The Learning Sciences Graduate Student Conference (LSGSC) is a convening for emerging voices in the learning sciences and related fields to (1) engage with and iterate on work that focuses on studying and designing for learning, and (2) build community across campuses and among graduate students and faculty. For our 2019 conference, we are doubling our efforts to invite participants from the broader range of programs, departments, and fields that study learning—including, but not limited to, cognitive science and computer science; communication studies and curriculum and instruction; human development and human-computer interaction; linguistics and Latinx studies; philosophy, policy, and physics.

We are especially interested in works-in-progress and first-time presenters. Each year, students share work in its various stages of completion, including conjectured designs, theoretical frameworks, preliminary findings, and manuscripts being prepared for submission. We hope you will join us!

Conference Overview

The 2019 LSGSC will be held in Evanston, IL, at Northwestern University’s School of Education and Social Policy (SESP) on Saturday, September 21, and Sunday, September 22. Additionally, a set of pre-conference workshops co-designed and facilitated by faculty and graduate students will be held Friday, September 20. A full list of faculty keynote and panel speakers as well as pre-conference workshops will be announced in mid-July.

Registration for the conference is free. The schedule offers a range of opportunities for graduate students to share work, build community across programs and institutions, and engage with faculty members.
We aim to make the conference accessible for every attendee to engage with the spaces and events of the weekend. If you are interested in attending LSGSC and have an accessibility need (e.g., ASL interpretation, childcare, large-print schedule), please let us know. All conference spaces are wheelchair accessible. Please email us (lsgs.conference@gmail.com) if you have any specific questions or requests.

Conference Theme: Contexts, Complexity, & Communities

The 2019 LSGSC invites emerging scholars to reflect on ways in which our collective research might explicate and innovate how we attend to contexts, complexity, and communities.

We recognize that the conference theme may be quite broad and that any invocation of contexts, complexity, and communities is “multi-voiced” (Bakhtin, 1981; Werstch, 1991). As the learning sciences is an interdisciplinary scholarly community, we welcome interpretations of this theme, in part or in whole, from the full range of researchers who study and design for learning.

For instance, as our research community studies learning across contexts and timescales, we have much to learn if we are to account for learning’s rich complexity, and in particular how learning occurs in and recreates social contexts. We might embrace views of learning that include embodied, situated, and distributed perspectives. We could attend further to the ways in which micro-interactions index, reflect, and renew larger ecological, technological, sociocultural, and sociopolitical systems—and seek to make visible linkages across levels (Cole, 1996; Lee, 2010).

Members of our research community also explore and investigate complexity with computational models. We might design and study uses of agent-based models as learners make sense of and reason about emergent patterns in a complex system (Jacobson & Wilensky, 2006). If we design a computational model about global climate change, we could further study learning with these models in classroom or museum contexts—and link this learning to our global community’s need to address climate change. This work may also emphasize ways in which different local communities are impacted by the effects of climate change and that these differences are connected to sociopolitical histories and contexts (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2018).

To support dialogue across multiple conceptualizations of “context,” “complexity,” and/or “community,” we are asking participants to clarify for themselves and for those at the conference how they are interpreting these terms. We argue that reflecting on these construct(ion)s as a research community is an important step in also reshaping the ways we account for, characterize, and design to support learning toward more just ends. In this spirit, we invite participants to respond to calls for researchers to “more clearly attend to the ways in which the ‘for what,’ ‘for whom,’ ‘with whom,’ and ‘towards what ends’” impact teaching and learning (Philip, Bang, & Jackson, 2018).

Abstract submissions need not address the theme directly. That said, we hope that our framing here will encourage dialogue amongst conference participants, including both students and faculty. Please find more guidance below about opportunities to participate in the 2019 LSGSC. Also, visit lsgsc.org for up-to-date information about the conference as well as information about past convenings. Submit questions and comments to lsgs.conference@gmail.com.

Types of Submissions

We invite 500-word abstracts (not including references) that describe a poster, paper presentation, or proposed workshop.
Submissions can be works-in-progress, conjectured designs, theoretical frameworks and literature reviews, preliminary findings, and manuscripts being prepared for submission. Work related to coursework or milestone processes is welcome. Abstracts may or may not respond directly to the conference theme. You may view past proceedings at lsgc.org.

Paper Presentations
Author(s) will discuss their work for approximately 10-12 minutes in a presentation session with 3-4 other papers grouped by theme, on either Saturday, September 21, or Sunday, September 22. There will be an additional 3-5 minutes for questions after each paper is presented. While slideshow presentations are not required, visual aids are helpful during paper presentation sessions.

Posters and Demos
Posters will be displayed during a 1.5 hour session on Sunday, September 22. Presenters will discuss their posters for either the first or second 45-minute portion of this session. Posters should be no larger than 36 inches by 48 inches. Additionally, presenters who are sharing demos may have access to tables and a limited set of small monitors and larger screens that can be connected to a presenter’s laptop.

Workshops
Student-led workshops will take place during lunch on Sunday, September 22, and should interactive components/activities and discussion of a learning sciences topic or skill. While workshop hosts do not necessarily need to be experts, they should feel comfortable facilitating activities for other attendees. Recent student-led workshops have focused on writing to address one's own positionality as a researcher, using game design software, and refining visual representations of data and findings.

How to Submit
Abstracts will be submitted via the EasyChair conference system. You can access the submission portal by visiting lsgc.org or going directly to easychair.org/conferences/?conf=lsgsc2019.

Stage 1: Submitting Initial Abstracts
Initial abstracts should be anonymized (i.e., do not include author names or institution affiliations), no more than 500 words (excluding title and references), and submitted by May 17 in both PDF and Word formats. Use one of the two templates below to format your abstract.

Posters and Papers
- Abstract Template (anonymized)

Workshops
- Proposal Template (anonymized)

In addition to submitting an abstract via EasyChair, you will be asked to provide 3-5 keywords and select relevant topics from a provided list, which the committee will use to assign anonymous reviewers and to create cohesive sessions. Please be thoughtful about keyword selections.

This year we are also asking authors to submit brief statements to reviewers on (I) the status of their work and (II) the feedback they are requesting via the EasyChair portal, such that it is most helpful in further developing the work. These statements should address:

I. Where you are in a research or design process, which findings (if any) within your submission are preliminary or projected, or the milestone the submission is aligned to in your program; and

II. What kinds of feedback would be most helpful from reviewers, such as with support aligning research methods to research questions or learning theories to your designs, suggestions on literature that would motivate your problem, or writing tips regarding style and tone.

Reviewers will provide feedback on: (1) engagement with related work; (2) motivation; (3) soundness, particularly in relation to methods and claims; (4) alignment among literature, questions, methods, designs and/or findings; (5) broader impacts; and (6) presentation and organization of abstract.
Stage 2: Submitting Revised / Finalized Abstracts

Upon acceptance, revised abstracts will be due from all authors by August 16 and should include author names, email addresses, and institution affiliations. Please note: Authors are not expected to submit a full paper to participate in this conference. Templates for revised poster, paper, and workshop abstracts (with author names, email addresses, and institution affiliations) will be available July 1.

Revised abstracts will be combined into conference proceedings and posted in PDF format at lsgsc.org.

Commitment to Reviewing

As peer review is central to our work, the first author of each submission must review at least 2 conference submissions. This year, we are revising our review process in two key ways that we hope will make the process more productive. First, we are updating our feedback categories to better support works-in-progress, particularly abstracts which may not include findings. Second, we will offer improved supports for reviewers by June 1 via our website, lsgsc.org.

Submissions and Review Timeline

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2019 LSGSC Organizing Committee

For the past four years, graduate students from Northwestern, the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), Indiana University, Vanderbilt University, and the University of Wisconsin–Madison have collaborated to organize the LSGSC. The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign joined last year as a member of the organizing consortium. We are excited for this fourth convening and cannot wait to see you in Evanston!

Northwestern University (host)
Connor Bain  
Sugat Dabholkar  
Ava Jackson  
Stephanie Jones  
Kit Martin  
Nikki McDaid-Morgan  
Melissa Perez  
Nathan Reiff  
Ally Reith  
Trey Smith  
Michael Spikes  
Sarah White

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
Susan Kelly  
Lu Lawrence  
Nitasha Mathayas

Indiana University
Bria Davis  
Christina Stiso  
Xintian Tu

Vanderbilt University
Ashlyn Pierson  
Lauren Vogelstein

University of Wisconsin—Madison
Tiffany Herder  
Kelsey E. Schenck  
Hanall Sung
REFERENCES


