## CROSS SECTION OF ACTIVITIES AT ETH

## ALESSANDRA IOZZI

### ACADEMIC YEAR 2000/01: FIM Guest

Activities: Minicourse on Tessellation of homogeneous spaces

ACADEMIC YEAR 2001/02: FIM guest until December 2001, then Research Associate at ETH, funded by an ETH project (until December 2002)

Activities: Organizer of the Reading Seminar Introduction to Arithmetic Groups

- <u>ACADEMIC YEAR 2002/03</u>: Research Associate until December 2002, then holder of a FN Marie-Heim Voegtlin Fellowship until September 30th, 2003
  - <u>Activities WS</u>: Organizer of the Reading Seminar *Symplectic Group Theory*, joint between the research groups of M. Burger and D. Salamon
    - Advanced course Bounded Cohomology, I
  - Activities SS: Advanced course Bounded Cohomology, II
    - Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium in Arithmetic and Geometry (with E. M. Feichtner)
- ACADEMIC YEAR 2003/04: Postdoc in D-Math in Group 1 as of October 1st, 2003 until the end of September 30th 2004
  - <u>Activities WS</u>: Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Th. Bühler, E. M. Feichtner and N. Stalder)
  - <u>Activities SS</u>: Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Th. Bühler, E. M. Feichtner and N. Stalder)
    - Advanced course on Rigidity of group actions on the circle (the official title
      of the course was Bounded Continuous Cohomology: a New Tool
      in Geometry and Group Theory)
- ACADEMIC YEAR 2004/05: (Unpaid) Lehrauftrag to organize the Graduate Colloquium (while I was an NF Professor at the University of Basel)
  - <u>Activities WS</u>: Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Th. Bühler, E. M. Feichtner and C. Kelley)
  - <u>Activities SS</u>: Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Th. Bühler, E. M. Feichtner and C. Kelley)
- <u>ACADEMIC YEAR 2005/06</u>: (Unpaid) Lehrauftrag to organize the Graduate Colloquium (while I was an NF Professor at the University of Basel)
  - Activities WS: Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with N. Kurt, C. Zhu and F. Ziltener)
  - Activities SS: Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with N. Kurt, R. Müller and C. Zhu)

#### ACADEMIC YEAR 2006/07: Senior Scientist at ETH

- Activities WS: Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with M. Bader, N. Kurt and A. Ott)
  - Organizer of the Reading Seminar Higher Teichmüller Theories, joint between ETH, the University of Zürich and the University of Basel
  - Organizer of the panel session and the Zürich talks for the evaluation of the Graduiertenkolleg, Humboldt University
  - Undergraduate course Introduction to Continuous Bounded Cohomology
  - Student seminar Applications of Bounded Cohomology
  - Member of the Hiring Committee for the succession of E. Zehnder
  - Graduate students: Tobias Hartnick

#### Activities SS: - Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with M. Bader, A. Ott and D.Windisch)

- Organizer of the Reading Seminar Patterson-Sullivan Theory
- Undergraduate course Introduction to Lie Groups
- Member of the Hiring Committee for the succession of E. Zehnder
- Postodcs: Gabriele Link
- Graduate students: Tobias Hartnick, Johannes Lieberherr, Tobias Strubel

## ACADEMIC YEAR 2007/08: Senior Scientist/Titular Professor at ETH

#### Activities WS: - Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with A. Lopez, J. Swoboda and D. Windisch)

- Organizer of the Reading Seminar Selberg Trace Formula
- Organizer of the Algebra and Topology Seminar
- Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
- Undergraduate course Analysis III (ITET)
- Member of the Master Admission Committee
- Member of the Hiring Committee of Postdocs
- Postodcs: Gabriele Link
- Graduate students: Tobias Hartnick, Tobias Strubel
- Postdoc: Gabriele Link

#### Activities SS: - Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with A. Lopez, J. Swoboda and D. Windisch)

- Organizer of the Algebra and Topology Seminar
- Organizer of the Reading Seminar Patterson-Sullivan theory
- Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
- Undergraduate course Measure and Integration (MATH)
- Member of the Master Admission Committee
- Member of the Hiring Committee of Postdocs
- Semesterarbeit: Sarah Tischauser
- Postodcs: Gabriele Link
- Graduate students: Tobias Hartnick, Tobias Strubel
- Postdoc: Gabriele Link

#### ACADEMIC YEAR 2008/09: Titular Professor at ETH

Activities WS: - Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with P. Hubschmidt, J. Swoboda and T. Preu)

- Organizer of the Algebra and Topology Seminar
- Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
- Undergraduate course Analysis III (ITET)
- Member of the Master Admission Committee
- Member of the Hiring Committee of Postdocs

- Bachelorarbeit: Christian Sbardella
- Graduate students: Tobias Hartnick

#### Activities SS: - Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with P. Hubschmidt, J. Swoboda and T. Preu)

- Organizer of the Algebra and Topology Seminar
- Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
- Undergraduate course Komplexe Analysis (ITET)
- Member of the Master Admission Committee
- Member of the Hiring Committee of Postdocs
- Bachelorarbeit: Christian Sbardella
- Graduate students: Tobias Hartnick, Tobias Strubel
- Master students: Pascal Rolli (thesis published and ETH Medal),

#### ACADEMIC YEAR 2009/10: Titular Professor at ETH

<u>Activities HS</u>: – Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Ivan Guillermo Contreras Palacios, Patrik Hubschmid, Peter Kauf, Corina Simian)

- Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
- Organizer of the Reading Seminar The mathematics of LEGO
- Undergraduate course Analysis III (ITET)
- Member of the Master Admission Committee
- Member of the Hiring Committee of Postdocs
- Maturandentage
- Graduate students: Tobias Hartnick
- Bachelor Students: Manuel Cavegn

## <u>Activities FS</u>: – Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Ivan Guillermo Contreras Palacios, Patrik Hubschmid, Peter Kauf, Corina Simian)

- Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
- Member of the Master Admission Committee
- Member of the Hiring Committee of Postdocs
- Studienwoche
- Graduate students: Tobias Hartnick, Tobias Strubel, Pascal Rolli
- Bachelor Students: Manuel Cavegn, Mario Huber, Gian Hail

#### ACADEMIC YEAR 2010/11: Titular Professor at ETH

<u>Activities HS</u>: – Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Ivan Guillermo Contreras Palacios, Patrik Hubschmid, Peter Kauf, Corina Simian

- Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
- Undergraduate course Analysis I (INFK)
- Member of the Hiring Committee for an Assistant Professor position
- Member of the Master Admission Committee
- Member of the Hiring Committee of Postdocs
- Maturandentage
- Graduate students: Tobias Strubel, Pascal Rolli
- Bachelor Students: Mario Huber, Gian Hail

<u>Activities FS</u>: – Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Ivan Guillermo Contreras Palacios, Robert Haslhofer, Lisa Lamberti, Corina Simian)

- Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
- Undergraduate course Analysis II (INFK)

- Member of the Hiring Committee for an Assistant Professor position
- Member of the Master Admission Committee
- Member of the Hiring Committee of Postdocs
- Studienwoche
- Graduate students: Tobias Strubel, Pascal Rolli
- Bachelor Students: Gian Hail

#### ACADEMIC YEAR 2011/12: Titular Professor at ETH

<u>Activities HS</u>: – Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Ivan Guillermo Contreras Palacios, Robert Haslhofer, Lisa Lamberti, Corina Simian)

- Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
- Advanced course Lie Groups I
- Member of the Hiring Committee for the succession of G. Wüstholz
- Member of the Raumplanungskommission
- Member of the Master Admission Committee
- Member of the Hiring Committee of Postdocs
- Student seminar p-adic analysis compared to real
- Matura thesis: Robin Leroy
- Graduate students: Beatrice Pozzetti, Pascal Rolli

<u>Activities FS</u>: – Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Ivan Guillermo Contreras Palacios, Robert Haslhofer, Lisa Lamberti, Corina Simian)

- Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
- Organizer of the Reading Seminar Special cube complexes and the virtual Haken conjecture
- Advanced course Lie Groups II
- Student seminar Special cube complexes
- Member of the Hiring Committee for the succession of G. Wüstholz
- Member of the Raumplanungskommission
- Member of the Master Admission Committee
- Member of the Hiring Committee of Postdocs
- Semester paper: Carlos Alberto De la Cruz Mengual, Manuel Herzog
- Graduate students: Beatrice Pozzetti, Pascal Rolli
- Master students: Claire Burrin (thesis published),

#### ACADEMIC YEAR 2012/13: Titular Professor at ETH

<u>Activities HS</u>: – Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Ivan Guillermo Contreras Palacios, Lisa Lamberti, Claudia Scheimbauer, Corina Simian)

- Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
- Organizer of the Reading Seminar Trees, lattices and simple groups
- Undergraduate course Analysis III (MAVT, MATL)
- Student seminar Trees, lattices and simple groups
- Member of the Raumplanungskommission
- Member of the Master Admission Committee
- Member of the Hiring Committee of Postdocs
- Semester paper: Carlos Alberto De la Cruz Mengual
- Graduate students: Claire Burrin, Beatrice Pozzetti, Pascal Rolli

<u>Activities FS</u>: – Sabbatical semester (at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Princeton, NJ, USA, where I took my PhD students, Claire Burrin, Beatrice Pozzetti and Pascal Rolli)

### ACADEMIC YEAR 2013/14: Titular Professor at ETH

- <u>Activities HS</u>: Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Ivan Guillermo Contreras Palacios, Georg Oberdieck, Simon Pepin Lehalleur, Claudia Scheimbauer)
  - Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
  - Organizer of the reading seminar Geometric Group Theory
  - Undergraduate course Analysis III (MAVT, MATL)
  - Member of the Raumplanungskommission
  - Member of the Master Admission Committee
  - Member of the Hiring Committee of Postdocs
  - Postodcs: Cristina Pagliantini, Alessandro Sisto
  - Graduate students: Claire Burrin, Beatrice Pozzetti, Pascal Rolli
  - Bachelor Students: Jacob Dambon
- <u>Activities FS</u>: Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Vincent Sebastian Braunack-Mayer, Maria Hempel, Georg Oberdieck, Simon Pepin Lehalleur, Michele Schiavina)
  - Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
  - Organizer of the reading seminar Geometric Group Theory
  - Undergraduate course Multilinear algebra and applications (MATL)
  - Member of the Raumplanungskommission
  - Member of the Master Admission Committee
  - Member of the Hiring Committee of Postdocs
  - Postodes: Cristina Pagliantini, Alessandro Sisto
  - Graduate students: Claire Burrin, Beatrice Pozzetti, Pascal Rolli
  - Bachelor Students: Jacob Dambon, Patrick Link, Patrick Hnilicka, Robin Leroy

## ACADEMIC YEAR 2014/15: Titular Professor at ETH

- <u>Activities HS</u>: Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Vincent Sebastian Braunack-Mayer, Carlos De la Cruz Mengual, Georg Oberdieck, Simon Pepin Lehalleur, Michele Schiavina)
  - Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
  - Undergraduate course Analysis I (ITET)
  - Undergraduate course Analysis III (MAVT, MATL)
  - Semester paper: Nicolaus Heuer
  - Member of the Bibliotekskommission
  - Member of the Raumplanungskommission
  - Member of the Master Admission Committee
  - Member of the Hiring Committee of Postdocs
  - Postodcs: Cristina Pagliantini, Alessandro Sisto
  - Graduate students: Claire Burrin
  - Master students: Nicolau Heuer (thesis published),
  - Bachelor Students: Jacob Dambon, Patrick Link, Patrick Hnilicka, Robin Leroy
- <u>Activities FS</u>: Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Vincent Sebastian Braunack-Mayer, Maria Hempel, Georg Oberdieck, Simon Pepin Lehalleur, Michele Schiavina)
  - Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
  - Member of the Bibliotekskommission
  - Member of the Raumplanungskommission
  - Member of the Master Admission Committee
  - Member of the Hiring Committee of Postdocs
  - Postodes: Cristina Pagliantini, Alessandro Sisto
  - Graduate students: Claire Burrin

- Master students: Lluis Usó i Cubertorer
- Bachelor Students: Patrick Link, Patrick Hnilicka, Robin Leroy

### ACADEMIC YEAR 2015/16: Titular Professor at ETH

<u>Activities HS</u>: – Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Vincent Sebastian Braunack-Mayer, Carlos De la Cruz Mengual, Maria Hempel, Jakob Oesinghaus, Michele Schiavina, Johannes Schmitt)

- Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
- Organizer of the reading seminar Geometric Group Theory
- Undergraduate course Analysis I (ITET)
- Undergraduate course Analysis III (MAVT, MATL)
- Member of the Hiring Committee for an Assistant Professor position
- Member of the Bibliotekskommission
- Member of the Raumplanungskommission
- Member of the Master Admission Committee
- Member of the Hiring Committee of Postdocs
- Member of the Zürich Colloquium committee
- Member of the Nachdiplomkommission
- Member of the Doktoratsauschuss
- Member of the Bernays Lectures committee
- Postodcs: Nir Lazarovich, Robert Kucharzyk, Mentor Stafa
- Graduate students: Claire Burrin
- Bachelor Students: Patrick Link, Robin Leroy

<u>Activities FS</u>: – Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Vincent Sebastian Braunack-Mayer, Carlos De la Cruz Mengual, Maria Hempel, Jakob Oesinghaus, Michele Schiavina, Johannes Schmitt)

- Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
- Undergraduate course Analysis II (ITET)
- Member of the Hiring Committee for an Assistant Professor position
- Member of the Bibliotekskommission
- Member of the Raumplanungskommission
- Member of the Master Admission Committee
- Member of the Hiring Committee of Postdocs
- Member of the Zürich Colloquium committee
- Member of the Nachdiplomkommission
- Member of the Doktoratsauschuss
- Member of the Bernays Lectures committee
- Postodcs: Nir Lazarovich, Robert Kucharzyk, Mentor Stafa
- Graduate students: Claire Burrin, Yannick Krifka
- Visiting graduate students: Nils Leder (student of Linus Kramer), Ana Silva (student of Tara Brendle), Alessio Savini (student of Stefano Francaviglia)
- Master students: Lluis Usó i Cubertorer

#### ACADEMIC YEAR 2016/17: Titular Professor at ETH

<u>Activities HS</u>: – Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Vincent Sebastian Braunack-Mayer, Carlos De la Cruz Mengual, Jonathan Lorand, Dr. Jakob Oesinghaus, Johannes Schmitt)

- Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
- Member of the Hiring Committee for the succession of D. Salamon
- Member of the Bibliotekskommission
- Member of the Raumplanungskommission
- Member of the Master Admission Committee

- Member of the Hiring Committee of Postdocs
- Member of the Zürich Colloquium committee
- Member of the Nachdiplomkommission
- Member of the Doktoratsauschuss
- Member of the Bernays Lectures committee
- Postodcs: Nir Lazarovich
- Graduate students: Yannick Krifka

# <u>Activities FS</u>: – Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Vincent Sebastian Braunack-Mayer, Carlos De la Cruz Mengual, Jonathan Lorand, Dr. Jakob Oesinghaus, Johannes Schmitt)

- Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
- Undergraduate course Multilinear algebra and applications (MATL)
- Member of the Hiring Committee for the succession of D. Salamon
- Member of the Bibliotekskommission
- Member of the Raumplanungskommission
- Member of the Master Admission Committee
- Member of the Hiring Committee of Postdocs
- Member of the Zürich Colloquium committee
- Member of the Nachdiplomkommission
- Member of the Doktoratsauschuss
- Member of the Bernays Lectures committee
- Member of the goMATH, Frauen machen Mathematik committee
- Postodcs: Nir Lazarovich
- Graduate students: Yannick Krifka
- Master students: Lluis Usó i Cubertorer

#### ACADEMIC YEAR 2017/18: Titular Professor at ETH

<u>Activities HS</u>: – Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Vincent Sebastian Braunack-Mayer, Carlos De la Cruz Mengual, Jonathan Lorand, Dr. Jakob Oesinghaus, Johannes Schmitt)

- Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
- Advanced course Lie Groups I
- Member of the Bibliotekskommission
- Member of the Raumplanungskommission
- Member of the Master Admission Committee
- Member of the Hiring Committee of Postdocs
- Member of the Zürich Colloquium committee
- Member of the Nachdiplomkommission
- Member of the Doktoratsauschuss
- Member of the *Bernays Lectures* committee
- Member of the goMATH, Frauen machen Mathematik committee
- Postodcs: Nir Lazarovich
- Graduate students: Yannick Krifka
- Master students: Lluis Usó i Cubertorer,

## <u>Activities FS</u>: – Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Vincent Sebastian Braunack-Mayer, Carlos De la Cruz Mengual, Jonathan Lorand, Dr. Jakob Oesinghaus, Johannes Schmitt)

- Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
- Advanced course Symmetric Spaces
- Member of the Bibliotekskommission
- Member of the Raumplanungskommission
- Member of the Master Admission Committee
- Member of the Hiring Committee of Postdocs

- Member of the Zürich Colloquium committee
- Member of the Nachdiplomkommission
- Member of the Doktoratsauschuss
- Member of the *Bernays Lectures* committee
- Member of the goMATH, Frauen machen Mathematik committee
- Postodcs: Matthew Cordes, Konstantin Golubev, Alessio Savini
- Graduate students: Yannick Krifka
- Master students: Philip Föhn (thesis published)
- Semester paper: Philip Föhn

#### ACADEMIC YEAR 2018/19: Titular Professor at ETH

<u>Activities HS</u>: – Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Carlos De la Cruz Mengual, Jonathan Lorand, Nima Moshayedi, Nicolas Müller, Johannes Schmitt)

- Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
- Undergraduate course Analysis I (ITET)
- Undergraduate course Analysis III (MAVT, MATL)
- Reading course: Francesco Fournier Facio
- President of the Master Admission Committee
- Member of the Bibliotekskommission
- Member of the Raumplanungskommission
- Member of the Zürich Colloquium committee
- Member of the Nachdiplomkommission
- Member of the Doktoratsauschuss
- Member of the Bernays Lectures committee
- Member of the goMATH, Frauen machen Mathematik committee
- Postodcs: Matthew Cordes, Konstantin Golubev, Alessio Savini
- Graduate students: Yannick Krifka, Lisa Ricci
- Master students: Philip Föhn (thesis published)

<u>Activities FS</u>: – Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Benedetta Cavalli, Jonathan Lorand, Nima Moshayedi, Nicolas Müller, Lisa Ricci, Johannes Schmitt)

- Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
- Undergraduate course Analysis II (ITET)
- President of the Master Admission Committee
- Member of the Bibliotekskommission
- Member of the Raumplanungskommission
- Member of the Zürich Colloquium committee
- Member of the Nachdiplomkommission
- Member of the Doktoratsauschuss
- Member of the Bernays Lectures committee
- Member of the goMATH, Frauen machen Mathematik committee
- President of the Alice Roth Lectures committee
- Postodcs: Matthew Cordes, Konstantin Golubev
- Graduate students: Yannick Krifka, Lisa Ricci
- Master students: Philip Föhn (thesis published)
- Bachelor students: Alain Jean-Jacques Schmid
- Semester paper: Francesco Fournier Facio

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ACADEMIC YEAR 2019/20: Titular Professor at ETH

- <u>Activities HS</u>: Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Benedetta Cavalli, Nima Moshayedi, Nicolas Müller, Lisa Ricci, Violetta Weger)
  - Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
  - President of the Master Admission Committee
  - Member of the Bibliotekskommission
  - Member of the Raumplanungskommission
  - Member of the Zürich Colloquium committee
  - Member of the Nachdiplomkommission
  - Member of the Doktoratsauschuss
  - Member of the Bernays Lectures committee
  - Member of the goMATH, Frauen machen Mathematik committee
  - President of the Alice Roth Lectures committee
  - Postodcs: Matthew Cordes, Konstantin Golubev
  - Graduate students: Yannick Krifka, Lisa Ricci
  - Master students: Francesco Fournier Facio

## <u>Activities FS</u>: – Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Benedetta Cavalli, Nima Moshayedi, Nicolas Müller, Lisa Ricci, Violetta Weger)

- Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
- Undergraduate course Komplexe Analysis (ITET)
- Reading course: Jeanne Fernandez
- President of the Master Admission Committee
- Member of the Bibliotekskommission
- Member of the Raumplanungskommission
- Member of the Zürich Colloquium committee
- Member of the Nachdiplomkommission
- Member of the Doktoratsauschuss
- Member of the Bernays Lectures committee
- Member of the goMATH, Frauen machen Mathematik committee
- President of the Alice Roth Lectures committee
- Postodcs: Matthew Cordes, Konstantin Golubev
- Graduate students: Yannick Krifka, Lisa Ricci, Francesco Fournier Facio
- Master student: Lorena Python, Valentine Nusbaumer, Matteo Giardi

#### ACADEMIC YEAR 2020/21: Titular Professor at ETH

## <u>Activities HS</u>: – Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Benedetta Cavalli, Ödül Tetik, Nicolas Müller, Lisa Ricci, Violetta Weger)

- Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
- Advanced course Lie Groups I
- Reading course: Jeanne Fernandez
- President of the Master Admission Committee
- Member of the Bibliotekskommission
- Member of the Raumplanungskommission
- Member of the Zürich Colloquium committee
- Member of the Nachdiplomkommission
- Member of the Doktoratsauschuss
- Member of the *Bernays Lectures* committee
- Member of the goMATH, Frauen machen Mathematik committee
- President of the Alice Roth Lectures committee
- Postodcs: Matthew Cordes, Konstantin Golubev
- Graduate students: Yannick Krifka, Lisa Ricci, Francesco Fournier Facio

<u>Activities FS</u>: – Organizer of the Graduate Colloquium (with Benedetta Cavalli, Nima Moshayedi, Nicolas Müller, Lisa Ricci, Violetta Weger)

- Organizer of the Geometry Seminar
- Advanced course Symmetric Spaces
- President of the Master Admission Committee
- Member of the Bibliotekskommission
- Member of the Raumplanungskommission
- Member of the Zürich Colloquium committee
- Member of the Nachdiplomkommission
- Member of the Doktoratsauschuss
- Member of the *Bernays Lectures* committee
- Member of the goMATH, Frauen machen Mathematik committee
- President of the Alice Roth Lectures committee
- Postodcs: Matthew Cordes, Konstantin Golubev
- Graduate students: Yannick Krifka, Lisa Ricci, Francesco Fournier Facio
- Master student: Lorena Python

REMARKS ON THE GRADUATE COLLOQUIUM: The Graduate Colloquium did not exist when I was asked by Professor Wüstholz in the Winter Semester 2002 (together with E. M. Feichtner) to organize it. One of the proposed ideas was a format according to which we would invite a well known mathematician to give an hour talk, followed by a twenty minute talk from a student in the same field, with a half an hour break with tea in between. We were however given freedom to choose what we thought worked best.

We went through several trials and errors, trying out different implementations, also because at any given time not all organizers would agree with the goal. Some of us wanted a very high level seminar, where the cutting edge research could be presented, while others felt that this would restrict too much the audience. However we all agreed that we did not want yet another research seminar, one where students would tell their mathematically closest peers their latest technical result. This was very difficult to achieve, as often students were a bit too enthusiastic about their latest lemma which only a handful of people could understand.

On my part I have always been in the quest of a format where on the one hand the students could learn something even about fields very far away from their own, and on the other which would make the students feel that this was "their" colloquium, which they wanted to attend and run. It was in the first meeting of the new organizing team in September 2005 that, taking inspiration form the homonymous column in the Notices of the AMS, I had the idea of the "What is...?" talk. I felt that somehow this would necessarily direct the talks in the right direction, forcing the speaker to be pedagogical, at least for part of the talk.

The Graduate Colloquium has finally now a life of its own. In addition to me, students take turns organizing it, there are almost too many volunteers to give talks than available slots, the attendance is overall excellent and the quality of the talks is mostly very high. While at the beginning the amount of energy that we all had to devote to keep it going was enormous, it is finally now a smoothly running machine fueled by the students enthusiasm.