

## **GWF Meeting: October 24, 2014**

**Attendees:** Vincenzo Coia; Andy Leung; Estella Qi

**Purpose:** The “GWF blog” is inactive, so we need to discuss the problems we’re facing.

### **Discussion**

- We discussed the underlying purpose of the GWF:
  - Faculty members play too large of a role in the writing process of students’ theses and proposals (by giving feedback). This costs faculty a lot of time, and limits the learning potential of students. The GWF is intended to fix this problem.
- Some problems the GWF is facing:
  - It’s difficult for students to know what specific problems they face when writing; so the GWF needs to focus on “problem-finding” as well as “problem-solving”.
  - Students are busy and are not motivated to participate in something unless they see the immediate benefits.
- A potential solution:
  - Hold a workshop (every term? Year?) with a general topic where students exchange their work with peers so that they can give and receive feedback. This would teach students to search for both problems and solutions.
  - The topic of a workshop should be related to writing using the “integrated” language of math and language. Examples of topics are math notation, writing abstracts, or writing introductions.
  - See page 3 for rough ideas on the workshop mechanism.

### **Action Items (in order):**

1. Andy: Send an email to grad@stat (the week of October 27):
  - a. Remind grad students of the existence of the GWF blog.
  - b. Explain that there’s a new module underway (as discussed today) and that we’re looking to form a small focus group (besides Vincenzo and Andy, we will need 2-3 more people) to develop an outline for a first workshop by the end of this term.
2. Andy: Talk to the grad seminar organizers (sometime this term):
  - a. Ask if we can have a half-hour of time during one seminar to present a first-draft workshop mechanism (purpose of the seminar: get feedback, and possibly recruit participants)

Once the focus group is formed, then:

3. Vincenzo: Organize a meeting with the focus group (during the week? Coffee shop on a Saturday?)

a. Agenda:

- develop a topic and first draft of the workshop mechanism, and a rough idea of when the workshop should take place (next term).
- Discuss how to recruit people for the workshop.
- Assign workshop leader
- Who will present the idea to the grad students?

Once we find time to talk to the grad students (such as the student seminar):

4. Presenter: Prepare discussion with grad students (goal is to get feedback and possibly recruit people for the workshop)

## **Workshop Mechanism – Rough Ideas**

Before the workshop:

- Find a topic
- Have participants exchange a piece of their writing
- Students will review their peer's work
  - Do we need a rubric or guideline for this? Maybe check with faculty for suggestions.

At the workshop (maybe 3 hours long? Maybe on a Saturday?)

- Peer review (two sessions, since each person will need to give and receive feedback)
  - Possibly need to bring awareness to the power of peer review, or at least emphasize it, before proceeding with the workshop.
- Take time to make changes to your document?
- Lunch?
- Have a “lecture” (faculty lead (will have to be planned much in advance, especially if the workshop is held on a Saturday)? Student lead? Or maybe everyone should present, maybe 5-10 minutes each, on the things they “taught” their peer)