opportunity endeavor: science exists within and is supported by a society characterized by systemic inequities. Because inaction promotes the status quo, we actively oppose racism, neocolonialism, sexism, elitism, classism, xenophobia, transphobia, homophobia, ableism, and all other *exclusionary behaviors*. We acknowledge that members of our scientific community have been discriminated against and made to feel unwelcome because of their skin color, nationality, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability condition, socioeconomic origin, religion, and more\*. Our field of study, marine science, has been (and continues to be) dominated by a small subset of people with privileged voices due to barriers that exist at every level, from exposure to education to recruitment and promotion. In our lab, we envision a different future for our field: one where the voices of marginalized groups<sup>2</sup> are uplifted, and the research environments we create are welcoming, enriching, and enjoyable for all. To realize this vision, we are taking active steps:

**As individuals** we pledge to: Search for and listen to the voices of marginalized groups, reflect on our own unconscious biases and privileges, seek out resources and trainings to educate ourselves, speak up when we see exclusionary behaviors, and review the composition of boards/panels we manage.

**As a lab** we strive to: (1) Increase our collective understanding about how exclusionary behaviors have shaped (and continue to shape) our field through reading and discussion; (2) Recruit, train, support, retain, and promote lab members from groups that have historically been marginalized in the sciences; and (3) Identify and pursue high-impact ways to increase exposure and education opportunities for marginalized people (e.g., through undergraduate mentoring, teaching accessible online courses, working with rural high school teachers and students, paying for graduate recruitment trips, waiving GRE requirements).

**As a part of the OSU and HMSC institutions**, we can leverage our visibility in the scientific community to help create better standards for how we do science. We are committed to initiating and participating in equity, justice, and inclusion efforts at OSU and HMSC. We strive to share our resources with other labs on campus so that self-education, self-reflection, and inclusionary practices become our scientific community's new status quo.

**As members of the broader community**, we have an opportunity to be leaders in Newport and Corvallis. We recognize that we have more work to do to reckon with our use of educational and research facilities built on coastal land that was violently stolen from tribal nations. We

acknowledge that racist laws were only abolished in Oregon in 1926, while racist language was part of Oregon's constitution until 2002, leaving a damaging legacy on Oregon's present and future<sup>3</sup>.

Signed,

Members of the Plankton Ecology Laboratory

March 2021

Attribution:

\*Portions of this paragraph were adapted from the Tarvin Lab policy surrounding diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (<https://www.tarvinlab.org/deij>), the Gratton Lab (<https://gratton.entomology.wisc.edu/equity-inclusion-statement/>), and the University of Chicago (<https://www.ucls.uchicago.edu/about-lab/diversity-statement>)

Footnotes:

1. See [Nature article](#).
2. We recognize that no single term can encompass the diverse groups who have been excluded in our society. Further, the use of certain common terms may be detrimental (see [article](#)). We have used the term "marginalized" as this may be the least offensive.
3. See [OPB article](#).