

FLORIDA WORKSHOP ON MODEL BASED TESTING

**A FORUM FOR SHARING INSIGHTS
ABOUT MODEL-BASED AUTOMATED SOFTWARE TESTING**

Prepared for the February 2001 meeting.

For more information, contact

- Cem Kaner at kaner@kaner.com, or
- James Whittaker at jw@se.fit.edu.

The Florida Workshop on Model-Based Testing is a periodic gathering of senior practitioners and theorists. Our meetings differ from traditional conferences because we focus on a single topic and run the meeting as an open discussion among all attendees, rather than as a series of time-limited presentations. This lets us dig into the topic in depth. It lets us question each other, and explore each other's ideas in detail.

The Workshop is based on the Los Altos Workshop on Software Testing (LAWST), which has been meeting three times per year since February, 1997. We've attached the LAWST ground rules memo at the end of this paper. The Workshop will run pretty much the same way as LAWST. This memo will point out a few differences. Some others might develop as we go forward.

MISSION

Improve the state of the practice of model-based software testing by sharing insights, data, and practical experience in the context of a series of structured, focused discussions among a diverse group of researchers and senior practitioners. Note that the state machines are one type of model, but not the only one of interest.

We formed LAWST (and now STMR) out of a belief that we need more cross-pollination of techniques and approaches across companies. People run into the same problem in company after company, but don't realize that they're dealing with a widespread problem. Instead, they think that something is wrong with their group or their company. Facing these problems, different groups try different partial solutions. If you could combine their thinking, everyone would have made progress. To achieve this, we've developed a structure for exposing people to successful techniques and ideas that they might not have otherwise considered, in a setting that lets them explore the ideas in depth and challenge the advocates to demonstrate that their approaches are useful and that they really do work.

Another important benefit of these meetings is the development of a sense of community and collaboration among the participants.

OPERATION

At twice-yearly meetings held at Florida Tech, participants will discuss and analyze well-focused topics critical to model-based testing.

Meetings will be managed by Cem Kaner and James Whittaker.

Specific topics will be drawn from suggestions of the attendees:

EXPENSES

Florida Institute of Technology is providing the meeting room and it may pay for lunches. You will be responsible for your own transportation and lodging expenses, but there is no charge to attend the meeting.

We're keeping money out of this meeting (you don't pay for the meeting; Cem and James don't get paid for running it) to reinforce the sense that this is a voluntary collaboration among everyone in the room. Your contribution to the meeting will be measured in terms of your participation, not your cash.

PARTICIPATION

We understand that some people are quieter than others, but we hope that every person will contribute in some way to the intellectual content of the meeting, or to the output from the meeting. As we note in the LAWST process memo (below), we encourage publication of the ideas raised in the meeting. Any attendee can use any information that was presented at the meeting in her or his paper, so long as she acknowledges the meeting attendees.

We aren't putting people on a schedule and saying, "If you attend the meeting, you must speak at least X% of the time or publish a paper within N months." We've found at LAWST that some people are used to publishing their work, and they start writing papers right away. Others take a few meetings before they co-author a paper with one or two other attendees. Others never publish, but they find a way to contribute valuably to the discussion in the meeting itself.

SELECTION CRITERIA

We look for people who can have the following characteristics:

- Experience in model-based testing.
- Professional focus is on model-based testing.
- Congenial and collegial in demeanor.
- Possess a sense of professionalism about testing.
- Willing and able to actively participate in the meetings.

Previous attendees (and other people) will recommend candidates to Cem and James, who will make the final selections and invitations based on their subjective impressions of the people involved.

A person who attends one meeting is normally invited to attend the next two (one on each coast). However, the decision to re-invite someone is a discretionary one, made jointly by Cem and James.

DE-SELECTION

People can make themselves unwelcome at the Workshop in different ways, such as by:

- Unprofessional or inappropriate conduct.
- Publishing the group's materials without appropriate acknowledgements.
- Not showing up after committing to.

Additionally, we might choose to rebalance or diversify the group, which might mean that we cannot re-invite some people simply because there is not enough room for everyone who deserves to attend. Re-invitation might happen through no fault of the person who has not been re-invited.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is limited to about 15 people per meeting.

Based on our experience at LAWST, we expect that (once these meetings get rolling), many more people will want to attend each meeting than we can accommodate.

SCHEDULE

The meeting will typically run on a Sunday and Monday in October and in February. Several of us will also meet to socialize on Saturday evening. The meeting itself will start at 9 a.m. Sunday (breakfast starts at 8:00), break for lunch, and continue until about 6:00 p.m. The Monday meeting will run from 9:00 to about 3:30 p.m. (maybe later, the group decides).