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The Evolution of a Structured Writing Accountability Group (SWAG)

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The Evolution of a Structured Writing Accountability Group (SWAG)

Abstract

In this Friday Forum, Professors Chas. Phillips (Political Science), Alice Brawley Newlin (Management), and Patturaja Selvaraj (Management) will cover two key aspects of their ongoing Structured Writing Accountability Group (SWAG). First, we'll talk about we have varied the structure of the SWAG since Summer 2018, including our celebratory end-of-year conference in 2019 which was sponsored through the generosity of the Provost's Office grants for Faculty Reading/Writing Groups. Second, we'll briefly highlight the projects and products we have accomplished through our SWAG. Though the principles of the SWAG are simple, participating in this group has greatly enhanced the rate and quality of our research outputs.

We hope to share with others how the structure has been successful for us in order to inspire others to develop their own SWAGs. We look forward to interdisciplinary discussions of ways to modify and improve SWAGs' success.

Keywords

writing, accountability, higher education, tenure and promotion, faculty, Gettysburg College

Disciplines

Higher Education | Higher Education and Teaching | Teacher Education and Professional Development

Comments

Presentation given at the [Friday Forum](#) on September. 6, 2019 The Friday Forum is a series of lectures given by members of the Gettysburg College community on their personal scholarly research, creative activities, or professional or curricular development activities.

The evolution of a Structured Writing Accountability Group (SWAG)

with

Chas. Phillips - Political Science
Alice Brawley Newlin - Management
Patturaja Selvaraj - Management



Who are we?

Chas. Phillips - Political Science

Alice Brawley Newlin - Management

Patturaja Selvaraj - Management



Goals and format of SWAG

Interdepartmental

Structured, weekly scheduled time for research/writing (and nothing else)

Doesn't involve peer-editing, collective problem solving, feedback in general

Away from our offices

- Kind of secret (until now!)

SMART goals each writing session

Spring 2019 mini-conference

Funded by generosity of Provost's office and Dean Bloomquist



Followed by more writing “retreat” days in Summer 2019

Challenges for SWAG

Scheduling & Continuity



Finding Good Working Space
on a Consistent Basis

Accountability



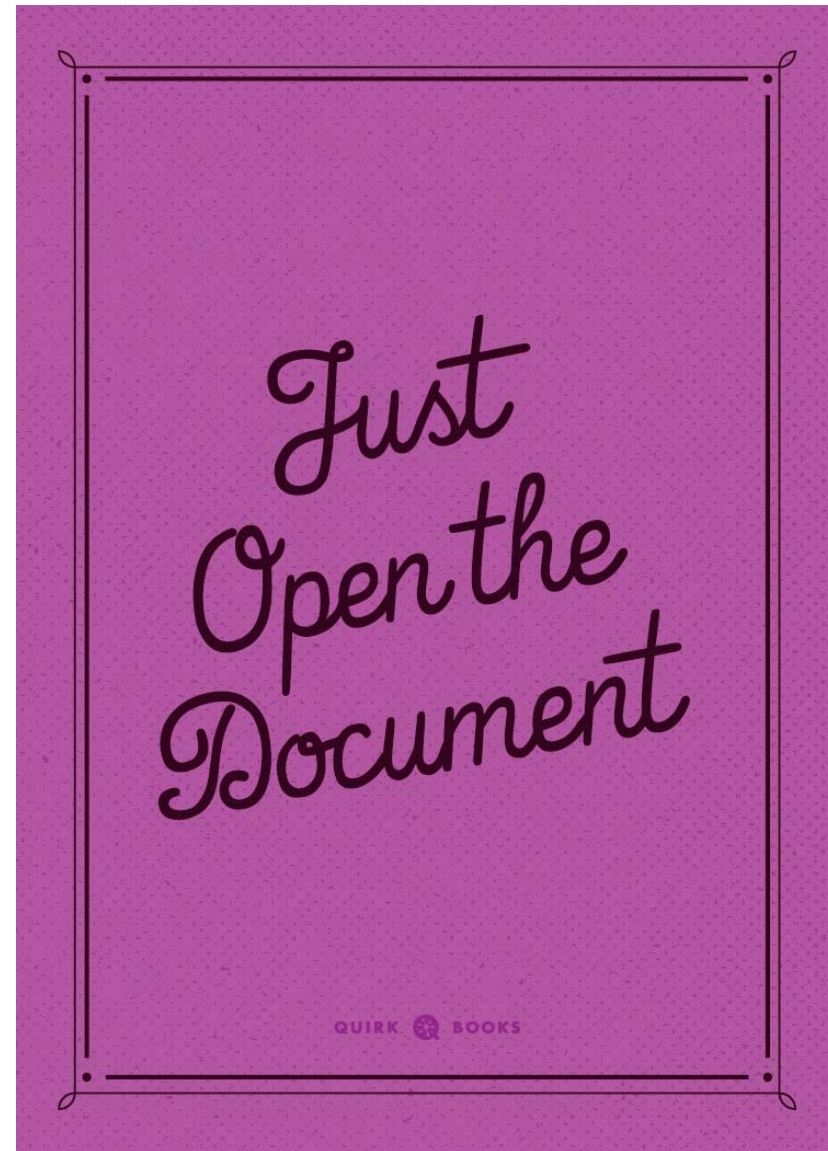
Challenges we've overcome
thanks to SWAG

#1: Not today, teaching trap!



#2: Strictly
“focused” time

Time flies...



Chas.'s challenges overcome/wins from SWAG

1. Scholarly Productivity in Output

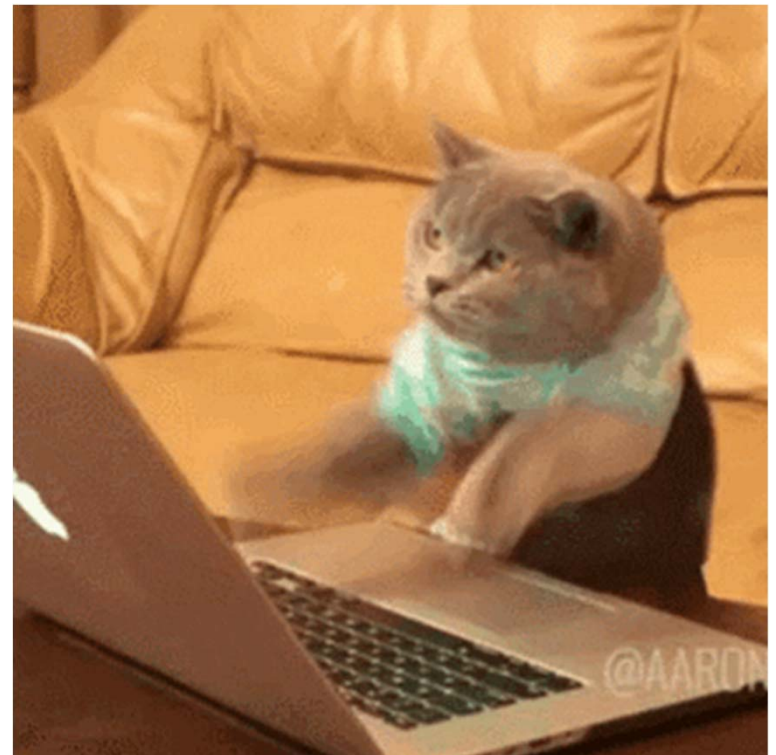
Pivoted from spending all of my time doing:

New course preparation,
student meetings outside of office hours,
Idea generation

(Lots of time between stages of writing
productivity, and minimal results)

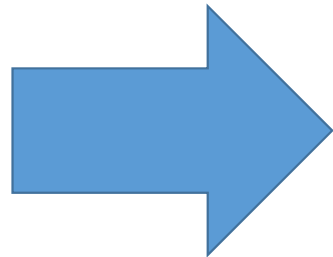
To:

Write! And then do the other stuff.



Chas.'s challenges overcome/wins from SWAG

2. Protected Time for Writing



Chas.'s challenges overcome/wins from SWAG

3. Reprioritized my Time Commitments and Time Distribution

Stopped allowing unimportant 'urgent' deadlines take permanent precedent over important but 'non-urgent' projects.



Past - Pattu's challenges

- Uncertainty
- New course preparation
- Undergraduate teaching
- Instant feedback in teaching

Present - Pattu's challenges overcome/wins from SWAG

- Dedicated time for writing
- Quiet environment
- Inspiration and Motivation
- Achieve writing goals
- Productive year as well

Future

TO DO LiST

1. **SO**
2. **MANY**
3. **THiNGS**



Resources!

- [https://www.gettysburg.edu/offices/provost/forms/index.dot#fundin
g](https://www.gettysburg.edu/offices/provost/forms/index.dot#fundin
g)
- [https://www.gettysburg.edu/offices/provost/forms/faculty-reading-
and-writing-groups](https://www.gettysburg.edu/offices/provost/forms/faculty-reading-
and-writing-groups)