

STEM FELLOWSHIP PEER REVIEW GROUPS: THE FIRST MEETING

Before First Meeting:

- Offer a possible structure to the group (e.g., frequency of meetings, potential activities like exchanging feedback, discussing goals, or co-writing) while also clarifying that the group will decide these structures together during the first meeting.
- Schedule at least the first meeting. Tools like [DoodlePolls](#) or [When2Meet](#) can be helpful for finding a time that works for multiple people
- Ask participants to start thinking about when they'd like to "present" their drafts because the schedule will be set during the first meeting.

First Meeting:

To set a tone of collegiality, you might have each person introduce themselves with a statement about why they're excited about their project, and/or what they're hoping to get out of participating in this group. The way you approach the sample essay will also help set a tone of generous and productive feedback-giving. You might also share and discuss our [Giving & Receiving Feedback.pdf](#) handout as a group.

To set group logistics, your group will need to decide:

- Where and when to meet.
- How and when to share drafts for pre-reading. How far ahead of the meeting do the writers need to send their feedback to the group? Will they send an attachment in an email, or will they create a googledoc that everyone can comment on?
- How to communicate feedback outside of the meetings. Will people send their comments before or after the meeting? Will people all put comments into a common googledoc, or send separate comments? How much pre-reading and preparation time is expected for each draft?
- What will happen in each meeting. At minimum, each meeting should include time to discuss that week's drafts. Optionally, you might include time for everyone to give updates on their progress since the last meeting and/or time for silent co-writing.
- The presentation schedule. At minimum, decide whose writing you will read at the next meeting. Ideally, set the schedule for the whole duration of the group.
- You should emphasize how important it is for participants to attend every meeting. Occasionally we have a participant who will only come when they're presenting, but the group only works if everyone participates as much as possible.
- You should also emphasize that drafts should be kept confidential within the group.

To get the writers oriented to the fellowship, you may choose to give an overview of the application components or have the students practice "giving feedback" on a successful essay. Feel free to also share relevant GWL resources with them. You can find most of our resources on [this page of the website](#).