Briefly, about me

Skip the “Herr Prof. Dr.”
Instead, ask about my research!

ETH: Jan, 2016 —
PhD from U Illinois, 2015
Proud “Doktorvater” to 6 PhD students
Several MS / BS thesis students
Briefly, about the seminar’s papers

Applications: video streaming, Web
Congestion control & routing
Wide-area network infrastructure
Data center network infrastructure
Serverless paradigm ⇒ networking

Recent, high-quality papers at top networking conferences
For each Tuesday seminar session ...

Preceding Friday: you submit **reviews** online

Tuesday:

- discussion leader guides **discussion**
- next session leader gives **background**

No laptops; this is a discussion-focused seminar.
Next session lead (Ankit) gives background
Helps you read and review papers by Friday
For the first full session next Tuesday

By Friday: you submit reviews

Tuesday:
  Discussion lead (Ankit) guides discussion
  Background talks by Tuesday-after leads
Reviewing
Reading tip

“How to Read a Paper”, S. Keshav (2 pages)
Submitting reviews on Friday before session

https://netseminar.ethz.ch

Follow the instructions!

4 free “review skips”

Also skip review for paper you lead
Things to avoid in reviews

“They say X.”
Do you believe them? Why (not)?

“Y is computationally expensive.”
But does it matter?

“Z is optimistic.”
Why?
Things to avoid in “Key insights”

“Results are better. Achieves X.”
Results are the outcomes of insights.

“Solved difficult problems.”
How? Why were the problems hard?

“They had a prototype!”
Yes, good, but not an “insight”.
But don’t be too negative!

Personal opinion alert

One nice insight + no major issues = accept
Discussion
Discussions leaders

Summarize key points in online reviews
Guide the discussion
  Call out comments you liked
  Ask for elaboration
Add your own thoughts
Discussion not-leaders

Elaborate on points you or others made
Any new thoughts based on ongoing discussion?
Try not to interrupt your colleagues

Typically, women get interrupted a lot more*

What parts were hard to understand?
What are some prompts for future work?

Background talks
Goals of the background talks

Help your colleagues by providing context
Describe what broad problem is being solved
Why is that problem important?
What naive things could you do?
What are the smartest things preceding this paper?
Given by next session lead(s)

No longer than 15 minutes (per person) *
Make it …
   … useful
   … interesting
   … not a spoiler — everyone will read the paper!
   but can use motivation and related work bits

* some background talks can be done jointly with the other session lead
Typical presentation

1. What’s the problem being solved?
2. Why should we care? (I like throwing in a result-summary)
3. Overview of approach
4. Key insight; distinction from the past
5. Details, results
Typical presentation ≠ Background

1. What’s the problem being solved?
2. Why should we care?
3. Background, past work
For preparing background talks

Use my input

Give yourself enough prep time

Steal slides from authors *(with acknowledgment)*
Quick recap

Preceding Friday: you submit reviews online

Tuesday:

discussion leader guides discussion

next session leader gives background
Total workload

15 reviews
15 min talk + discussion leadership
Engagement in 10 sessions
Grading

1/3 reviews
1/3 discussion leadership, participation
1/3 background

Give a great background talk!
If everyone does that ... 

Paper reading becomes easier / faster
Deeper understanding
Knowledgable about many sub-areas
Poor talks hurt everyone!