Dear graduate students,

Early this term, I contacted you, with Andy’s help, asking for ideas about what can be done to help improve thesis and research paper writing. During the past four to five weeks, I received very warm responses: Some of you brought me your drafts, some discussed with me your needs and questions, and others spent hours telling me your stories of writing and making constructive suggestions. I reported all your ideas and suggestions to the faculty at the brown bag lunch last Thursday, March 13, and they were very pleased with your interest and would like to help.  After considering your suggestions and their feasibilities, here is what we have come up with:   
  
Several faculty expressed willingness to lead a few workshops to initiate the graduate students into thesis and research paper writing, and I am confident that many faculty would be happy to do so.  However, faculty were clear that they wanted this to be student-driven. The process would be for you to first determine some topics that you think would be useful. Then you can approach a specific faculty member to lead a workshop.  After each workshop, you can organize some follow-up sessions to further discuss the topic and critique or peer-review each other’s written work.

This is a great opportunity for graduate students to receive specific guidance on thesis and research paper writing from the faculty. To get started, we need to know 1) whether you are interested, 2) what topics you would like the faculty to cover, 3) who would be involved in planning and scheduling the workshops, and 4) how the focus group would work. To discuss these questions we are holding a forum on Thursday, March 20, between 12:00 and 1:00 (your regular graduate seminar period). I strongly encourage everyone to attend the discussion and give your input so we can set up the procedure to begin with. More details will be discussed at Thursday’s meeting.

Look forward to seeing you on Thursday,

Estella Qi