

# ARCSS Student Forum-Summary

*Lesleigh Anderson, University of Massachusetts:*

“The students were invited to meet this morning...which is why [many] of us were not in the small groups...It is great to have been given this platform and time to share what we talked about. The six students [on the stage with me] will talk about the six key points from our discussion.

All the students want to express our appreciation for being funded to be here. We're learning about the history of this effort and organization. We're not in this for the money, as you guys remember and we know. We're in the process of trying to make sense of our ideals, understand why we're doing this, and figure out how to make doing this reality. ...There are about 45 students who shared in this and talked for two hours this morning.”

Who are we (ARCSS)  
and how do we accomplish our goals?

*Jennifer Benning, University of Alaska Fairbanks:*

“One of the things we discussed is who we are and how we can accomplish our goals. We realize each individual's research is valuable and all contributions are important. [An] introduction would be helpful to further interdisciplinary research. It would also help in identifying who we should search out, and [whose work] we might contribute to and whose research we need to continue our own. That could fuel us with challenges for new research and offer us new perspectives and new ideas. It would also help us to incorporate each other's work and not duplicate it..”

Colleagues: competitors or collaborators?

*Zach Lundeen, University of Massachusetts:*

“As young, naïve students we had the opinion that the purpose of this meeting was to establish what we know and don't know in order to develop important research ideas for science in the near future. After being here for a few sessions we took a bit more cynical [view]. We have been given a mandate to pursue interdisciplinary research. In our working groups something we need to evaluate is whether the questions being developed...are motivated by the fact that there is a group of people with knowledge different from our own that may contribute to our work...or are questions being developed for political reasons and self-interests? The realistic view is there will be some politics. You have to let everyone know how important your own research is. However, in order to have successful interdisciplinary research we need to balance our motivations. Are we being objective when we develop the scientific questions, or are we being selfish and just making sure we don't get left out? ”

The struggle for discipline  
in an interdisciplinary effort.

*Katey Walter, University of Alaska Fairbanks:*

“We recognize that it's time for fields to come together and communicate about what we don't know. We question whether interdisciplinary research is of value at the sacrifice of disciplinary research. Are interdisciplinary discussions too general to understand what we need to know about the arctic system? It is a struggle we need to get through to identify the overarching system. As we form the niche of interdisciplinary research and researchers let's not neglect the needs of specialists. As graduate students we have to focus on one or two disciplines. If interdisciplinary research is the future of science, maybe we need to be trained in how to do that.”



Human impacts and/or humans impacted?

*Jason Vogel, University of Colorado*

“It seemed to us there was little attention being [paid to] human impacts in the arctic system...A few important [issues] are contaminants, bioaccumulation in the arctic context--the impact on human and animals--oil spills, local development and resource use, erosion and permafrost. These all seemed like important issues that were being pushed to the side. Some of these are politically charged because they are important and maybe that should tell us to go in that direction.

We [also] need to keep in mind [that] we are guests in arctic communities. We need to remember science should be useful and pertinent--not for just papers, but to solve real problems. The HARC initiative is a good step toward this sort of research. There was a wide misunderstanding about what HARC was. Half of us thought HARC was human impacts--such as what does an oil spill do? We also thought it was a good thing the ANSC was invited here.... It was good to hear from the community people. We want them to have a bigger role in the future--we need to hear what is important to them and what they want to see in the research. It would help educate some of us scientists in a way we're not used to.”

# Spatial coverage and International collaborations

*Andy Mahoney, University of Alaska Fairbanks:*

“Spatial coverage and International collaborations was identified as a problem by us grad students. The arctic is a really big place and the data is sparsely available in that space. The arctic is a multi-nation space. We have gaps in our data and understanding. International collaborations might help heal up some of these gaps, when we need to look at bigger problems instead of just symptoms. The major hindrances to this are non-scientific. They include international politics, foreign logistics or lack of. I heard a lot of stories from Russia about helicopters not arriving, people being robbed; maybe we need to look outside groups like this or invite more outsiders to discuss some of these problems. I tried to think of people who successfully do projects throughout the arctic (RAISE, CAPE). Although this may not be a popular opinion, oil companies may have pointers for us.”

# Spatial and temporal scale in ARCSS organization

*Jill Johnstone, University of Alaska Fairbanks:*

“Issues of scale have emerged in the breakout groups. Our identification of gaps and uncertainties is inherently linked to our scale of interest. One of the questions is whether the current structure of ARCSS is really dealing with this fundamental issue. A focus on the pan-arctic system as a single goal may misrepresent gaps on smaller scales. It may be useful to structure discussions or funding to look at the global, regional and then local scales. A lot of the discussions are being confounded by the scaling issue.”

# ARCSS Graduate Student Forum-Summary

- Who are we and how do we accomplish our goals?
  - Colleagues: competitors or collaborators?
- The struggle for discipline in an interdisciplinary effort.
  - Human impacts and/or humans impacted?
  - Spatial coverage and international collaborations
  - Spatial and temporal scale in ARCSS organization