



a place of mind

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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Mr. Josh Greenberg
Sloan Foundation
630 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2550
New York, NY USA 10111

Dear Mr. Greenberg,

I am a Science Teaching and Learning Fellow with the Carl Wieman Science Education Initiative at the University of British Columbia (UBC) in Vancouver, Canada. My work in the Mathematics Department and that of the fellows in the other Science departments is to introduce evidence-based instructional practice into our university classrooms, partnering with faculty in their teaching and measuring the effectiveness of our implementation, as well as publishing back to the broader research community when possible.

I participated in the Software Carpentry workshop at UBC this past May with the intention of improving my software development skills for use in the quantitative side of my own research and was impressed to the point where I am becoming more involved in the expansion of the workshop. I am writing this letter of support for the workshop developers as I believe it fills a critical gap in research training and accomplishes this in a commendable way.

My current research focuses on the teaching and learning of university mathematics. Software Carpentry not only provided me with the basics of several relevant software tools, but also with a framework for storing both data and software systematically in order to promote sound research practice. This type of training was absent in my own previous experience and that of the various other participants, even though this type of scientific computing is now prevalent in so many fields.

Moreover, Software Carpentry emphasizes research-based pedagogical methods in achieving its aims. It was very encouraging as a participant with my background to see these ideas implemented and mentioned explicitly as part of the workshop. In giving feedback about my experience, I was also intrigued by the work of Jorge Aranda in measuring effectiveness of the workshop using surveys and interviews; evidence-based instruction is a key element of my current work, and I am hoping my perspective will be of value to Software Carpentry as it moves forward in the coming months.

I would be happy to discuss my experience and involvement with Software Carpentry in more detail. If you are interested, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,

Dr. Warren J. Code