



Leveling the field: making fieldwork in SESE more equitable and accessible

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What's the problem?

Fieldwork:

- is key for coursework, instruction, and research
- fosters positive academic and social development
- *Presents numerous barriers for students whose backgrounds differ from the traditional majority*

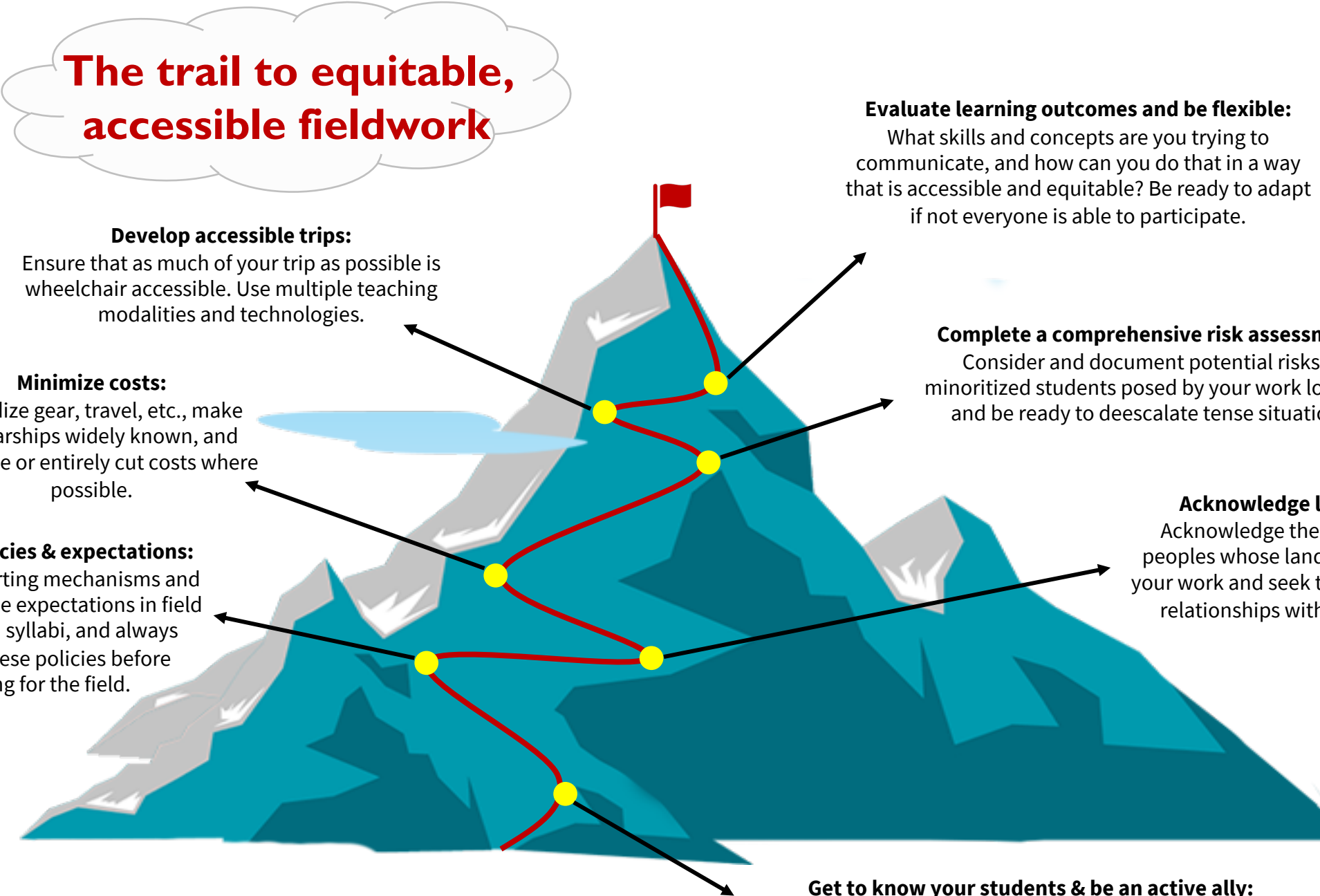
These barriers manifest as direct and systemic harm



So, how do
we address
these
barriers?



The trail to equitable, accessible fieldwork



Develop accessible trips:

Ensure that as much of your trip as possible is wheelchair accessible. Use multiple teaching modalities and technologies.

Minimize costs:

Subsidize gear, travel, etc., make scholarships widely known, and minimize or entirely cut costs where possible.

Discuss policies & expectations:

Include reporting mechanisms and zero-tolerance expectations in field guides and syllabi, and always discuss these policies before leaving for the field.

Evaluate learning outcomes and be flexible:

What skills and concepts are you trying to communicate, and how can you do that in a way that is accessible and equitable? Be ready to adapt if not everyone is able to participate.

Complete a comprehensive risk assessment:

Consider and document potential risks to minoritized students posed by your work location and be ready to deescalate tense situations.

Acknowledge land:

Acknowledge the Native peoples whose land enables your work and seek to develop relationships with them.

Get to know your students & be an active ally:

Students should feel comfortable self-advocating in a space that is actively anti-discriminatory.



Potential impacts & outcomes

In practice, these recommendations:

- Protect students
- Equalize learning experiences
- Improve career preparation
- Increase retention rates
- Create happier, healthier, more productive academic environments for all
- Demonstrate to SESE members that they are essential and valued in their community



Thanks!