

End-of-Term Status Report

Strong vs. Weak Examples

IB 514: Graduate Scientific Writing
Mark Novak

3-slide limit:

Project Status, Successes and Challenges, Action Plan.

Strong Example (1/3): Project Status

Title

Demographic anti-switching in the original switching predator

Target Journal

Ecology Letters

Authors

Mark Novak, Lila Yang, Malcolm Peralta, Malayah York

Current Status

- ▶ Full draft complete (5800 words)
- ▶ First round of co-author comments received
- ▶ 5 figures finalized (1 schematic in progress)
- ▶ Supplemental materials partially drafted
- ▶ Robustness checks underway

Strong Example (2/3): Successes and Challenges

Key Successes

- ▶ Clearer articulation of novelty relative to prior work
- ▶ Figures now anchor argument structure
- ▶ Stronger alignment between Introduction and Discussion
- ▶ More concise writing overall

Remaining Challenges

- ▶ Results overly dense
- ▶ Model assumptions need clearer explanation
- ▶ 800 words over journal limit

Process Insight

- ▶ Structured writing blocks increased consistency

Strong Example (3/3): Feedback & Action Plan

Co-author Feedback Still to Incorporate

- ▶ Clarify distinction between stability and persistence
- ▶ Justify parameter choices explicitly
- ▶ Move robustness checks to supplement
- ▶ Reduce speculative evolutionary paragraph

Revision Plan

- ▶ Week 1: Tighten Results, incorporate co-author feedback, finalize schematic
- ▶ Week 2: Recirculate to co-authors (2 weeks)
- ▶ Week 3: Final formatting and submission setup
- ▶ Week 4: Final edits, co-author approval, pre-print and journal submission

Submission Target: 4 weeks post-course

Weak Example (1/3): Project Status

Title

Food webs and predator behavior (still working on it)

Target Journal

Probably Ecology Letters or similar

Authors

Me, my advisor, others still being discussed

Current Status

- ▶ Most sections written but not seen by co-authors
- ▶ Figures mostly done
- ▶ Still editing

Progress

- ▶ Did a lot of writing this term
- ▶ Improved the paper

Weak Example (2/3): Successes and Challenges

Successes

- ▶ Better than first draft
- ▶ Got helpful feedback

Challenges

- ▶ Writing is hard
- ▶ Finding time to write is hard
- ▶ Need to polish more

Issues

- ▶ Already too long
- ▶ Not fully done

Weak Example (3/3): Feedback & Action Plan

Co-author Feedback

- ▶ Clarify things
- ▶ Improve methods
- ▶ Shorten discussion

Plan

- ▶ Revise soon
- ▶ Send to advisor and co-authors
- ▶ Submit when ready

Timeline

- ▶ Hopefully finished sometime next semester