NARST Graduate Student Council
NEWSLETTER

April 2023

Reflections on Reform and Graduate Student Power

By Alexandria (Ali) Muller
The University of California, Santa Barbara

As I move further into my degree program, I find myself wanting to do more and make more changes in how academia operates, how higher education serves the surrounding communities, and the approach to DEI work my institution takes. I want to build rich community partnerships and engage in long-term projects that challenge the status quo of who can do science; and yet I feel hindered by my position in the lower rungs of academia's hierarchical ladder, just a graduate student. While I want to recognize that being in graduate school comes with a plethora of privilege and power, it can be disheartening to hear grandiose talks of reform such as in the NARST 2023 theme.

What's Inside

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Reflections On Reform
By Alexandria (Ali) Muller

Because the prevailing belief of graduate students is that we are powerless to make changes until we finish our programs and become tenure-track professors. In this blog post, I'd like to reflect on the role of emerging scholars in the reform of science education and consider how we do have immense and often overlooked power to bring about change.

Use the power we do have: While we may not have determining power over research agendas and grant distributions, our roles as graduate students can elevate the voices of research participants, undergraduate researchers, and practitioners within the science education research space. By advocating for diverse voices to be considered when engaging in research, we encourage attention towards equitable practice and can push educational reform to align with the needs of our communities (See for example, professional organizations such as https://www.reshapenetwork.com/). As the people who are often entrenched in the data, connecting directly with our communities, and sharing out findings from projects, we have immense power to guide the discussions to center equity, justice, and inclusion within science learning spaces.

Find your cheerleader: I find myself struggling with identifying when and where to raise my voice in discussions of reform. When talking with my peers, I find we have a hard time negotiating the balance between being an academic, student, mentor, and employee when trying to make change in our respective fields and departments. I have found over the last five years that my ability to make change and challenge the status quo has been emboldened by finding cheerleaders who are in a higher position of power, who trust my voice, and are willing to go to bat for me. These people use their platform to elevate my voice for change or seek out and support opportunities for me to find a position where change can be made. Cultivating a network of individuals who want to see the similar reforms as you and are willing to help raise others up to achieve these changes can be powerful.

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If you have a strong relationship with your advisor, they may be a great place to start - especially as that is usually in their formal job description! If you do not find you connect with your advisor, seek out others in your department or within professional networks. Conferences such as NARST 2023 are a great place to meet new people who might have interests that align with yours and connections that might help further your goals.

Don't Stop Dreaming: Lastly, I want to encourage us all to dream. Dream of a better world. Dream of a place where everyone can be a scientist and has the resources and support to succeed. Dream of a world where there is no one-right answer and students are encouraged to explore and critically engage with knowledge. While we are not necessarily able to rock the boat completely right now, we are the next generation of academics who can challenge the system from the inside. Change is slow but as Robin D. G. Kelley reminds us, dreams are the purest inspiration for change and activism. Together, we can make our dreams of a better future, a better world, become reality.

I'd like to leave you with one of my favorite quotes by fantasy author Sarah J. Maas, "The world will be saved, and remade by the dreamers." As graduate students, it can be easy to get lost in the lower rungs of the academic hierarchical ladder; however, we have immense power already to make changes and contribute to the reform that we want to see. We are the dreamers and I have all faith that in time we can and will change the world for the better.

Navigating Networking at and Beyond NARST 2023
By Sandhya Krishan and Theila Smith

Sandhya Krishan,
University of Colorado, Boulder

Theila Smith
Florida International University

We're just a few weeks away from NARST 2023 folks! Is this your first large conference? Or is this your first education research conference? If so, hopefully this post can help you navigate the networking aspects of the conference. If not, read on anyway - as we'll also go beyond the conference and talk about networking in this field!

Conference Networking

Let's first acknowledge it: **conferences are TOUGH**. While they can be intellectually stimulating, that constant stimulation can mean that they're also a huge energy drain. And getting through FIVE days of NARST 2023 can be challenging when it means you have to be "on" from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily. (that's if you don't attend the evening socials!). Especially if, like me, you're working with limited social battery, you have to find ways to be efficient about your energy.

So how do we meet the people we want to meet and grow our connections within the community through the auspices of a conference setting in the most efficient way? Of the list below, you may have the energy to do it all or to do only some. Some strategies may also appeal to you more so than others - do what jives with your personality and your interests! The NARST Program will be very useful to you for the conference.
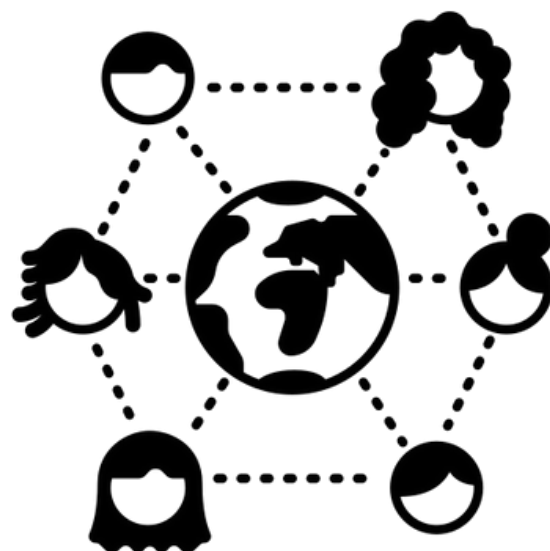
Navigating Networking at and Beyond NARST 2023
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Be intentional about the sessions you attend. Most likely you've already narrowed your list of interests - follow a strand or a topic through the conference and you'll start seeing the same folks attending these.

a. Introduce yourself to folks sitting nearby and share what you're hoping to learn (or what you have learned) from the session.

b. Search the program for authors of articles you enjoy or are really impactful for your topic of study. Attend their sessions and meet with these presenters. Share what you enjoyed about the presentations and have a question about their work that intertwines your readings with what they presented.

c. Take notes on presentations you really like (either because of the topic or because of the presenter). Meet with that presenter and their team. Take a photo of their name tag or their contact information in the presentation and follow up with specific notes from that presentation.

d. If you're new to conferences, sessions that allow for more dialogue can potentially be more valuable - such as the roundtable sessions or the poster sessions.

Attend at least one social event in which you can meet with other NARST attendees: go for a run together, eat lunch with other grad students, attend a breakout room discussion if you're attending virtually.

a. Everyone will be talking about work and life in these settings - feel free to contribute!

Attend at least one sponsored session. These sessions are a great way to get to know the different committees and special interest groups - which, if they interest you, can help you form a more focused network within the greater NARST community.

At the end of each day, make a note of who you met and what interested you about them. Revisit this list a week or two weeks after the conference (give yourself and everyone else time to recover!) and then reach out to them!

Navigating Networking beyond Conferences

Reaching out to presenters

Be mindful to follow up with presenters you are interested in connecting with within 24 hours of the conference. Add descriptive information from conversations you had with this person to make you memorable. Ensure to edit your message to ensure it is error-free and will leave a good impression.

Whilst you might not hear back right away, bear in mind that you can follow up within a month asking to meet up for a brief online coffee chat. This person is a prospective mentor and you want to respect their time, so be specific about what you would like to discuss. It may be finding out their own experience with a particular subject matter or directly related to your research activity. If they are not able to meet one-on-one, then attending a webinar they are participating in or any other online sessions that are open to others might be a great start to find out more about their work and further the connection. In addition to emailing them, you can follow them on Twitter or connect with them via LinkedIn.

THE CONFERENCE MORNING SESSION

DAY 1 7:00am — Welcome, everyone!

DAY 2 7:00am — Sorry, I haven't had my coffee yet...

DAY 3 7:00am — (Awkward silence)

LAST DAY 7:00am — Thanks for attending. I couldn't find an earlier flight.

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Conference Hacks
By Theila Smith

Here a few tips and tricks to keep in mind to get ready for the upcoming NARST conference. (Thanks to B. Whitworth, J. Tabora and A. Batailles for sharing tips.)

1. Strategize what sessions to prioritize. If you can't get to a session you really like, ask for slides.
2. Early to bed early to rise...Get enough sleep!
3. Socialize and make it a goal to talk to one person you don't know per day.
4. Have your business cards ready, To help with networking at a conference digital business card such as HiHello: https://www.hihello.me/ can help.
5. Add the digital business card link as a QR code on your poster or in your PPT presentation.
6. Make haste while the sun shines: connect with people on Linkedin during or right after the conference.
7. Bring coffee bags/tea bags or use the coffee in the rooms.
8. Bring snacks, such as granola bars and candy.
9. Share a room with colleagues.
10. Bring your water bottle.
11. Do group dinners and divide the bill

Connect with other NARST Grad Students via Slack!

Click here to join the Slack Channel!

CONFERENCE TIPS Hacks

Here are a few tips and tricks to keep in mind to get ready for the upcoming NARST conference.

1 Strategize

Choose what sessions to prioritize.

If you can't get to a session you really like, ask for slides!

Socialize 2

Make it a goal to talk to one person you don't know per day.

Connect with people on LinkedIn during or right after the conference!

3 Network

Have your business cards ready!
To help with networking at a conference, try digital cards such as HiHello: www.hihello.me

Add digital business card link as QR code on your poster or PPT presentation

4 Mingle

Get to know each other!

Try sharing a room with colleagues or have group dinners and split the bill.

5 Refresh

Bring snacks such as granola bars and candy

Bring coffee or tea

Bring your own water!

Rest 6

Early to bed, early to rise!
Be sure to get ENOUGH sleep!

Thanks to: B. Whitworth, J. Tabora, and A. Batalles for the tips

Designed by Cynthia Ha

Graduate Student Events at NARST's 2023 Annual International Conference

This list is curated by the Graduate Student Committee. We will add to it and edit it as we receive additional information about events and when/how to access them. Mark your calendars! All times are in the Central time zone. Those events with *asterisks* are planned by our committee.

Tuesday, April 18
8:00 - 9:00am Mentor-Mentee Nexus
11:45 - 1:00pm Graduate Student Luncheon* (Registration was required)
4:45 - 6:15pm Contemporary Methods RIG: Measurement, Methodologies, and Methods in Science Education Research

Wednesday, April 19
6:30 - 7:30pm Graduate Student Forum*

Thursday, April 20
6:00 - 7:00am NARST Committee Exploration
7:00 - 8:30am Graduate Student Committee Business Meeting*
8:40 - 10:10am 2023 Basu Symposium
1:10 - 2:40pm Graduate Student Research Symposium*

Post Conference Mini Job Fairs
Session 1: Wednesday, April 26, 2023 from 2:00 PM to 2:30 PM (CST)
Session 2: Thursday, April 27, 2023 from 5:00 PM to 5:30 PM (CST)

**For an updated list curated events, check out the live document here.
{CLICK ME!}**

Join us again on the selfie scavenger hunt around Chicago! Explore the city, make new friends, win some awesome prizes. Scan the QR code for more information

GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL

#NARST23 SCAVENGER HUNT

WRIGLEY FIELD HOME OF CHICAGO CUBS CUBS WIN! TOYOTA

Explore the city and take a selfie!

Upload to social media or Google Forms with #NARST23

Prizes drawn daily!

SEE FULL INSTRUCTIONS HERE

SCAN ME

GRAND PRIZE IS NARST 2024 REGISTRATION!

Writing Groups

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Theila Smith 5 - 7am EST	Brenda Guerrero 11am -1pm EST	Ti'Era Worsley 9 - 11am EST	Ali Muller 12 - 2 pm EST	Theila Smith 5 - 7am EST
Sandhya Krishan 4 - 6pm EST	Dave Jackson 1 - 3pm EST	Sabrina Stanley 3 - 5pm EST	Sandhya Krishan 5 - 7pm EST	Dave Jackson 1 - 3pm EST

Writing groups will be hosted daily by the Communications and Networking Sub-Committee.

If there is a time you would like to attend writing group, just log into zoom at that time.

https://bit.ly/NARST_writing_group

Call for Special Issues and Papers

Not sure where to submit your work? Check out this list compiled by Ti'Era Worsley

Journals and Calls List

Resources

Other Groups to Connect to
- <u>SABER</u>- Biology ED specific network
- <u>ESERA</u>- European Science ED Network
- <u>BE-STEMM-</u> Canadian Black Scientists Network
- <u>ASTC</u> - Informal science museum network
- <u>EARLI</u> - European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction

Professional Development Resources
- <u>DEAI through SABER</u>
- <u>National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity</u>
- <u>Equity in Graduate Student Education Resource Center</u>

NARST RIGs to Connect To
- Check them out <u>here</u>!

<u>Links to past NARST webinars</u>

Ways to Become Involved With NARST GSC

- Volunteering to help with the sub-committees
  - Communications and Networking
  - Research Symposium
  - Scholarship & Awards
  - Graduate Forum

- Writing a 500-700 word blog for the newsletter
  - <u>Link to submit your idea</u>

Contact Us: narstgradcommittee@gmail.com