

Example STLF Meeting Topics and Announcements

Source: Carl Wieman Science Education Initiative

PDF and editable Word version: <https://pressbooks.bccampus.ca/seihandbook/chapter/supplemental-documents/>

In the SEI, a regular meeting was established for the Science Teaching and Learning Fellows (STLFs). This meeting was, essentially, a community of practice for the STLFs, who were embedded in different departments. Session topics were determined by current needs of the group at the time, and facilitation would often be by others in the group with more experience in an area (and/or a willingness to learn more in advance), by facilitators invited from another unit on campus, or by a particular visitor.

Many of these sessions would have some form of pre-reading for the group, to be built upon at the session. See <http://www.cwsei.ubc.ca/resources/papers.htm> for a variety of pre-reading suggestions. Additionally, the references contained in the relevant two-pagers at http://www.cwsei.ubc.ca/resources/instructor_guidance.htm and elsewhere in the Resources section of our site (<http://www.cwsei.ubc.ca/resources>) can be useful pre-reading (and helpful hand-outs).

The following tables, categorized by meeting topic, offer an example of the range of topics used in the SEI. The tables are not in order of priority or frequency, as these varied by cohort.

STLF group process

Meeting topic	Detail
Round table	A typical meeting topic at the beginning of term. Each person brings a brief update on a current or new project to share in a few minutes with the group, with some time for questions/feedback. (This doesn't scale particularly well as group size increases.)
Looking back	This is a common meeting topic for late in a term or late in a year, during which the group reflects on what was accomplished, thinking about and writing down goals for next term (even just for personal use). These are collected to help organizers map out sessions for the next term or year, which can lead to a follow-up poll to help determine the needs of the group relative to the suggestions from individuals.

STLF role and interacting with faculty

Meeting topic	Detail
STLF Role	What is the STLF role and how do you communicate it to others? Meetings are mainly focused on sharing across the group and reading earlier comments on the role; this helps to solidify things and to help people see the breadth of the kind of work happening in departments.
Facilitating meetings with faculty	How do you facilitate a meeting with faculty (setting the meeting, keeping the conversation on track, follow-up)?
Project planning and management	This topic does not cover formal project management, as this is not generally a great fit in department-based work, but it provides general advice from the group around time management, keeping records, etc.
Workshop design	Tools, examples, and recommended practices in designing workshops.
Exit talk: reflections from a departing STLF	When one STLF is moving on to another position, this is time in the group meeting for an informal presentation during which they reflect on their work and offer thoughts/advice to the remaining group.

Evidence-based teaching practices

Meeting topic	Detail
Activity design	Generally, these meetings focus on a specific topic like worksheets, clicker questions, etc., or introduce a particular method like peer instruction, team-based learning, etc. This is a good opportunity for an invited facilitator from elsewhere on campus.
Concept maps	Practice developing concept maps (e.g., create a concept map related to a project or for the STLF role) and consider potential use in a course.
Effective multiple-choice questions (MCQs)	Typically includes analysis/reworking of existing MCQs that people bring to the session and/or designing new ones. Potential pre-readings are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Evaluating multiple-choice exams in large introductory physics courses.</i> Scott, Stelzer, and Gladding; Phys Rev Special Topics – PER V. 2, 020102 (2006). • <i>On the Relative Value of Multiple-Choice, Constructed Response, and Examinee-Selected Items on Two Achievement Tests.</i> Lukhele, Thissen, and Wainer; J. of Ed. Measurement, V. 31, N. 3 (1994).

Research and evaluation

Meeting topic	Detail
Developing research projects	This topic can cover any aspect of research/evaluation: study design, data collection, etc. It may not be easy to have a single topic as people are generally in very different stages of this work. This is an opportunity to share across the group and receive feedback from peers. Ideally there will be a range of experience in the group.
Classroom observations	Usually these meetings have involved training related to a specific tool/protocol, such as COPUS.
Conducting interviews with students	Such a session could involve some role play, and/or critique of a video of an actual or simulated interview.
Coding in qualitative research	Ideally facilitated by someone with experience in such methods; session can include a brief introduction to the ideas/methods in coding and offer some practice with an example transcript or data set.
Survey design	As surveys are a very commonly-used tool for feedback and data collection in courses, people will generally have some drafts to bring. The session can include (or have pre-reading which provides) an overview of effective practices and time to share one's own work and receive feedback from peers.
Data Management and Excel tips	There are various specific practices related to educational data, including privacy concerns, and the likelihood of sharing with and collecting from a broader group (hence Excel is often used for storage and analysis of such data). This session provides an opportunity to establish group/institutional norms and practices.
Quantitative analysis topics	This topic could be a separate series for the group on its own, built around a particular topic, or it could be a session focusing on learning to use R for analysis. Topics could include: factor analysis, linear regression, working with Likert data, working with other multiple choice data, Item Response Theory, etc. Sometimes it is helpful to structure these around an example paper from the literature that uses a particular method of interest to the group.

Workshops offered by the SEI or elsewhere on campus

Instructional Skills Workshop (ISW)

Intensive 3-day workshop that introduces reflective teaching, with a core activity of video-recorded mini lessons in small groups which prompt self-reflection, as well as training to provide feedback to (and receive feedback from) peers.

Facilitator Development Workshop

Introduction to facilitation skills and the logistics of running an ISW; similar format of self-reflection and feedback to (and from) peers.

Communication Skills

Role play and other activities related to communication, negotiation, and interpretation of communication from others.

Sample announcements

These announcements were made through BaseCamp, a project management site consisting of posts in a blog-like format, with the ability to comment on posts and receive posts as emails. The primary goals of these announcements are to provide a clear date and location (especially as these could vary) and to describe any preparation required, including attachments or links to preparatory reading in the posts. Questions or any follow-up related to a specific session would be made by comments on the initial post.

Student Interviews

[Date]

[Time]

[Location]

Hi everyone,

In next week's meeting, we will be focusing on the process, analysis, and dissemination of interview research. I am hoping to tailor the meeting to your current and future interview projects, so could you please email me [email address] or respond to this post (if the group is small enough) with your responses to the following questions/requests:

- What overarching questions/concerns do you have about the interview process and analysis?
- Describe your past, current, and/or future projects incorporating interviews (i.e., what were your research questions? How many participants were involved? What type of questions did you ask the participants? Did you experience any challenges throughout?)
- How did you develop your interview questions?
- What approaches have you been using to analyze your interview data?
- How have you been disseminating your interview research? (i.e. journal publications; conference presentations; department meetings)

During the meeting, we will we share our various strategies and challenges with conducting interviews. As such, please bring any materials, data, and/or reports you have created.

I look forward to your responses and our discussion on [meeting date],

- [Name of facilitator]

Note: follow-up from facilitator included the slides from the session and a further resource to read.

Activity Design Overview

Tomorrow's meeting will be an overview of key design and implementation issues for in-class activities (generally worksheet-driven activities). We will probably have a separate session in the next few weeks for peer instruction with clickers, so this won't really be a focus.

To prepare:

1. Bring at least one existing activity or one in a stage of development that you would like to revise/improve/create or understand better. If you don't have one, you'll spend more time with someone else's.
2. Look over two of the relevant two-pagers from the Instructor Guidance section of the CWSEI website:

http://www.cwsei.ubc.ca/resources/instructor_guidance.htm

- "Creating and implementing in-class activities; principles and practical tips"
- "What not to do; practices that should be avoided when implementing active learning"

3 (Optional). If you are already very familiar with those two-pagers or have more time, also check out these (which we may pick up next week):

- "Assessments that support student learning"
- "Basic instructor habits to keep students engaged"
- "Group work in educational settings"

These two-pagers have distilled an enormous amount of research and course experience into a small space. We'll have some time for "Why would I do this?" questions this week, but we'll also extend this background in the next few weeks both in the *How Learning Works* reading and in the other two-pagers and related readings.

Working with faculty

Next week our meeting will address the topic of working with faculty. We'll explore: (i) understanding your role in a project or course team; (ii) setting and managing expectations; (iii) communicating effectively; and (iv) giving effective feedback. Thanks to everyone who has sent me input for this meeting.

As preparation for the meeting, I would suggest reading the attached article, "Personal Best" by Atul Gawande. Reading the article is not essential for participating on [meeting date], but it is an interesting and enjoyable read which I highly recommend.
