

Writing Studio  
Annual Report 2010 – 2011

**Mission Statement**

The Writing Studio places an emphasis on helping writers become better learners and writers by supporting them through the process of writing. The Writing Studio Consultants focus on each individual writer's process to ensure that they leave the Studio with a better understanding of how to create effective texts. The Studio works toward these goals through the peer-tutoring model, which fosters intellectual growth for both student writing consultants and writers. Furthermore, the peer-tutoring model helps the Writing Studio provide a leading example of student-centeredness in teaching and learning.

In addition to providing FIT students the best individualized writing support possible, the Writing Studio is also committed to assisting faculty members in everything from incorporating writing into their courses to working with multilingual writers to developing and responding to writing assignments that effectively target the concerns of their courses. Since the Writing Studio is strongly committed to collaboration, building and fostering strong relationships with faculty members across the disciplines and in the various programs offered at FIT is important to us. The Studio builds these relationships to create opportunities for teaching and learning with writing across the curriculum that will strengthen the academic core. The Writing Studio welcomes faculty and staff to contact us about possibilities for creating writing partnerships that benefit courses and writers at FIT.

**Accomplished Goals 2009-2010**

Throughout the 2009-2010 academic year, the Writing Studio continued to improve its services and access to the larger FIT community. The Writing Studio set the following six objectives for AY 2009-10:

- New Directions in Writing Across the Curriculum
- Tutoring Innovation and Writing Studio Consultant Education
- Workshop Development
- Marketing
- Online Presence and Technological Goals

The Writing Studio made headway in achieving each of these goals and will continue to work toward a few of them with the insight gained from experiences over the past year. The efforts toward these goals are detailed below:

- New Directions in Writing Across the Curriculum

There was increase in the number of courses the Writing Studio interacted with throughout AY201-11. Students using the Writing Studio represent 31 of FIT's

degree programs ranging from Accessories Design to FMM to Visual Arts Management. Writing Consultants worked with students on a variety of writing projects from courses in a variety of Liberal Arts courses, AMC, Accessories Design, Advertising Design, Business Enterprise, Business Law, Communication Design, Computer Graphics, Fashion and Culture of the World, Cosmetics and Fragrance Marketing, VPED, Direct and Interactive Marketing, Fine Arts, Fashion Design, FMM, Fabric Styling, Graphic Design, Home Products Development, Internship Center, Interior Design, ITM, Jewelry Design, Menswear, Photography, Packaging Design, Textile Design, Textile Science, and Toy Design. Furthermore, students from graduate studies, including GFM, Exhibition Design, Illustration, Art Market, and Fashion and Textiles Studies have used the Writing Studio for both coursework and thesis/qualifying paper purposes. This variety suggests that students are writing in a broad range of disciplines at FIT.

In addition to student use, AY 2010-11 saw an increase in faculty use of the Writing Studio from photography, interior design, art market, and textile and fashion studies. Faculty in these programs have worked with the Writing Studio to develop greater support for student writers. In some cases, the director has worked with faculty members to support student writers in the classroom, has assisted in developing writing assignments and workshops, and has led CET presentations to initiate conversations on writing in the arts and using blogging as a tool for enhancing student writing skills.

Finally, the Writing Studio is going through an administrative review process. As part of that process, focus groups were conducted with the faculty to learn more about how the Writing Studio can better support them and their students. Findings from these groups have provided valuable feedback on the relationships that have worked well for the writing studio but also on how the writing studio can begin to target faculty, especially adjunct faculty, who might not be as aware of the conversations happening about writing at the college.

The goals set for the year are on-going, however, the Writing Studio made headway in its outreach to the College community both in terms of its work with students and faculty. Furthermore, the director had the opportunity to assess WAC efforts through the focus groups, affirming positive experiences and providing direction for continued support.

- Tutoring Innovation and Writing Studio Consultant Education

Like Writing Across the Curriculum, tutoring innovation and writing studio consultant education are central to the Writing Studio mission and are therefore goals that we continue to improve upon. This past year was successful in this endeavor. A group of 10 Writing Consultants attended the International Writing

Centers Association/National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing where 8 of the 10 had the opportunity to present based on the work we do with student writers and faculty at FIT. This important professional development opportunity provided writing consultants with a greater understanding of pedagogy. In one of the consultants own words: "I think just engaging in a more academic setting is really exciting for a lot of us just because I feel like this community that we have here is pretty academically minded and it was nice to engage with a larger academic community."

In addition to the conference experience, writing consultants met every two weeks throughout the academic year to discuss best practices in teaching and tutoring writing. The topics range from how to deal with everything from socioeconomic issues to how to craft a visually appealing resume. Guest speakers on learning disabilities and second language acquisition also led discussions for the writing consultants.

- Workshop Development

Two of the newest workshops the Writing Studio offered this academic year were blogging about art and developing artist statements and design philosophies. While the blogging about art workshop was held outside of class, the artist statements and design philosophies were conducted in fabric styling and fashion design courses.

The Writing Studio also worked with the Career and Internship Center to develop and implement a series of workshops on job-search correspondence: resume writing, cover letters, and thank you notes. Given the success of the workshops coordinated with the CIC, we have decided to go in a new direction with workshop development. We are in the process of developing workshops that we will market to teachers that can be facilitated in the classroom. We believe this approach will allow the Writing Studio to build stronger connections with faculty and outreach to a greater number of students.

- Marketing

The Writing Studio continues to expand its services and hours. As a result, we have had to find new ways to reach out to students and faculty. The director has started to visit more chairs meetings and departmental meetings to inform faculty of our services.

Furthermore, we have linked with the CET to reach a greater number of adjunct faculty. There are videos demonstrating a writing consultation on the CET website. In another outreach effort that debuted at the faculty of the future summit, we

created a video of writing consultants speaking about the variety of writing assignments they see and the common struggles and frustrations experienced by FIT student writers.

Writing Consultants have created new campaigns in the forms of signs to get information to the student body. In addition, we started a twitter account to share information and updates.

- Online Presence and Technological Goals

We put a concerted effort into developing the content available on our Web site this year. Since there is plenty available on the Web for student writers, our goal was not to re-create handouts that already exist elsewhere, but to create a more interactive experience specifically tailored for FIT students. This includes information geared toward specific FIT courses or writing needs such as design philosophy statements or writing summaries for FMM case studies. In addition to student content, we also developed information for faculty about writing assignments, using writing in the classroom, writing workshops, and responding to/evaluating student writing.

One of the biggest technological advancements we made this year is the launch of our face-to-face online tutoring. Students are now able to log on remotely for a synchronous video chat with a writing consultant using Adobe Connect. While there were very few students using the program this year, we are finding that the program is easy for students to use and plan to connect with online learning to advertise this opportunity for next year.

### **Program Overview and Changes**

The Writing Studio did not undergo any major program changes during AY 2010-11. As was anticipated, the Writing Studio's presence on campus continues to grow as evidenced by the number of students using the Writing Studio and the connections being built between the Writing Studio, Art and Design, Business and Technology, and Graduate Studies.

#### *Number of Writers and Contacts*

Individual Writers	878
Contacts (number of sessions)	3181

We served 878 students this year, which is a 292-student increase from last year. We also saw an increase of 879 contacts from last year's numbers. The break down of the degrees these students are working toward is below.

#### *Academic Standing*

Associates	407 (46%)
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Bachelors	366 (42%)
Graduate	60 (7%)
Other (non-degree, faculty, staff)	45 (5%)

*English Language Learners*

English Language Learners	400 (45%)
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400 users of the writing studio indicate that they speak a language other than English as their native language, which means we are providing English language learning assistance to 45% of those who use the Writing Studio.

*Writers' Degree Programs/Courses with the most visitors*

Student Writers by Major	Courses with Frequent Visits
# of Students – Major	# of Visits - Course
122 – not specified	297 - EN121
16 - Accessories Design	116 - EN321
72 - Advertising and Marketing	62 - FM114
4 - Advertising Design	44 - FM116
9 - Art Market	51 - FM117
23 - Communication Design	47 - FM268
2 - Computer Animation	58 - HA112
6 - Cosmetics and Fragrance Marketing	561 - personal/professional writing (these are often resumes and cover letters)
4 - Direct and Interactive Marketing	
9 - Exhibition Design	
2 - Fabric Styling	
3 - Fashion and Textile Studies	
137 - Fashion Design	
207 - Fashion Merchandising Management	
20 - Fine Arts	
10 - Global Fashion Management	
18 - Graphic Design	
3 - Home Products Development	
27 - Illustration	
38 - Interior Design	
35 - International Trade and Marketing	
11 - Jewelry Design	
15 - Menswear	
3 - Packaging Design	
5 - Photography	
12 - Production Management	
11 - Technical Design	
11 - Textile Development and Marketing	
15 - Textile/Surface Design	

6 - Toy Design 7 - Visual Art Management 15 - Visual Presentation and Exhibition Design	
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The columns above demonstrate the variety of students who use the Writing Studio. However, it is clear that FMM and Fashion Design students constitute the largest number of students using the Studio. The right column displays courses/purposes that students frequently visit the Writing Studio for writing assistance. The data shows that students in English, Fashion Merchandising Management, and History of Art courses make frequent use of the writing studio. Furthermore, the 561 personal/professional writing visits indicate that the Writing Studio is also helping FIT student writers for writing purposes outside of the classroom. These visits often deal with resume/cover letter assistance.

### *Session Satisfaction*

Student writers were surveyed in order to determine the level of satisfaction they had with their Writing Studio experience. Ninety-four (94) students responded to the survey, which asked four questions. The four questions asked about their overall experiences at the writing studio, their experiences with tutors, and whether or not they felt their writing improved.

1. My tutor took the time to understand my concerns as a writer.

Strongly Agree	53 (56.4%)
Agree	36 (38.3%)
Neutral	4 (4.3%)
Disagree	0 (0%)
Strongly Disagree	0 (0%)

2. I feel my tutor helped me improve my writing.

Strongly Agree	48 (51.1%)
Agree	38(40.4%)
Neutral	7 (7.4%)
Disagree	0 (0%)
Strongly Disagree	1 (1.1%)

3. Overall, how satisfied were you with your Writing Studio experience?

Very Satisfied	57 (60.6%)
Satisfied	31 (33%)
Neutral	4 (4.3%)
Unsatisfied	2 (2.1%)
Very Unsatisfied	0 (0%)

4. Please feel free to comment on your experience, provide feedback, or make suggestions (Optional):

(Positive feedback highlighted in bold typeface)

Everyone at the writing center that I has the pleasure to study with (Emma, Edrien, Lina) were helpful and professional. I am so happy this great place is available for FIT students. Thank you! FMM Freshwoman

Georgi was a very helpful and an excellent tutor.

Writing Studio certainly helps me a lot!

**My tutor was very helpful and had helped me come up with some great ideas to write about.** Thank you!!

except supplies such as pencil wasn't working very well though, other writing service was all good and ncie. thank you

**I think that reading out loud method is effective** but I feel like if it is 10 pages of essay might take a long time to finish. might be if the tutor could read the whole paper first and give some advice then work where the problem is will be helpful. Thanks.

I was hesitant to stop in because the college I transfered from just spent 15 minutes with each student to answer general questions, and you were not allowed to go in depth about what your paper was about. **Being able to sit down for an hour and have them next to you or to be in the area as you rework your paper was a huge help** and allowed me to write a better paper.

Sasha is an absolutely AMAZING!!!! Her approach to essay editing is outstanding and thorough. **She took every detail into an account, clearly understood what I wanted to express, and tactically guided me to achieve fulfilling results.** I am thrilled to have her as my tutor.

I thought writing studio will help me with grammar, brain storming ideas, how to work my papers or essays better. but i think some of the people or students who worked there doesnt seem like they know what they were doing.

My writing skill has been improved very much because of all tutors great support. Also I am very satisfied with every single workshop from writing center. I really appreciate all you guys hard work. Have a wonderful holiday!

I had great experience with my tutor today. Patrick is great! **Writing Studio is one of the best thing that exist in FIT!**

My tutor is Courtney and she is the best. She is patient and very nice. She takes the time to understand what I want to say and she is always in good mood. I will definitely recommend students to work with her. Moreover, **I am doing my masters and she helps me write to that high level of expectations that my professors have.**

I think if there are more English major tutor in the Writing center, it will be much helpful to me. Because sometimes, non-english major does not help.

Sometimes 1 hour time limit is not enough for proofreading the final paper of 10-15 pages.

**She helped me not only to correct my english (grammar etc) but also not to miss the point of my paper.** It was great.

Hire graduate students that have a degree in English or have strong writing skills rather than FIT student!!!!

Allison Krawczyk looked over my paper. She is fabulous and made the process a breeze.

Of all the times I went, only one tutor satisfy me. If I come there to get help, they shouldn't tell me to think how I can make it better because there is a reason why I am there.

Tutor's knowledge level and passion truly vary. If I am lucky, I get a good one otherwise, most of the time, I could feel that they did not like what they are doing. I had to wonder if they are paid....I would not use the studio.

**I'm so thankful to have the writing studio available to help assist in improving my writing skills,** which will leave a lasting impact to take with me when I graduate.

**It really helped me both in the essay itself and also my confidence with it.** The people in the studio are really nice and that helped me to be brave to ask question. Thank you!

This is a great service available to students, I wish more people would take advantage of it!

**One of the best programs at FIT. Everyone works in the writing studio is helpful, friendly and patient. Thank you very much for all of you!!**

My writing skills has been improved a lot from all tutors! Thank you so much. I only want to suggest that many international students may need more grammar workshops.



I know the writing studio is great, but I needed to know a specific way to input footnotes, so it wasn't that helpful.

I love your work! you are doing a great job and each and every one of the tutors help me develop new depth to my work!

Most visitors indicate that they feel very satisfied by their session, their experience with the tutor, and their writing as a result of their Writing Studio experience. However, we are examining some of our students' negative experiences and comments to learn how we can improve our services. Some of the suggestions above indicating low satisfaction or an issue with our services will be addressed in our goals for AY2011-2012. In some cases, we will make efforts to reach out to students working with particular writing needs, such as graduate students, that may go above and beyond more common writing issues that we often work with at the Writing Studio. Also, some of the negative comments suggest that more needs to be done to explain to students how the Writing Studio realistically functions in their writing process. Comments that deal with the amount of time we can spend with a student are better addressed by a campus-wide campaign that focuses on the recursive and revisionary nature of learning to write.

### **Administrative Review/Program Assessment**

The Writing Studio is participating in FIT's Quality Assurance and Improvement Program for Administrative Services. As a part of this process, we are examining the Writing Studio's hiring and payroll process in addition to customer service to students and faculty. The assessment process began in the spring 2011 semester with faculty and tutor focus groups and will continue in fall 2011 with a student focus group. Preliminary findings from these focus groups have provided feedback on how to better market the Writing Studio to faculty and students, how to implement more successful writing across the curriculum initiatives and workshops, and how to improve upon the day to day operations at the Writing Studio. After a site visit by two external reviewers, we expect to complete the report by the end of the fall 2011 semester.

### **Notable Honors, Awards, and Professional Development**

\*Peer Writing Consultant

#### *Awards*

Brian Fallon, The 2010 Ron Maxwell Award for distinguished leadership in promoting the collaborative learning practices of peer tutors in writing.

Jonathan Guzi\*, the FITSA Amy Lucicero Extracurricular Service Award and a Peter Vogel Leadership Key, May 24, 2011

Teneka King\*, a Peter Vogel Silver Key Leadership Award, May 24, 2011

Lina-Paola Riveros\*, NYS Tap Award, the Peter Vallone Scholarship, and the Presidential Scholars Award, Fall 2010

Heather Viggiani\*, Peer Writing Consultant, SUNY Chancellor's Award

### *Professional Activities*

Brian Fallon, Blind Peer Reviewer, *Writing Center Journal*

Brian Fallon, Co-Chair, SUNY Council on Writing at FIT, (with Melissa Tombro, English and Speech Department), Spring 2012.

### *Conference Presentations*

Alexander Cavaluzzo\*, Cassandra Holden\*, and Yecca Zeng\*, "Tutoring the Non-writer: Where Design Meets Discourse." International Writing Center Association joint with National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing, Baltimore, MD, November 5, 2010.

Brian Fallon, "When Tutors Nag, and Nag: Exploring ways to Care, Listen, and Learn in the Center." International Writing Center Association joint with National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing, Baltimore, MD, November 5, 2010.

Brian Fallon, "Finding a Hallway': Writing the Production of Space." Conference on College Composition and Communication, Atlanta, GA, April 8, 2011.

Cassandra Holden\* and Daniel Phillips\*, "Big Apples for Maple Syrup: Results of a Tutor Swap." International Writing Center Association joint with National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing, Baltimore, MD, November 6, 2010.

Patrick Jackson, Sasha Graybosch, and Courtney Kelsch, "Navigating the University: Creating Safe Harbors Outside the Writing Center." International Writing Center Association joint with National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing, Baltimore, MD, November 6, 2010.

### **Student Centeredness**

The Writing Studio continues to be one of the primary sites on campus that puts students in charge of their own learning. Through the collaborative learning techniques employed, students assist other students in their efforts to become better writers. What's more is that Peer Writing Consultants also develop

intellectually and socially from their interactions with fellow students. In a number of instances, the Writing Studio has empowered student writers to be more proactive in their learning, as evidenced by feedback by students: “The people in the studio are really nice and that helped me to be brave to ask question.” Many students, and especially our international students, benefit from speaking to knowledgeable peers about successful techniques for learning in an American, college-level academic context.

Furthermore, the democratic nature of how the Writing Studio is run means that students, Peer Writing Consultants, have a say in everything from how to handle difficult pedagogical situations to how to best advertise the Studio’s services. The students who use the Writing Studio find our staff to be overwhelmingly friendly and helpful, kind and courteous, and go so far as to label the Writing Studio one of the best places on FIT’s campus. From the artwork on the walls to the writing workshops we offer, students have a hand in creating nearly everything that the Writing Studio offers the College, which means that the Writing Studio actively engages students in its efforts to improve writing and learning at FIT.

## **New Goals and Initiatives for 2011 – 12 academic year**

### *Strategic Planning: The Writing Studio in 2020*

- Draft a strategic plan that responds to the findings of the administrative review, accounts for the needs of faculty who teach with writing, promotes the growth of the Writing Studio program, establishes a plan to meet the literacy needs of tomorrow’s students, and outlines an educational agenda for peer and professional tutors.

### *Writing Across the Curriculum*

- Outreach to Graduate Studies to assist with thesis and qualifying papers.
- Catalogue courses that use writing for learning extensively such as thesis and capstone courses.
- Collaborate with faculty and students in undergraduate thesis and capstone courses.
- Design and implement departmental in-service workshops that assist faculty with writing assessment, writing assignments, and collaborative learning.
- Survey departments in each of the schools on how writing is used in their department.

### *Tutoring Innovation and Writing Studio Consultant Education*

- Publish tutor-conducted research.
- Prepare conference presentations.
- Facilitate exchanges with local writing centers to share ideas about best practices.

- Survey Peer Writing Consultant alumni will be to determine how their tutoring influenced their overall educational experience at FIT.

#### *Workshop Development*

- Develop workshops that assist students in digital literacy and in-class workshops on a variety of topics.
- Provide Online access to workshops.

#### *Sponsorship/Grants*

- Investigate grant opportunities (other than the Perkins grant) to support tutoring and writing across the curriculum efforts.
- Investigate opportunities for sponsorship to develop a comprehensive program focusing on communication across the curriculum.

#### *Online Presence and Technology*

- Enhance Web resources with more interactive instructional technology: podcasts, youtube videos, blogs, etc.
- Create a Writing Studio facebook group that we can use as a communication hub for peer tutors and student writers.
- Strategize with the director of Online Learning to market online tutoring to online courses and programs.