

Major Effort 7: FIT Writing Studio

A. Narrative Section

1. Objectives, Activities, and Evaluation:

The following were the Writing Studio's approved objectives for FY2012:

- The Writing Studio will strengthen both their academic work and their preparation for career paths.
- The Writing Studio will show students how important the act of writing is to their career objectives.
- The Writing Studio will demonstrate success rates of students who used the Writing Studio during their AAS in pursuing the baccalaureate degree in Fashion Design and Fashion Merchandising Management.
- It will provide students with the experience and the confidence to tackle difficult writing tasks, assisting them in becoming more methodical critical thinkers.

These objectives are at the center of the Writing Studio's mission and guide the tutoring and teaching practices used in tutorials and workshops. In order to accomplish these objectives, the Writing Studio engaged in a number of activities during AY2010-2011 that ranged from peer tutor education, professional development, tutoring, and workshops. Additionally, the Perkins grant made it possible for 10 Writing Studio consultants to travel to the National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing, where six of them presented papers on best practices in tutoring writing. This professional development opportunity provided tutors with up-to-date information on issues in teaching writing; furthermore, tutors who attended the conference were able to bring what they learned back to the Writing Studio and presented information to the rest of the staff during education meetings.

In the past year, the Writing Studio has grown both in the number of A.A.S. students served and the number of sessions. In total, there were 3902 sessions this academic year. Of those sessions, 1723 were with the 427 A.A.S. students who visited the Writing Studio this academic year. Three hundred twenty-five (325) of those 427 students were LEP students. In addition to one-to-one sessions, the Writing Studio conducted six workshops focusing on job correspondence writing (resumes and cover letters). Thirty A.A.S. students were in attendance at these workshops throughout the year. Despite our best efforts to advertise these workshops, the attendance was very low. The Writing Studio collaborated with the Career and Internship Center to try to increase the turnout at these workshops, but we were unable to attract more students to these events. As a result, we have decided to no longer offer workshops. Over the past three years, we have seen very little interest in writing workshops and have come to the conclusion that A.A.S. level students at FIT would be best served by one-to-one instruction and by reaching out to faculty interacting with students served by the Perkins grant.

Peer tutor education continues to be one of the main ways that we are able to achieve the approved objectives for the Writing Studio. Peer tutor education provides FIT Writing

Studio consultants an opportunity to prepare to work with any FIT writer who enters the Writing Studio. Through the peer tutor education program, there is an assurance that writing studio sessions are productive because tutors are taught best practices in tutoring. These practices help peer and professional tutors to make better choices while tutoring and help them to explain to students the importance of any number of concerns in writing. For instance, tutors are instructed on how to help students set goals, reflect on choices in their writing, and how to plan for revision. In addition to instilling these practices, each staff meeting addresses important issues in writing and learning that relate to the population of students we serve. Topics of the bi-monthly staff meetings included adult literacy, second language acquisition, learning disabilities, tutoring underprepared students, mentoring young students and writers, understanding socio-economic and racial influences on literacy learning, and writing for academic and professional purposes. To shore up these topics and bring more perspectives into our discussion, guest speakers have visited to provide information on Second Language Acquisition and tutors have prepared presentations that cover these topics. Peer tutor education is the most significant way to ensure that the approved objectives are being met because it provides tutors with tools to help students improve their writing skills.

The professional development opportunities during staff meetings were reinforced by tutors' participation at the National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing in Miami, FL, November 4-6, 2011. Seven peer writing consultants and three writing consultants attended this conference and six of the peer writing consultants presented on topics in peer tutoring and teaching writing. Consultants who attended the conference as participants had an opportunity to network, share information with other writing center professionals, and learn from presentations and research fairs. The conference provided these tutors with new perspectives on tutoring and also demonstrated to them the myriad approaches to teaching and tutoring writing at a number of colleges and universities across the country. Upon return to FIT, tutors shared their experiences with the rest of the staff at subsequent meetings.

The following activities were conducted during AY 11-12 to ensure that the objectives are being met:

- Peer-Tutor Education: Both writing consultants and peer writing consultants work together regularly on writing center related issues from tutoring student writers to developing and implementing plans for writing studio staff development. Twelve staff education meetings occurred throughout AY 11-12, which were held about every other week starting September 10, 2010. As noted in the narrative, each meeting asked all consultants to reflect on their work and tutoring and to engage in pedagogical and theoretical conversations about writing. During both semesters, tutors were asked to investigate issues in tutoring and present them to the rest of the staff complete with suggestions for working with writers.

In addition to staff meetings, writing consultants also meet with other tutors in the NYC area. As part of this exchange, they had the opportunity to work with and learn from Dr. Lauren Fitzgerald, a leading writing center scholar who writes about

undergraduate research and tutoring. This cross-institutional experience allowed FIT tutors to discuss their experiences with tutoring and writing and fostered a better understanding of how to work with diverse learners and writers.

- **Conferences:** Tutors are expected to research areas that relate to tutoring and to present them at conferences. As mentioned in the narrative, a total of 10 FIT Writing consultants (7 peer writing consultants and 3 professional) attended the National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing in Miami, FL, November 4-6, 2010. Six peer consultants presented at the conference. Peer Writing Consultants were also given the opportunity to meet with peer tutors from other colleges and universities to discuss best practices in tutoring and to learn more about the demands that exist at other schools. Tutors were also involved in preparing for and planning the SUNY Council on Writing conference, which was held at FIT on March 30 and 31, 2012. At this conference, tutors attended conference presentations given by writing instructors from across the SUNY system.
- **Workshops:** We held a series of workshops on job correspondence that were poorly attended. The Writing Studio teamed up with the Career and Internship Center (CIC) to offer workshops that focus on writing for career purposes. These workshops assisted students with critical thinking and writing skills, as well with ways to come up with creative approaches to persuading potential employers. Only 30 students attended these workshops throughout the semester. Based on the declining interest in these workshops and the amount of effort and time that went into planning and implementing them, we have decided to discontinue offering workshops.

Evaluation of this major effort dealt with three measures:

1. Measure

The retention rate of students in targeted writing courses who are regular users of the Writing Studio will be compared to a similar group who did not use the Writing Studio.

Outcome

As a result of this major effort, it is anticipated that regular users of the Writing Studio will have a 3% higher retention rate in the targeted writing classes than those who did not use the Writing Studio.

Results forthcoming.

Results forthcoming.

2. Measure

A sample of students who use the Writing Studio regularly will be assessed for improvement in their writing skills using a checklist of skills, i.e., rubric.

Outcome

As a result of this major effort, it is anticipated that a minimum of 50% of students, based on a sample of their writing, will meet or exceed standards identified in the rubric.

The Director of the Writing Studio developed a rubric that can be used to measure Content, Organization, Voice, Style, and Mechanics in writing. After reviewing a sample of student writing, the Director determined whether the sample surpassed expectations, met expectations, or fell below expectations in each of these areas by rating each sample. The rating process was blind, as students were asked to anonymously submit samples. Sixteen samples of A.A.S. student writing were collected at the end of the spring semester. The director contacted A.A.S. students who have used the Writing Studio more than once. Despite reaching out to 250 students, only 16 students provided a writing sample using an online submission. Here are the findings for each area measured:

	Content	Organization	Voice	Style	Mechanics
Below Expectations	12.5%	25%	0%	6.25%	12.5%
Meets Expectations	75%	68.75%	87.5%	75%	75%
Surpasses Expectations	12.5%	6.25%	12.5%	18.75%	12.5%

Based on these writing samples, the Writing Studio is finding that students are performing above the anticipated minimum of 50% meeting or exceeding expectations for each of these areas.

3. Measure

Students will be asked to rate the effectiveness of the tutoring services and the workshops offered by the Studio.

Outcome

As a result of this major effort, it is anticipated that a minimum of 80% of the students will indicate satisfaction with the Studio and its services.

Students were asked to indicate satisfaction with their Studio experience by filling out an online survey that was emailed to them. A.A.S. student writers indicated that they were satisfied with their Writing Studio experience. About 28.8% were satisfied while 53.8% reported that they were very satisfied with their experiences at the Writing Studio, meaning 82.6% were satisfied with their experience.

Session Satisfaction Data

Very Satisfied	53.8%
Satisfied	28.8%
Neutral	7.7%
Unsatisfied	7.7%
Very Unsatisfied	1.9%

4. Measure

A sample of faculty from the Fashion Design and Fashion Merchandising Management program will be surveyed to determine the value of the writing studio within the umbrella of the two-year and four year programs.

Outcome

As a result of this major effort, it is anticipated that a minimum of 80% of faculty will indicate that the Studio is valuable to students moving from the AAS to the baccalaureate degree.

Results Forthcoming

5. Measure

A sample of students from the Fashion Design and Fashion Merchandising Management programs who use the Writing Studio will be tracked to determine their success in transitioning from the A.A.S. to the baccalaureate.

Outcome

As a result of this major effort, it is anticipated that a minimum of 85% of students will have average GPAs of 3.2 or higher in writing intensive courses.

Results forthcoming

2. Linkages:

N/A

3. Special Populations:

The Writing Studio has served 325 A.A.S. students designated as LEP this year. Overall, the one-to-one consultations were the primary activities that helped these students. Many of the LEP students were helped with English language skills, understanding American academic writing conventions, and general literacy issues such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening in English.

4. Personnel:

Name	Title	Responsibilities	% of time spent on effort
Apploff, Corey	Peer Writing Tutor	Tutoring, peer tutor education	100
Carl, Michelle	Peer Writing Tutor	Tutoring, peer tutor education	100
Dwiggins, Georgeanna	Peer Writing Tutor	Tutoring, peer tutor education	100

Fowler, Anushka	Writing Consultant	Tutoring, peer tutor education, workshops	100
Graybosch, Sasha	Writing Consultant	Tutoring, peer tutor education, workshops	100
Guzi, Jonathan	Peer Writing Tutor	Tutoring, peer tutor education	100
Hall, Danna	Peer Writing Tutor	Tutoring, peer tutor education	100
Hayon, Jessica	Peer Writing Tutor	Tutoring, peer tutor education, workshops	100
Holden, Cassandra	Peer Writing Tutor	Tutoring, peer tutor education	100
Jackson, Patrick	Writing Consultant	Tutoring, peer tutor education, workshops	100
Jacobs, Rachel	Peer Writing Tutor	Tutoring, peer tutor education	100
Kadar-Penner, Emma	Peer Writing Tutor	Tutoring, peer tutor education, workshops	100
Kelsch, Courtney	Writing Consultant	Tutoring, peer tutor education, workshops	100
King, Teneka	Peer Writing Tutor	Tutoring, peer tutor education	100
Krawczyk, Alison	Peer Writing Tutor	Tutoring, peer tutor education	100
Larmond, Ashley	Peer Writing Tutor	Tutoring, peer tutor education	100
Morse, Stephanie	Peer Writing Tutor	Tutoring, peer tutor education	100
Riveros, Lina-Paola	Peer Writing Tutor	Tutoring, peer tutor education	100
Rogers, Evan	Peer Writing Tutor	Tutoring, peer tutor education	100
Seggio, Jennifer	Peer Writing Tutor	Tutoring, peer tutor education	100
Smith, Keely-Shea	Peer Writing Tutor	Tutoring, peer tutor education	100
Soto, Tyana	Peer Writing Tutor	Tutoring, peer tutor education	100
Tan, Nicole	Peer Writing Tutor	Tutoring, peer tutor education	100
Wakefield, Louisa	Peer Writing Tutor	Tutoring, peer tutor education	100
Zeng, Yecca	Peer Writing Tutor	Tutoring, peer tutor education	100

5. Equipment:

N/A