I. INSTRUCTIONS
Complete this form in its entirety and email it to plig@rit.edu no later than November 1, 2013. Please note to save and rename this document substituting your name (in place of “NAME”) in the file name.

II. PERSONAL INFORMATION
Name: Michael Palanski Email: mpalanski@saunders.rit.edu Phone: 5-4758

College: SCB Department: Management

Department head name, phone and e-mail: Bob Barbato, 5-2350, rbarbato@saunders.rit.edu

Faculty rank: (full-time lecturer, tenured, and tenure-track faculty only): Asst. Prof.

Proposed project name: Anonymous Peer-Reviewed Writing

Total funds requested: (Implementation grants of $3,000-$5,000 will be considered): $4,560.00
III. BUDGET

Provide information on how the funds will be used, modifying the following categories as needed to match your project. (Please note that the budget total must match the “Total funds requested” amount on page one of the application.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget item</th>
<th>Amount requested</th>
<th>Amount committed from other sources</th>
<th>Brief statement of explanation/justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personnel (including course release, consulting support, etc.)</td>
<td>$4,341</td>
<td></td>
<td>Writing experts (e.g., grad students): 2 @ $40/hr. for 50 hours = $4,000; Grad Student Worker: 1 @ $11.36 for 30 hours = $341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits (applicable rates for FY14)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licenses (i.e., software)</td>
<td>$219</td>
<td></td>
<td>DICTION 7 software license</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other resources (be specific)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$4,560</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IV. PROPOSED TIMELINE

Provide a high-level timeline for your investigation (see the Dissemination Agreement section of this application for more details)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project plan complete</td>
<td>15 January 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preliminary findings complete</td>
<td>21 June 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of final findings complete</td>
<td>29 August 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final budget accounting complete</td>
<td>29 August 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course, activity, or tool (re)design complete (design and development support may be provided by the ILI Teaching &amp; Learning Studio)</td>
<td>29 August 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Teaching &amp; Learning Commons entry complete (development facilitated by the ILI Teaching &amp; Learning Studio)</td>
<td>29 August 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in faculty panel event complete (event to be planned and facilitated by the ILI Teaching &amp; Learning Studio)</td>
<td>December 2014 or as needed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note that the timeframe for milestone completion must align with the PLIG schedule.
V. STATEMENT OF UTILITY (TWO PAGES MAXIMUM)

1. Provide an overview of the project you are proposing, including:
   • Project objectives
   • An explanation of the teaching/learning problem(s) it is designed to address
   • An explanation of the significance of the project to student outcomes and/or the student experience.

2. Provide a brief description of how the project integrates with activity already underway at RIT in the priority area and/or how this approach has been successfully used at RIT already.

1a. Project Overview:

**Overall Goal:** Scientific examination of the accuracy and efficacy of the Mobius SLIP social learning platform ([http://www.ctasit.com/](http://www.ctasit.com/)).

Mobius SLIP is a web-based tool that allows students to submit writing samples and receive anonymous critiques from other students in the class. A short overview video may be found at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7V0rr-IBQPg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7V0rr-IBQPg). In short, students submit a writing assignment, and the Mobius SLIP system randomly assigns each student to an anonymous peer group. Students then rank the quality of each submission and provide actionable feedback. Students also rank the quality of the feedback for each assignment. Mobius SLIP assigns a grade based on these rankings, and instructors provide feedback (if desired).

1b. Project Objectives:

A. Analysis of the similarity between the writing score assigned by Mobius SLIP based on peer reviewers and “expert” scores (e.g., faculty or qualified graduate students) of the same writing assignments. In other words, we seek to answer the question, “*How accurate is Mobius SLIP?*”

B. Analysis of student writing skill improvement over the course of the semester. In other words, we seek to answer the question, “*How effective is Mobius SLIP for student writing skill improvement?*”

1c. Teaching / Learning Problems Addressed:

A. **Learning:** Improvement of student writing skills is a top priority at RIT. This system has the potential to offer a creative alternative or compliment to traditional, instructor-driven feedback and evaluation. With Mobius SLIP, students receive multiple critiques on a particular assignment instead of just one. Plus, students practice the skill of critically evaluating others’ work.

B. **Teaching:** Perhaps the most critical challenge for teaching a Writing Intensive (WI) course is the time that it takes to read and critique each student paper. The Mobius SLIP system’s analytic tools make it easier for an instructor to give targeted feedback, either to individuals or to the entire class.

1d. Student Outcomes and Experience:

Ideally, this tool can be used to improve student writing skills across a variety of disciplines.
2. **Integration with Current RIT Activities:**

This activity is a natural fit with the current university-wide initiative on writing. As a member of the Institute Writing Committee, I can see the immediate need for creative solutions to improve writing.

I am using Mobius SLIP in one section of Leadership in Organizations and two sections of Business Ethics this semester (a total of about 100 students). I know that the system itself works well and I can see the potential benefits to students and professors, but I need to find evidence that it actually helps students learn to write better.
VI. STATEMENT OF CREATIVITY (THREE PARAGRAPHS MAXIMUM)

Provide a brief description of how this is a novel approach, or a new application of an existing mode or model of teaching and learning, or represents an entirely new paradigm. (Please note that special consideration will be given to proposals that demonstrate a new use/application of a model, system, or technology already in use at RIT.)

This system utilizes a different approach to writing skills improvement. The traditional model is some form of writing, followed by a single response from a faculty member, followed by revision (maybe), and finally evaluation. The Mobius SLIP system offers “double learning”: the opportunity to write, receive feedback, and improve, as well as the opportunity to critique others’ work.

In my initial use of the tool, I have found that the requirement to critique others’ work is perhaps the most valuable part of the learning process for two reasons. First, as they read others work, students begin to simultaneously critique their own work (e.g., “I do not understand this person’s thesis. Hmmm… I wonder if my own thesis is clear enough?”). Second, students are forced to learn the skill of providing written feedback to others that is accurate, actionable, and written in a tone that is likely to be accepted by the author.

In addition, this tool allows the instructor to leverage his/her time by focusing on providing targeted feedback to those who need it the most. I have been able to identify common issues and discuss them in class. I have also had very rich one-on-one conversations with students.
VII. STATEMENT OF EFFICACY (TWO PAGES MAXIMUM)

Provide a brief description of the experiment/research design, methodology, and methods of data collection you will use to gauge efficacy.

**Data Source:**

I will use data that are being collected currently (Fall 2013) in three different classes. The dataset will include about 100 students, each of whom has 4-5 writing samples.

In addition, I will collect data from about 25 more students in Spring 2014.

**Research Design:**

I will hire two writing experts (likely graduate students from Communication & Media Technology or a similar program). The two raters will be tasked with reviewing and assigning a score to each student writing sample based on a rubric that I will provide. I will provide training in which each rater will score a common set of examples, and then discuss each one to determine the final score for each writing sample. Raters will then score remaining writing samples independently, and meet to discuss scores that vary beyond a pre-defined level. The goal is to provide a single, independent, “true’ score for each student writing sample.

The will then combine these expert rater scores with the peer-generated scores from the Mobius SLIP system. In addition, I will run each writing sample through the DICTION 7 software to determine characteristics of each writing sample.

**Analysis:**

To determine the accuracy of the peer-generated scores in the Mobius SLIP system, I will correlate the Mobius scores with the expert rating scores. I will then perform correlation or covariance-based analysis to further specific the accuracy of the Mobius system.

To determine the efficacy of the Mobius SLIP system for developing writing skills, I will use a within-subjects design with analysis of variance (ANOVA). I am primarily interested in comparing the quality of writing in the first sample to the quality of writing in the last sample.

For both approaches, I can use additional data from the DICTION 7 analysis as covariates for better understanding of the factors that lead to greater accuracy and efficacy.

**Note:** Should these initial studies provide evidence that using Mobius SLIP has an effect on improving writing skills, I would like to plan a follow up study that compares students who use the Mobius SLIP system to those that do not (e.g., perhaps compare two sections of the same class).
Provide a brief description of the experiment/research design, methodology, and methods of data collection you will use to gauge efficacy.
IX. DISSEMINATION PLAN (OPTIONAL)

If applicable, provide details about the journal, conference, show, other external vehicle with strong potential for dissemination of your results. Include supporting documentation such as preliminary interest or acceptance with your application, if available. (Please note that special consideration will be given to proposals that have a defined opportunity for external dissemination, such as an academic journal or professional conference.)

Because these data are from Management classes, there is an opportunity to publish the results in the *Journal of Management Education*. I have both published in and reviewed for this journal, and have high confidence that this type of study would be well-received there. In addition, there is likely an opportunity to present the results at the annual *Organizational Behavior Teaching Conference*.

My primary interest, though, is for direct application to RIT. If this system works, we will have a low-cost ($20 per student per semester), effective tool to improve writing at RIT.
X. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Please address these questions, if needed.

• Will your project require assistance for extensive or unusual media, multimedia, simulation, and/or software development? If so, please explain?

   NO

• All courses offered by RIT must be accessible to students with disabilities, according to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (rit.edu/diversity/title-ix). Is your proposed teaching approach accessible to all students, with reasonable accommodation? If not, please explain.

   YES

• RIT abides by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), which prohibits instructors from making students' identities, course work, and educational records public without their consent (rit.edu/xVzNE). Will any data gathering or sharing for your project raise any FERPA issues? If so, please explain.

   NO
XI. DISSEMINATION AGREEMENT

By completing this grant application, I agree to provide the materials described here, in support of disseminating what is learned from this project to other faculty at RIT.

I also agree to return all/a portion of the funds that I receive for this project to RIT if I fail to complete or provide the materials described here.

- Project plan (including roles and responsibilities, milestone dates, and pertinent project details)
- Overview of preliminary findings (may include experiment/study design, lessons learned, initial data collection, and/or literature review summary)
- Final project summary (including data collection, lessons learned, implications for further study, and which may be in the form of an article abstract, conference presentation outline, or short report)
- Course, activity, or tool (re)design (Materials that will allow other faculty to adopt the mode of model of teaching and learning effectively and efficiently. Design and development to be supported by the ILI Teaching & Learning Studio)
- Faculty Teaching & Learning Commons entry (excerpts from research findings summary, the development of which is facilitated by the ILI Teaching & Learning Studio)
- Participation in faculty panel event (presentation of a brief summary of project and lessons learned and response to faculty questions. Event is planned and facilitated by the ILI Teaching & Learning Studio)
- Final budget accounting (reconciliation of budget provided with your application and the actual project expenses)

By submitting this application, I accept this agreement