

Writing the NAR Paper

Thoughts and experiences

Tip 1: Follow Cath's Tips

TIPS

1. Start ASAP. It all takes more time than you think. I think so anyway!
2. Negotiate more "NAR time" with your manager if needed
3. Read other browser's NAR updates, like Ensembl
4. If it's not new, don't include it. This refers to a long introduction or summaries of categories.
5. Forget about the past "template" and shorten the NAR
6. Supplemental data are a great way to include tables & images without counting against your allotted page count.
7. Have boundaries with internal reviews, do these in stages with small groups.
8. Make a calendar and work backward.
9. Start with a clear outline
10. Keep it simple





Takeaways from writing it.

- ***Give Yourself Time:*** schedule a calendar backward.
- ***Think Small:*** maybe start your paper in the NAR MS word template to avoid bloat.
- ***Let [newsarch.html](https://www.nar.org/newsarch.html) guide you:*** it may help limit yourself to newsworthy items.
- ***Visit the NAR site earlier:*** no harm seeing the submission steps before the end.

Read previous NAR papers

- 2021 <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7779060>
- 2020 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7145642>
- 2019 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6323953>
- 2018 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5753355>
- 2017 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5210591>
- 2016 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4702902>
- 2015 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4383971>
- 2014 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3964947>
- 2013 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3531082>
- 2012 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3245018>
- 2011 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3242726>
- 2010 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2808870>

Just read them, avoid spending too much time on this step.



Possible Outline Model (not req.)

ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION

NEW DATA IN THE GENOME BROWSER

- -subsection 1
- -subsection 2
- -subsection 3 - as makes sense

NEW SOFTWARE FEATURES IN THE GENOME BROWSER

- -subsection 1
- -subsection 2
- -subsection 3 - as makes sense

FUTURE PLANS

OUTREACH AND CONTACT INFORMATION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

FUNDING

REFERENCES

Make a REAL Outline of the MEATY Section

Let [newsarch.html](#) guide you

ANNOTATIONS AND VISUALIZATIONS (new data)

-Some Title 1

Put list of overview thoughts here

-Some Title 2

Put list of overview thoughts here

-Some Title 3

Put list of overview thoughts here

SOFTWARE AND TOOL IMPROVEMENTS (new software)

-Some Title 1

Put list of overview thoughts here

-Some Title 2

Put list of overview thoughts here

-Some Title 3

Put list of overview thoughts here

COMMIT TO A SUMMER SCHEDULE >>>MEMORIAL DAY TO LABOR DAY<<<

Reverse Order Schedule starting with September Due Date

Week end 9/Z: (9/15 Due)

Week end 9/Z: (Labor Day Holiday)

Week end 9/Z:

Week end 8/Y: FINALIZED DRAFT TO ENTIRE TEAM

Week end 8/Y:

Week end 8/Y: DRAFT2 REVIEW TEAM_2

Week end 8/Y: (Vacation_2 if planned 8/A-8/B)

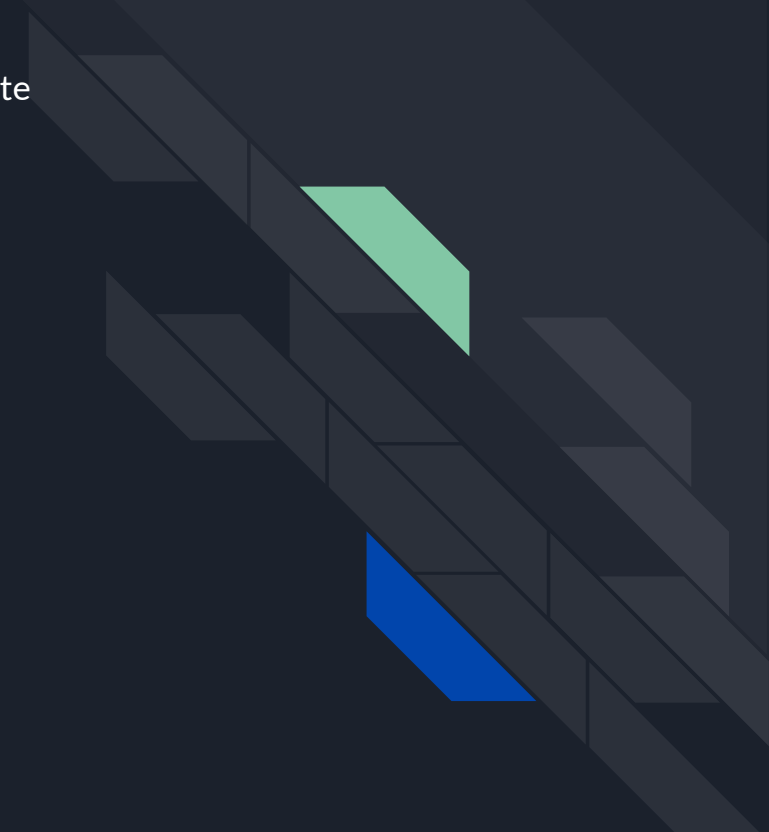
Week end 7/X:

Week end 7/X: DRAFT1 REVIEW TEAM_1

Week end 7/X: (Vacation_1 if planned 7/A-7/B)

Week end 7/X: (4th July Holiday)

Week end 7/X: (Memorial Day Holiday)





MID JULY:

Share Schedule with Review Teams

Share your complete outline - and revisions

People have summer vacations so your schedule has to also meet your REVIEW TEAM_1 and REVIEW TEAM_2 plans.

Sharing your Skeleton Outline, at least to REVIEW TEAM_1 can save you a ton of pain.

Reworking your paper is way easier before you have written a full draft that may need to be entirely reconstructed.



Listen to the input you get from your review team on your outline.

Consider it a blessing to get this input before you've spent too much time writing. If need be, resubmit outline several times.

It is worthwhile to do a meeting with your review team to talk about the outline after they have looked at it.

WRITING: Knock out easy sections first

AUTHOR LIST: ask management to verify your proposed list.

FUTURE PLANS

- anything that won't be out by Sep 15th NAR deadline
- check with Project Manager to get sign-off on text early

OUTREACH AND CONTACT INFORMATION

- model from previous versions

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- model from previous versions

FUNDING

- contact finance early (was Rochelle Fuller)
- get spreadsheet matrix of funding per person
- use it to map onto previous versions of this section

WRITING: avoid explaining the site

ABSTRACT

-Do this last, it will be clearest when the paper is done.

INTRODUCTION

-This has the potential to be the biggest pitfall

Don't try to explain or introduce the site

Just introduce what your paper is about (new data & software)

If need be, write a blog post so you can vent desires to explain how the site works. Then reference that blog post in your paper's introduction.

WRITING: the MEAT

NEW DATA

- Doing Images first can help you break this down
- Ask for help to get a Track List & Public Hubs List from the team
(Progress Report author may know who did these tasks earlier)

NEW SOFTWARE

- Doing Images first can help you break this down
- Write about what excites you, it probably will excite readers

It's best to polish your draft

Before handing it off, reread your paper out loud, several times.

Use Google Doc to collaborate your drafts with the team.

If you need more time talk with your review team, it is likely OK.

On the other hand, make your crunch time deadlines in the middle of the summer, not the end, to avoid excessive stress.



Miscellaneous thoughts on breaking through
procrastination and painful writer's block:

Outdoor Exercise
Uplifting Music
Taking a Shower
Walk & Talk Meeting
Working Late Nights
Subsection Deadlines