

# **TOWSON UNIVERSITY**

## **CRLA TUTOR TRAINING MANUAL**



### **Tutoring & Learning Center**

**Elizabeth Scarbrough, Director**  
**Cook Library, Room 347**  
**410-704-2291**



**Fall 2024 Tutor Version**

## Contents

OVERVIEW & WELCOME.....	4
<b>About the Tutoring &amp; Learning Center</b> .....	4
History of the Tutoring & Learning Center .....	4
<b>Tutoring &amp; Learning Center Philosophy &amp; Mission</b> .....	5
<b>TLC Contacts</b> .....	5
<b>Tutoring Center Locations</b> .....	6
<b>Role of Peer Tutors</b> .....	6
4 Goals of Tutoring.....	6
<b>Tutor Code of Ethics &amp; Confidentiality</b> .....	7
CRLA TUTOR TRAINING & CERTIFICATION .....	8
<b>Verification of Requirements for CRLA Certification</b> .....	8
<b>Monitoring &amp; Achieving Certification Goals</b> .....	9
Training Terms .....	9
EFFECTIVE TUTORING .....	10
<b>Characteristics of Effective Peer Tutors</b> .....	10
<b>Communication Skills</b> .....	11
<b>Active Listening</b> .....	11
<b>Questioning Skills</b> .....	12
Examples of Open-ended Questions.....	12
Examples of Closed-ended Questions.....	12
Examples of Clarifying Questions.....	12
<b>Tutoring Do's &amp; Don'ts</b> .....	13
<b>Additional Tutoring Do's for Online Tutoring</b> .....	14
<b>Video Recording</b> .....	15
CONDUCTING TUTORING SESSIONS .....	16
<b>The Tutoring Cycle</b> .....	16
<b>Recommending Study Strategies</b> .....	20
<b>Tutoring How-to's</b> .....	22
TUTORING STRATEGIES .....	23
<b>Tutoring Strategies for Different Learning Styles: Visual, Auditory, &amp; Kinesthetic</b> .....	23
<b>Facilitating Independent Learning</b> .....	24
<b>Facilitating Critical Thinking</b> .....	26
GROUP TUTORING.....	27
<b>Small Group Tutoring</b> .....	27
1:1 Tutoring & Small Group Tutoring Variations .....	27

<b>Research-Based Strategies for Small Group Tutoring</b> .....	28
<b>Peer-Assisted Learning (PAL) Sessions</b> .....	31
<b>PAL &amp; Small Group Tutoring Do's &amp; Don'ts</b> .....	33
<b>TUTOR POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b> .....	34
<b>Tutor Job Responsibilities</b> .....	34
<b>Tutoring Policies</b> .....	35
<b>Scheduling Policies</b> .....	35
<b>Attendance Policies</b> .....	35
<b>Session Note Policies</b> .....	36
Scheduled Session Note Example:.....	36
Poor Example of a Session Note.....	36
Drop-in Tutoring Session Note Example: .....	37
<b>Tutoring Center Guidelines</b> .....	37
<b>Peer Tutor Job Description &amp; Qualifications</b> .....	37
<b>Tutor Hiring, Payroll, &amp; Salary Procedures</b> .....	39
<b>ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR TUTORS</b> .....	41
<b>Important Links</b> .....	41
<b>Helpful Links</b> .....	41
<b>On-campus Resources</b> .....	41

# OVERVIEW & WELCOME

Welcome to the Tutoring & Learning Center! This manual can be a useful reference source when questions arise about the center's policies, procedures and services.

## About the Tutoring & Learning Center

The Academic Achievement Center is a full-service learning center for Towson University students. We provide free, though limited, tutorial services for TU undergraduates in many lower- and some upper-level courses. The courses selected for tutoring are listed on the TLC's web site for TU students. Although course instructors are the primary resource and we are the secondary resource for students experiencing course difficulties, our goal is to continue to help our students succeed in the classroom.

The TLC oversees tutoring at **four** decentralized locations across campus, as well as tutoring that occurs at the center. Other locations include the Spence Math Lab, Computer Science Lab, Science Lab, and Music Lab. These locations and the TLC, which is centrally located in Cook Library, are here to assist students in achieving their academic goals. In addition to tutoring, the TLC offers:

- Academic Coaching
- Strengths Quest Inventory
- Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI)
- Academic Workshops
- TU's Academic Renewal Program
- Study Group Information



### How do TU Students Access a Tutor?

Students who need tutorial assistance should report to the designated tutoring center to check tutor availability. Appointment-based and small-group tutorial sessions are provided on a first-come, first-served basis and depend upon the availability of a qualified tutor. Interested students can check schedules online or complete a tutor request form. Scheduled tutorial sessions are one hour a week, per course.

### History of the Tutoring & Learning Center

In **September, 1969**, a tutoring center called the Tutorial Services Center was first established on Towson's campus. After merging with the Office of Developmental Education, the center's name was changed to the Tutorial and Testing Services Center.

In **October 2002**, the Academic Achievement Center (AAC) was established. The Academic Achievement Center (AAC) was created in 2003 by a merger of Developmental Education and Tutorial Services under the direction of Terri Massie-Burrell. In **2004** the tutoring program received College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) certification up through level 3. Simultaneously, placement testing progressed from paper and pencil tests to computer adaptive testing using Maplesoft™. TutorTrac™ is now utilized to track tutoring sessions and implementation includes the University Childcare Center for scheduling and tracking visits as well as observations and the Developmental Math Lab for tracking attendance.

In **2017**, the Math Tutoring Lab was relocated to 7800 York Road, room 109. In **2017**, the Computer Science Tutoring Lab moved to 7800 York Road, room 407, and to the 4<sup>th</sup> floor Tech Hub in fall 2019. In **January 2007**, the main Academic Achievement Center moved to Cook Library, room 524. During the **fall 2010** semester, Placement Testing became a part of the Academic Achievement Center again. In **fall 2013**, Liz Scarbrough became the director of the AAC and in **May 2013**, the Math Lab was renamed the Spence Mathematics Lab in memory of a former math tutor and TU grad who passed away in a car accident.

Supplement Instruction began as a pilot in **Fall 2016** for select biology courses. This successful program has now become a staple into the TLC for multiple science courses.

In **July 2018**, the name officially changed to Tutoring and Learning Center.

## **Tutoring & Learning Center Philosophy & Mission**

The underlying philosophy of the TLC is *Advancing Students...Enhancing Learning*. Our mission is to facilitate a community of learners by coordinating high quality tutoring, structured study groups and offering study skills workshops.

## **TLC Contacts**

**Elizabeth Scarbrough**, Director | CK 347D, 410-704-6005 | [escarbro@towson.edu](mailto:escarbro@towson.edu)

**Jeremy Boettinger**, Assistant Director | CK 347G, 410-704-4027 | [jboettinger@towson.edu](mailto:jboettinger@towson.edu)

**Ali Brill**, Business & Liberal Arts Coordinator | CK 347F, 410-704-2292 | [abrill@towson.edu](mailto:abrill@towson.edu)

**Janae Carter**, Academic Skills Coordinator | CK 347E, 410-704-5588 | [jjcarter@towson.edu](mailto:jjcarter@towson.edu)

**Lucienne Karszen**, SI Coordinator | CK 347B | [lkarszen@towson.edu](mailto:lkarszen@towson.edu)

**Angela Simms**, Program Specialist | CK 347C, 410-704-2418 | [asimms@towson.edu](mailto:asimms@towson.edu)

**Sandrine Tchatie-Leudeu**, Mathematics Coordinator/Technology Learning Specialist  
CK 347H, 410-704-3283 | [stchatieleudeu@towson.edu](mailto:stchatieleudeu@towson.edu)

# Tutoring Center Locations

## **Business, Economics, and Liberal Arts**

CK 347 | 410-704-2292

Coordinator: Ali Brill

## **Computer Science Lab**

YR 407 | 410-704-2424

Coordinator: Kyle Cunningham

## **Natural Sciences Lab**

SC 3301 R | 410-704-3054

Coordinator: Siamak Salmasi

## **Music Lab**

CFA 2087

Coordinator: Christopher Dillon

## **Spence Mathematics Lab**

YR 109 | 410-704-3283

Coordinator: Sandrine Tchatie-Leudeu

## **Role of Peer Tutors**

A peer tutor is an academically accomplished student leader who represents the Tutoring & Learning Center, maintains professional and appropriate conduct during work hours, respects and adheres to the TLC policies and procedures presented in this Tutor Manual as well as the content covered in tutor training.

Peer tutors are student employees of Towson University. **We ask all tutors to focus on the positive aspects of the learning experience and assist students by:**

- 1) Providing unparalleled service to students seeking academic guidance and assistance
- 2) Serving as a role model to students by offering a student's perspective on learning and strategies for academic success
- 3) Explaining the steps taken to understand how to learn the information and concepts
- 4) Supporting tutees' insight into the thinking process to promote independent learning
- 5) Building students' confidence as they integrate effective learning and study strategies
- 6) Participating in training opportunities and reaching Level 1 certification within their first 2 semesters
- 7) Applying knowledge from tutor training into tutor sessions

## **4 Goals of Tutoring**

- 1) Promote independence in learning
- 2) Provide personalized instruction
- 3) Facilitate tutee insights into learning & the learning process
- 4) Respect individual differences

# Tutor Code of Ethics & Confidentiality

Ethics are standards of conduct based on shared values and principles. A code of ethics and confidentiality helps tutors be effective and prepares them to develop appropriate responses to situations before they occur. Following a universal code of ethics is essential to delivering successful tutorial services to all students as well as to fulfilling our goal of enhancing learning and advancing students. **The Code of Ethics & Confidentiality, shared by all tutors and employees across all locations, is as follows:**

1. My purpose is to help students learn how to learn, attaining independence – not give answers. Both the student and I will understand that my tutor role is not to do the student's work.
2. I will remain proficient and knowledgeable in the course areas that I tutor.
3. I agree to abide by the college's policies on academic honesty. I will not go beyond the scope of tutoring or complete graded work, which is the responsibility of the student. If approached, I will refuse and report this situation to the Tutoring Coordinator.
4. Each student deserves my total attention.
5. The language my student and I share must be mutually understandable at all times.
6. I may not be able to answer every question, but will help the student with identifying an appropriate resource and continue my learning to advance my knowledge in those areas.
7. I will provide honest feedback and encouragement, recognizing each student's potential and personal dignity without empty flattery or false hope.
8. I will strive for a mutual relationship of openness, honesty, respect, and patience as I tutor.
9. I will not discriminate on the basis of creed, color, race, national origin, age, socioeconomic status, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identify.
10. I will show respect for the cultural background and personal values of other students. I will not impose my personal values, beliefs, and/or lifestyle on the student during the tutoring session.
11. I will be open to feedback from the student and the Tutoring Coordinator regarding my performance so that I may grow in my capacity to tutor.
12. I will adhere to the policies and guidelines of the Tutoring & Learning Center, including maintaining accurate records and my tutoring schedule.
13. I understand that my relationship to the student is professional and not personal.
14. I will treat the information regarding students as confidential. If I have any concerns, I can share this information with my Tutor Coordinator.

# CRLA TUTOR TRAINING & CERTIFICATION

The Tutoring & Learning Center has been awarded CRLA International Tutor Certification since May 2004. The *College Reading and Learning Association's* (CRLA) International Tutor Certification Program (ITCP) certifies college and university tutor programs throughout the United States and Canada. The ITCP issues three levels of certification: regular (level 1), advanced (level 2), and master (level 3). Only 38% of the 671 certified programs have level 3 certification. The TLC maintains a level 3 certification.

The Tutoring & Learning Center plans to take the appropriate actions in order to maintain certification, therefore accurate recordkeeping is imperative. The usage of TutorTrac will ease the time consuming task of generating reports. It is of utmost importance to master the navigation of TutorTrac to ensure effective scheduling and log in/out procedures.

## Verification of Requirements for CRLA Certification

All new tutors start training in the Level 1 training topics and then progress to Level 2 and Level 3. Each certification level contains specific training topics for tutors. Examples of Level 1 training topics include: Definition of Tutoring/Tutor Responsibilities, Tutoring Dos & Don'ts, Learning Styles of Adult Learners, Goal-Setting & Planning, and Communication Skills. When hired, tutors begin working towards achieving level 1 certification. **All tutors must achieve level 1 tutor training within their first year of tutoring.** Tutors who do not get 25 tutoring hours during their first year of tutoring are an exception.

Moving from level to level requires 10 training hours and 25 hours of actual tutoring (see table below for detailed information). **This is why it's so important that tutors and tutees use TutorTrac and tutees choose the right tutor when signing out of TutorTrac.**

**All tutors are REQUIRED to attend a mandatory training at the start of each semester.**

	<b>10 <u>Training</u> Hours Required</b>	<b>Required <u>Tutoring</u> Hours*</b>
<b>Level 1</b>	-6 hours must be live, face-to-face trainings  -Training in <b>8 or more Level 1 topics</b>	<b>25 hours</b> <i>Tutoring hours must consist of tutoring through the TLC</i>
<b>Level 2</b>	-4 hours must be live, face-to-face trainings  -Training in <b>4 or more Level 2 topics</b>	<b>50 hours</b> <i>25 hours must be obtained <u>after</u> achieving Level 1 Certification</i>
<b>Level 3</b>	-2 hours must be live, face-to-face trainings  -Training in <b>4 or more Level 3 topics</b>	<b>75 hours</b> <i>25 hours must be completed <u>after</u> achieving Level 2 Certification</i>

\*tutoring hours consist of actual work hours with students present for live tutoring

*Example:* A tutor completes level 1 certification in the spring semester and thus receives her pay raise. In the fall, she:

- Attends the 5-hour mandatory training
- Attends a 1-hour developmental training
- Completes 4-hours' worth of self-directed, developmental trainings in level 2 topics.
- Has a total of 20 tutoring hours since receiving Level 1 certification.

As a result, she needs 5 more tutoring hours to achieve her goal of level 2.



## Monitoring & Achieving Certification Goals

Each CRLA level has a training checklist to help tutors create and achieve their certification goals. These checklists can be found on the tutor community in Blackboard. Tutors receive a level-specific training checklist upon being hired.

- Level 1 Tutor Training - Fundamentals Action Plan
- Level 2 Tutor Training - Advanced Action Plan
- Level 3 Tutor Training - Specialized Action Plan

Tutors and TLC staff use these documents to manage and track progress towards certification. It is expected that tutors regularly check their training hours and tutoring hours to identify when they achieve their certification goal. All hours must be verified by Tabatha Beck, Learning Specialist.

**A special recognition takes place each year at the Tutor Awards Ceremony to recognize the accomplishments of tutors changing levels.**

## Training Terms

**Developmental Training:** workshops, seminars, and self-directed trainings offered on an ongoing basis throughout the academic year. They cover certain topics in each level and include both live and non-live activities. Tutors can access non-live developmental trainings on Blackboard at any time to accumulate training hours.

**Live Training:** Live trainings are face-to-face workshops, seminars, or projects led by an instructor.

**Mandatory Training:** This face-to-face training occurs once a semester and attendance is required.

**Self-Directed Training:** Non-live trainings completed by tutors independently. They are often comprised of readings, videos, and reflection questions. The majority of self-directed trainings can be completed in the comfort of tutors' homes.

# EFFECTIVE TUTORING

Effective tutors are also effective employees meaning that they understand and follow the responsibilities of their job. A detailed explanation of the TLC policies and procedures for tutors can be found in the **Tutor Policies and Procedures** section of this training manual.

## Characteristics of Effective Peer Tutors

### Tutors are expected to be:

- Knowledgeable of course material
- Reliable, committed and punctual
- Honest if you do not know the answer
- Patient, considerate, and self-aware
- Observant and attentive to tutees response to tutoring approaches and how they learn
- Active listeners
- Knowledgeable of tutees' strengths and weaknesses
- Encouraging and enthusiastic tutors
- Effective communicators
- Professional, confident and humble
- Creative and dedicated to promoting an active, enjoyable learning experience
- Respectful of tutees' privacy and difference of ethnicity and opinions
- Open-minded and non-judgmental
- Supportive of tutees' efforts and their accomplishments
- Facilitators of learning



# Communication Skills

Tutoring requires the ability to communicate effectively. Here are some tips to being an effective communicator when tutoring:

- Slow down when explaining difficult material
- Use open-ended questions to identify the task(s)
- Be patient and emphasize the material when tutees are confused
- Use words that promote discussions, such as “Tell me more,” “And?”
- Pace your explanations so that tutees can participate
- Make sure that your tutees understand before you move on
- Show patience by waiting for responses after asking questions
- Break complex concepts or problems into parts
- Move from simple to complex
- Respect all questions or responses by not interrupting answers or changing the subject (i.e., *what do you think? What ideas do you have about that? What has been your experience?*)
- Provide specific statements that positively reinforce things the tutee is doing accurately and/or things the tutee is doing that contributes to academic success
- Check for evidence of understanding the (1) content & (2) the thinking process by paying attention to what the tutee is saying and asking clarifying, closed, & open-ended questions

## Active Listening

One of the key components of being a good communicator is active listening. Here are some tips for practicing active listening:



- Concentrate on what your tutees are saying.
- Look at your tutees when they are speaking and maintain good eye contact.
- Repeat one or two key words or phrases to let the tutees know that you are listening.
- Be aware of facial expressions and use positive body language. Respond appropriately to tutees with a nod or smile; sit up straight or lean towards tutee; avoid distracting behavior such as fidgeting, tapping your pen, or doodling on paper.
- **Recognize** what the tutee is saying, **request** more information (if necessary), & **restate** what the tutee said to check for understanding.

# Questioning Skills

Asking questions is an essential tutor skill. Remember, students, not the tutor, should be doing most of the talking. The majority of questions posed in a tutoring session should be open-ended. Open-ended questions provide students with space to talk about what they are learning and encourage critical thinking and learning.

Close-ended questions, which can be answered with a few words or less, are only effective when you want quick information, a commitment from the student, or to clarify the completion of a task.

## Ask Questions to:

- Get information
- Clarify
- Help students think things through
- Encourage participation & critical thinking
- Create or maintain a relationship
- Check your own understanding



As always, if you ask open-ended questions you give the power to the tutee, this reinforces his independence from you.

## Examples of Open-ended Questions

- To address this problem, what might we first need to know?
- How can we find out?
- How can you break this concept/problem down?
- What other information do you need?
- What would be an example?
- How do you know....?
- What led you to that belief?
- How would you describe....?
- What step(s) did you take to get from \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_?
- What can you use to find out?

## Examples of Closed-ended Questions

- Did the instructor give the definition of homeostasis in your notes?
- Is that clear?
- Did you look in your book?
- Do you want to schedule a second session?
- Would you like me to give you a handout on study skills?

## Examples of Clarifying Questions

- What do you mean by \_\_\_\_\_?
- How does \_\_\_\_\_ relate to \_\_\_\_\_?
- What do you think is the main issue here?
- How can you explain that in your own words?
- Would this be an example: \_\_\_\_\_?

## Questions to Check your Understanding of what the Tutee is Saying:

- What I hear you saying is.....Is that right?
- Help me understand what you mean by....

# Tutoring Do's & Don'ts

## Tutoring Do's

- Make direct eye contact with the student
- Demonstrate interest & energy through positive gestures, body position, & head nods
- Let students talk & verbalize their ideas; students should be taking about 75-80% of the time
- Ask open-ended questions
- Encourage participation
- Include appropriate forms of humor to create a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere
- Approach each session genuinely and with authenticity
- Model effective study habits
- Display concern
- Paraphrase what the student says to ensure *your* understanding
- Encourage students to become independent learners by creating a fun, hands-on session
- Use positive reinforcement and provide specific feedback on what the student is doing well
- Build motivation and self-confidence by suggesting small goals that tutees can easily achieve
- Assist tutees in realizing their full potential without threat or embarrassment
- Demonstrate knowledge of the subject(s) being tutored and the ability to facilitate tutees understanding of the subject
- Provide accurate information---not fraudulent material
- Demonstrate the ability to provide individualized instructional support
- Use and suggest various instructional strategies and techniques that may be helpful in assisting tutees to master course and personal objectives

## Tutoring Don'ts

- Don't finish a student's sentence
- Don't interrupt – even if a student is explaining something and its incorrect
- Don't make empty promises
- Don't text or have your phone on the table
- Don't show lack of interest
- Don't talk more than the student and avoid using acronyms
- Put down a professor
- Don't be biased, “talk down” or belittle tutees
- Don't advise students on dropping courses: refer students to their academic advisors
- Don't discuss your tutees' problems with other students or with their instructors without the tutees' permission
- Don't get frustrated or mad at struggling students. If they are beyond your capabilities to help, talk with an TLC staff member or suggest the student sign up with a different tutor or speaks to your supervisor
- Don't criticize or be quick to judge, make stereotypes of character, ability & intelligence
- Don't assume the role and responsibilities of the instructor – tutors are not professors!
- Don't be afraid to ask for help



## ***YOU HAVE RIGHTS ACCOMPANYING YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES***

You are not expected to take abuse, tolerate disruptive or threatening behavior, or to deal with personal or psychological problems, which may arise during the tutoring sessions. Remember, **tutors are not professors** so you are not expected to know all the answers to every question all the time. Tutoring is a two-way street and therefore, tutors are not expected to be miracle workers. If you have any problems along these lines, see the TLC director.

# Additional Tutoring Do's for Online Tutoring

## 1. **Build rapport**

Having your video on helps the students get to know you better and build connection. Call on the students by name. Break the ice by allowing time for getting to know each other and set goals for the session.

## 2. **Mute your speaker if you're typing**

When you are typing notes, it can sound incredibly loud to anyone else in the session and can result in zooming in on you, instead of the person who is talking.

## 3. **Manage nonverbal communication**

Monitor your students' engagement and make eye contact, by looking at the camera. Provide opportunities for students to reflect and express themselves using "raise hand" or appropriate emojis or chat feature.

## 4. **Be there five minutes early**

Give yourself time to log in and account for any technical difficulties.

## 5. **Be fully present**

Close other browser windows and use the screen that the meeting is on. Don't look down at your phone or your watch during the session. Treat it as you would an in-person session. Set a timer if need to assist you with keeping track of time.

## 6. **Work out tech issues ahead of time**

If you need headphones for the session, have them handy before it starts. If your laptop battery is nearly dead, then have it plugged in and ready to go. Take care of any technical concerns before the session.

## 7. **Be fully dressed**

Don't sit down for a meeting in just a nice shirt but sloppy bottoms. Sometimes you need to stand up, or you might need to walk around in front of the camera for an unexpected reason. Follow the guidelines for appropriate dress.

## 8. **Make sure your background is professional**

Turn on your camera during a non-meeting time. Assess your background. Does it look professional? Is there a bunch of clutter? Make sure that the background behind you sends the right message. To maintain a professional environment, consider using a virtual background or identifying an area of your space that will be effective.

## 9. **Tell everyone else in your home that you'll be in a teleconference**

Let everyone in your household know in advance that you will be in a meeting so that you can have quiet in the background. This is proper etiquette for you and for the participants.

## 10. **Think twice before you write**

Are you letting the student lead the session? Ask them for what to write next. Be mindful of what you write, it is more difficult to correct something you have written than what you have said.

## 11. **Handling quiet moments**

In online sessions, it may be challenging to know what the student is doing or thinking. Allow time for the student to respond and consider rephrasing your question or asking what they are thinking.

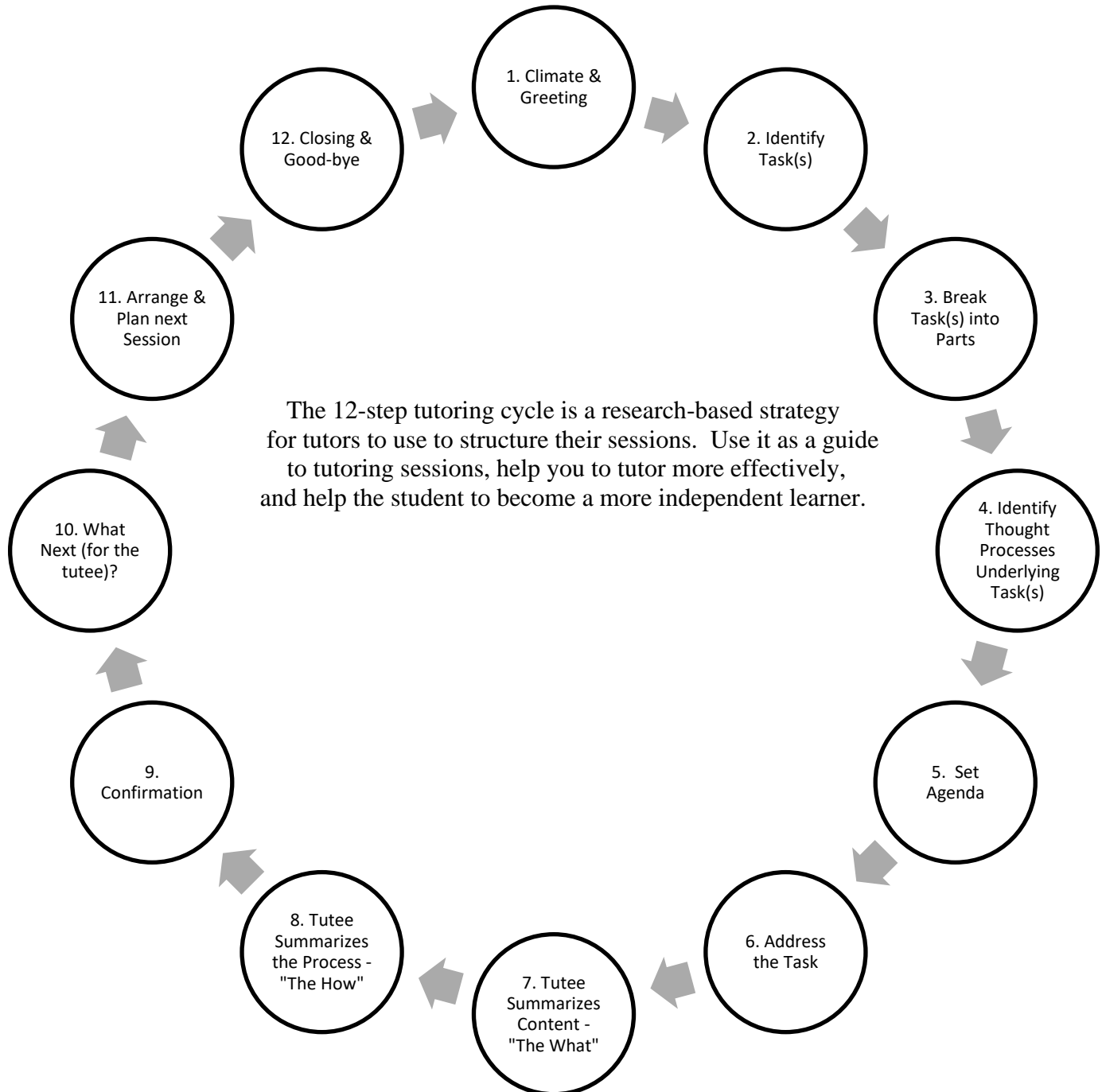
**12. Computer-based information**

## **Video Recording**

Many online tutoring tools provide the option for recording. However, at this time, recording is not permitted because of security and privacy of tutoring participants unless approved and directed by your coordinator.

# CONDUCTING TUTORING SESSIONS

## The Tutoring Cycle





# The 12-Step Tutoring Cycle

## **Step 1: Climate Setting & Greeting**

Consider: *How will you promote independent thinking & behavior from the beginning?*

The physical environment and arrangement of chairs and tables and warmth of the greeting are important to setting a positive tone conducive to learning. Introduce yourself to the tutee and take a few minutes of general conversation to allow you and the tutee to feel comfortable with each other.

Take time before a student comes to:

- Ensure tables are clean and neat.
- Arrange seating and notes in a way that encourages students to interact, use supplies (dry-erase markers, paper/pen, etc.), and see white boards and other visual aids.

The seating arrangement will help determine how much participation you can expect from the tutee(s). Remember, all tools you are using (pencils, pens, chalkboard, etc.) should be in the hands of the tutee(s).

## **Step 2: Identify Task(s)**

In this step, the session begins to develop a focus and the tutee is doing the focusing. Let tutees direct your attention to their needs rather than the other way around. This keeps them in charge of their learning. Most tutees, when given the opportunity, will voluntarily state what it is they wish to work on. However in some instances, the tutee will need guidance from tutors in order to develop the focus for the session. Guide tutees by asking open-ended/follow-up questions.

Once a tutee specifies the task, check for understanding by using the 3 R's –

- **Recognize the task(s) the tutee wants to focus on**
- **Request more information by asking questions (if necessary)**
- **Restate the task(s) the tutee wants to work on to clarify**

## **Step 3: Break the Task(s) Into Parts**

Most task(s) that a tutee brings to a session have several parts or a sequence of parts. Let the tutee break the task(s) into parts. For example, a student who needs help with understanding mitosis for biology can be guided to think about the full scope or nature of the concept as a sequence of ideas. Thus, tutors ask questions and collaborate with students to help them break complex concepts/problems into simpler steps/parts.

## **Step 4: Identify Thought Processes Underlying the Task(s)**

Consider: **What questions will you ask to identify how the tutee thinks the task(s) should be approached?**

In this step, the tutor's objective is to identify how the tutee will approach the task by asking her/him to explain what they learned about it in class. Identifying the tutee's thought process is one of the most critical steps to a student developing skills for learning/studying independently. If you always explain the information to the student, how will the student learn how to get information from the course materials? If tutees are unsure how to approach the task, help them learn how to learn ways to approach new or difficult tasks by encouraging them to use resources such as textbooks, handouts, lecture notes, and completed assignments. Directing students' attention to other resources shows them that the information they need is available. Remember, tutors are not the source of information. Don't be an "Answer Fairy" who just provides answers.

### **Step 5: Set the Agenda**

Consider: *How will you give the tutee the opportunity to structure the session?*

Working with an agenda role-models & teaches goal-setting and time management strategies.

Work together to set the learning agenda by creating a general plan – determine what part of the task you will start with based on the time you have to complete the task & focus of the tutee.

Consider asking, “What should we work on first?” “We have 30 minutes, how do you want to use them?”

### **Step 6: Address the Task**

In this step you and the tutee follow the learning agenda. Allow sufficient wait time (count to 120s) for the tutee to speak, demonstrate, and explain. Again, remember that the source of information is the course of material. Help tutees learn from the materials by encouraging them to read, write, explain, demonstrate, calculate, and/or describe the information to solve and eventually complete the learning task. **Utilize visuals, practice problems, and be creative in your tutoring method.**

### **Step 7: Student Summarizes Content – “The What” (Light Bulb & Ah-ha Moment)**

Consider: *How will you assess students’ understanding of the content?*

This is where the tutee explains and/or demonstrates the information just learned, as she/he understands it. The process of explaining/summarizing is also a first step to retaining the information and moving it from short-term memory to long-term.

Encourage tutees to demonstrate their understanding by asking them to:

- Work through a problem you have created
- Provide concrete examples of the information
- Explain it in their own words

Let the student’s explanation run its course without interruption even if you hear a misstatement or a gap to give tutee an opportunity to self-correct. This helps both of you evaluate the accuracy and the completeness of her/his understanding. After summarizing the content, if the tutee lacks complete understanding of the material or has a gap in her/his explanation: (1) pose open-ended questions, (2) redirect the student back to the source of information, and/or (3) return to *Addressing the Task*. Offer a clear explanation **only** after completing all 3 options.

### **Step 8: Student Summarizes the Underlying Process – “The How”**

Consider: *How will you encourage the tutee to summarize the learning (thinking) process used to successfully complete the task?* Encourage the tutee to explain how to do the type of task that was worked on. Consider asking:

- What steps did you take to solve the problem?
- Explain to me the process you used to complete the task
- How might you explain to someone else how to approach this task?
- How did you come to a better understanding of this concept?

### **Step 9: Confirmation**

Consider: *How will you let the tutee know that what she/he learned is accurate & appropriate?*

Once the tutee has explained the content and the thinking (process) that underlies the task, skillful tutors will offer positive reinforcement. Verbalize concise statements that identify

specific accomplishments to help the tutee know what to keep doing. For example, “*You did a great job breaking down the different steps to that problem. Be sure to use that approach when you work on your homework assignments.*” Place value on the work not necessarily the tutee as a person. Encourage tutees to also evaluate themselves by asking them questions about their progress and what they think they did well today. This encourages the student to look to oneself for approval and responsibility---not to you, the tutor.

### **Step 10: What’s next (for the tutee)?**

Consider: *How do you get the tutee to plan for future learning tasks?*

How that you’ve confirmed your tutee’s understanding, help the tutee plan for future learning situations by reviewing what will be covered next in class. Aim to reinforce the connection between what was previously learned in class, in the tutor session, and what is being learned when studying independently. Connect the processes used in the session to how he/she can approach it by asking, “*What will you do next time you encounter this type of task?*”

### **Step 11: Arrange & Plan the next session**

Set a time and place for the next tutoring session. Your particular tutoring format, i.e. setting the appointment or walk-in, will dictate the need for scheduling. Encourage tutees to get out their syllabus to see when the next tutoring session might be needed. This promotes the notations of time management, planning, and also, more tutee involvement (preparedness) in the next tutoring session. *Tip: create your own 3x5 “availability” handout to pass out to students at the end of a session.*

### **Step 12: Closing & Good-bye**

Close the tutoring session on a positive note and give a sincere good-bye. Provide a positive statement about what was accomplished to encourage all tutees to leave feeling a sense of accomplishment, pride, and motivation. Also aim to remind tutees of specific strategies or skills to practice and reinforce the use of resources. **After tutees leave, tutors should start writing their session notes.**

Abridged from the Master Tutor Ross B. MacDonald (1994) MacDonald, R. B. (1994). *The Master Tutor*. Willamsville, New York: The Cambridge Study Skill Institute for the Tutoring & Learning Center @2013

---

## Recommending Study Strategies

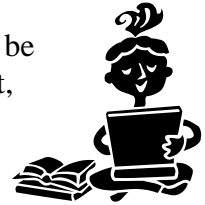


Working with students gives tutors the opportunity to model, practice, and recommend study strategies to enhance students' academic success. The following strategies are examples of some quick techniques you can give students to help them strengthen their learning methods.

### Encourage students to:

<b>Attention &amp; Concentration Strategies</b>	<b>Strategies for Memory</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sit near the front of the class.</li> <li>• Take a 2-4 min. study break</li> <li>• Take notes to maintain attention.</li> <li>• Study in a quiet place.</li> <li>• Remove electronic distractions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study notes after each class.</li> <li>• Study in a rhythm to memorize a list.</li> <li>• Make flashcards with a key word on the front &amp; the explanation on the back.</li> </ul>
<b>Listening &amp; Note-Taking Strategies</b>	<b>Strategies for Test Preparation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen for verbal clues often indicate a key point. (The professor may say, “The first point is...”)</li> <li>• Categorize a lecture into parts. (The professor may say there were five causes of a certain event, indicating five major topics in your notes.)</li> <li>• Underline key terms, star main points, and use different color inks. Be consistent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure they know what the test will cover.</li> <li>• Complete study guide (if provided)</li> <li>• Create a plan for studying</li> <li>• Start studying early (at least 2 weeks )</li> <li>• Clarify what you know and don't know</li> <li>• Complete practice questions and/or problems</li> </ul>
<b>Textbook Reading Strategies</b>	<b>Strategies for Taking Tests</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read study questions before they read the text, in order to gain a purpose for reading.</li> <li>• Identify &amp; use all study aids in the book (table of contents, index, appendix, tables, etc.).</li> <li>• Meet with an academic coach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use relaxation techniques prior to the test. (For example, mediation, deep breathing.)</li> <li>• Read all directions carefully.</li> <li>• Check their answers.</li> <li>• Look over the entire exam before they start and answer questions they know first.</li> </ul>
<b>Planning &amp; Organization Strategies</b>	<b>Strategies for Using Resources (text, library)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep a calendar with daily responsibilities.</li> <li>• Write assignments &amp; due dates in daily planner and on a calendar.</li> <li>• Prioritize important items - List items that you have to do in order of their importance.</li> <li>• Break a large project into smaller steps and set deadlines for each step.</li> <li>• Create post-it note reminders &amp; put in house</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend TLC Workshops</li> <li>• Meet with an Academic Coach</li> <li>• Attend professor office hours</li> <li>• Seek assistance from reference librarians</li> <li>• Create a course study group at the TLC</li> </ul>

- **Review the Notes:** During tutoring sessions, use tutees' in-class notes as a resource. Help tutees determine if their notes are organized in a way that will help or hinder their success. Examples of questions to use:
  - How can you use your notes to review material and/or prepare for exams?
  - How does the professor indicate what's important to know? How do you indicate this when taking notes?
- **Note-Taking Strategies:** Make suggestions to tutees, such as notes should be reviewed and edited, incomplete areas can be filled in from reading the text, key points can be highlighted, and extra definitions inserted--if necessary. Refer tutees to Note-Taking workshop



## Reviewing the Textbook

You will find that some tutees rarely open textbooks and don't know how to use them to their advantage. Similar to using tutee notes, use textbooks as a resource for information. **Centers have textbooks available for tutors to use too – in case tutees don't have them.** Examples of questions to use to encourage tutees to review and use the textbook when learning independently:

- How does content from a previous chapter relate to the next chapter?
- Compare your lecture notes to the text. How is the textbook different from or similar to the lecture?

### Strategies:

- Discuss the process of previewing and reviewing chapters
- Talk about the benefits of taking chapter notes vs. highlighting/marking textbooks.
- Whenever possible, refer tutees to their textbooks for information and answers to questions
- Give them a tour of their text and show them the benefits of how the text is formatted and how to use the chapter summaries, captions, charts and graphs to their advantage
- Try to help them make connections from chapter to chapter
- Refer tutees to Reading and Understanding Workshop



# Tutoring How-to's

## **How to Facilitate Learning:**

- Maintain the main objective of a tutoring session which is to help the tutees learn how to learn the content area of the problem(s) they are experiencing in the course
- Utilize independent learning techniques
- Guide tutees to discover the answers or solutions on their own
- Use positive reinforcements to help tutees have a sense of accomplishment & personal incentive to do more

## **How to Facilitate Support in the Learning Process:**

- Provide relevant solutions to course problems
- Suggest various study skills/independent learning strategies and techniques that may be helpful in assisting tutees to master course work and personal objectives
- Recommend resources or study strategies (i.e., go to the library to find out more about a particular topic, outlining textbook chapters, etc.)
- Build motivation & self-confidence by suggesting small goals that tutees can achieve
- Refer tutees to course objectives

## **How to respond when you don't know the answer:**

- "I'm not sure of that. I want you to be successful so let's find out by"...asking another tutor, asking a coordinator, looking in the text, researching online, etc.

# TUTORING STRATEGIES

## Tutoring Strategies for Different Learning Styles: Visual, Auditory, & Kinesthetic

Understanding the different learning styles will help tutors deliver tutoring sessions more effectively. Students often have a primary and secondary learning style. Aim to integrate strategies that satisfy all learning styles.

The TLC has several learning style inventories in case tutees want to know more about their learning style. Pick one up after tackling the problem tutees bring to your session or refer them to the center!

### Strategies for Tutoring Visual Learners

- Encourage visual learners to take notes during the tutoring session.
- Use a dry-erase board, Smart Board, or paper to explain concepts & work through problems.
- Offer students the option to take home any visuals created during the session.
- Refer to textbook at appropriate times (text, diagrams, charts, pictures).
- Provide opportunities for students to write explanations of course concepts and/or draw diagrams.
- Encourage students to make flash cards. Writing and viewing the cards increases understanding.



### Strategies for Tutoring Kinesthetic Learners

- Provide student opportunities to stand & write on whiteboard
- Point to concepts as you explain and/or reference them
- Encourage kinesthetic learners to write things down when discussing task(s)
- Find & use other books/resources (library, center, & web) that clarify course material
- Create handwritten models/charts that demonstrate key concepts
- Together, create one flashcard of what was covered in session – student can use when studying
- Be open to & encourage getting up to stretch or take a walk

### Strategies for Tutoring Auditory Learners

- Explain material to your tutee as if you were a tutor.
- Read explanations out loud (tutees & tutors)
- Encourage tutees to make audiotapes and review them while driving, jogging, etc.
- Speak out loud and reason through a solution out loud when learning new information.
- Promote the use of study groups
- Promote the use of songs/rhymes to remember course facts, dates, names, etc.
- Write out, in sentence form, any sequence of steps that must be learned, then read aloud
- After learning new information, have tutees get in pairs and take 1-2 minutes to discuss what they just learned ( in 1:1 sessions, have the tutee discuss it with a staff member, you, other tutor, or person)



## Facilitating Independent Learning

**Independent learners** take the initiative for their own acquisition of knowledge or skills.

Facilitating independent learning is a primary goal of tutors. Here are some ways tutors can help students effectively learn how to learn on their own.

### Predicting Test Questions

Predicting exam questions not only prepares tutees for tests, but it also acts as a method for reviewing and studying the material. Here are ways tutors facilitate predicting test questions:

- Help tutees to learn how to predict test questions by using their notes, textbooks and homework.
- Let tutees develop their own questions and quiz them. Encourage them to find old exams and practice with them (Some texts offer study guides and can be most useful in preparing for exams.)
- Encourage tutees to meet with their professors several days in advance of a test. (Sometimes professors may subtly direct students to study the appropriate material by how they answer questions, give extra information and sometimes say, “And don’t forget to review....”)
- Refer tutees to Test-Taking and/or Preparation for Finals Week TLC Workshops

### Working on Vocabulary and Terminology

Tutors bring knowledge of how to study vocabulary and terminology. Help tutees learn how to study by integrating these strategies into the tutoring session:

- Use flash cards or develop other memory games to help students learn difficult concepts, vocabulary, etc.
- Share your ideas when working on vocabulary and be sure tutees can give the definition in their own words by applying the information to a problem.
- Ask them definitions and see if they can name the term in their own words instead of repeating “the textbook version.” This helps you to determine whether they really do understand the material.
- **Focused Listing:** Have tutees focus on a single important term, name or concept and direct them to list several ideas that are closely related to that “focus point.” This helps tutees to see the connections of the ideas.
- **Empty Outlines:** Have tutees use their lecture notes and textbook to complete the outline. This helps tutees recall and organize the main points of a lesson within an appropriate knowledge structure, making retention more likely. It also provides a model for organization that could be used with other material.
- **Memory Matrix/Categorizing Grid:** The matrix is a two-dimensional rectangle divided into rows and columns used to organize information and illustrate relationships. For the matrix, the tutor provides the rows, columns, headings and a list of contents. The tutee fills the matrix with the individual items. This allows an evaluation of the tutees’ “sorting rules.” Tutees discuss the rules that they used in sorting the information.
- **Pro and Con Grid:** This activity provides important information and analysis of information.



- **One-Sentence Summary:** Ask tutees to synthesize an entire lecture into a single informative, grammatical, and long summary sentence.
- **Word Journal:** First, ask tutees to summarize a section of a chapter into a single word. Second, ask tutees to write a paragraph or explain why s/he chose that word. This helps tutees to write highly condensed abstracts and to “chunk” large amounts of information in long-term memory.
- **Problem-Recognition Tasks:** Have tutees recognize and identify the particular type of problem each example represents.
- **What’s the Principle?** Have tutees associate specific problems with the general principles used to solve them. This focus is on the general principle and not the precise individual steps taken to solve the problem.
- **Documented Problem Solutions:** Ask tutees to identify the specific steps taken to solve the problem.
- **Application Cards:** After tutees have dealt with an important principle, generalization, theory or procedure, ask them to write down on index cards (or note paper) at least one possible, real-world application for what they have learned. This helps them to connect newly learned concepts with prior knowledge and increase relevance of what they are learning.
- **Student Generated Test Questions:** Ask tutees to generate possible examination questions. The questions should start with, what are the factors? What contributed to...? What are the causes and effects? Why...? How.....? Tutees begin to understand how well they can answer the questions that they have posed and study for examinations in a proactive manner.
- **Use models, pictures and graphs to help tutees see or visualize “what is happening.”**  
- Ask them to draw their own picture of what something means to them. For example, in Biology, ask tutees to draw pictures of photosynthesis.

## Facilitating Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is an important part in the learning process. Here are some general strategies for promoting critical thinking in the tutoring session:

- 1) Ask tutees to explain what they are doing on a particular task or assignment
- 2) Encourage tutees to articulate the problem/difficulty they are experiencing by:
  - a. encouraging and helping tutees talk through solutions to problems and look for more than one answer,
  - b. drawing knowledge from tutees by framing questions specifically to elicit the desired kind of thinking (i.e., Why.....? How.....? What are the factors? What contributes to.....? What is the cause and effect?)
  - d. encouraging specific responses & viewpoints (i.e., Can you be more specific? Why do you think that? What exactly do you mean by that?),
  - e. encouraging the tutees to see the problem, situation or concept from a different viewpoint,
  - f. having the tutees analyze their own work, looking for patterns in their thinking and mistakes,
  - g. paying attention to the tutees in the process of your probing questions; if the tutees become frustrated or seem lost, provide guidance,
  - h. providing challenging tasks to help tutees better understand course material.

# GROUP TUTORING

## Small Group Tutoring

Individual tutoring is when a tutor works 1:1 with a tutee. Small group tutoring often occurs in drop-in tutoring center locations and consists of small groups of 2-4 students. (Small group tutoring is not to be confused with *Peer-Assisted Learning* (PAL) sessions, discussed later in this manual). **Group tutoring is most effective when all tutees are actively involved in the learning process. Therefore, participation is key. Remember, tutors should only be talking for 20-25% of a session.**



### 1:1 Tutoring & Small Group Tutoring Variations

	<b>1:1 Tutoring Session</b>	<b>Group Session</b>
<b>Time</b>	Ample time is often available to allow the tutee to ask questions	Time is restricted; therefore, tutors must remain aware of time & manage it effectively
<b>Introduction/Closing</b>	Introduce yourself to the tutee and take a few minutes of general conversation to allow you and the tutee to feel comfortable with each other.	As tutees drop in to your session, show a welcoming attitude & verbally introduce yourself without interrupting the task at hand; if at a stopping point, ask tutees to introduce themselves to one another.
<b>Instructional Approach</b>	Tutee gets instruction at her/his pace and level of understanding	Tutors must consider multiple abilities, backgrounds, & levels of understanding to accurately pace the session & tutor effectively
<b>Participation</b>	Tutee is often required to answer questions, communicate, & be actively involved	Non-participation of some tutees can occur – it is the tutor’s job to ensure this doesn’t happen
<b>Tutoring Session Goals/Objectives</b>	The goals/objectives are clearly established based on one tutee’s needs	Create general goals to address all tutees’ needs & create specific objectives based on each tutee’s needs

## Research-Based Strategies for Small Group Tutoring

Ross MacDonald (1993) did research on small group tutoring techniques. In interviewing and observing experienced tutors, he developed categories related to effective group tutoring. The categories listed below have been modified to provide an in-depth explanation of these successful techniques. *These techniques can be modified to apply to PAL sessions too.*

**Articulate a Common Task** – Finding and stating a shared goal of the session helps members work together in the learning process. Even though you may be tutoring 3 students in 3 different courses, there is a common task or aim of the session. Some examples might be to solve a problem, understand a concept, or simply to walk away from the session with new information.

**Clarify Roles** – The type of role a tutee takes can be detrimental to the tutoring experience. There will be instances when a tutee takes on the role of a leader, devil’s advocate, or mediator. You as the primary leader must define the activity and assign roles to members of the group. Doing so will help the group function effectively and lessen conflicts.

**Identify each Tutee’s Needs** – You will encounter sessions that have tutees from the same course but with different needs! When this occurs, tutors may need to split the group into pairs at the start of the session or at certain times during it. Splitting the group into pairs, individuals, etc. allows tutors to move among each tutee in a prearranged way. It will also help tutees feel as if you are actually listening to and addressing their needs. If students are experiencing more than one problem in the course, tackle one thing at a time. Prioritize the problems students identify they need the most help with.

**Create a Workable Plan & Timeline** – In MacDonald’s (1993) research, he found that many tutors don’t form a plan for what to do within the allotted tutoring time leading to frustration for the tutor and the tutees. **Develop a basic plan and communicate it clearly to each tutee. It is each tutor’s responsibility to make sure a reasonable plan is formulated and explicitly understood by all tutees. An example of a reasonable plan is:**

- Work with the tutee that arrives first & let them know you will move among all students if others arrive later in the session
- When tutee #2 drops in, find a stopping point with tutee #1 by giving them an independent task to work on, letting them know you are going to assist tutee #2 and check back in with her or him in about 10 minutes. Continue this rotation with all tutees at your table.
- Follow through with when and how you state you will check back with a tutee. This shows you are responsible, professional, respectful, and a good tutor.

**Be a Jump starter** – Learn and develop a repertoire of techniques for keeping tutoring groups on track and bringing them back when they get distracted. If tutees are focused more on socializing and less on learning, point out the disadvantages to socializing, ask them to refocus, or pose a question about the subject related to what they are talking about to grab their attention quickly. Pre-assigning tasks to tutees as you move among them at the table and working with tutees to define tutor session goals is also very effective.

**Control & Manage the Session** – Controlling and managing the session has to do with facilitating each tutee’s opportunity to speak, demonstrate their understanding of the thinking process and content, and obligation to listen and learn from each other. Often, one or two students do most of the talking, resulting in addressing their needs only and leaving other tutees’ needs on the backburner. Get control of the session by directing a question to each tutee periodically during the session. If needed, state that it is important that the group shares the floor and listens to one another.

# Small Group Tutoring Techniques

Use these techniques to encourage learning while you are working with other students or when students have completed a problem or task and have down time.



## Documented Problem Solutions

Ask tutees to identify the specific steps taken to solve the problem.

## Application Cards

After tutees have dealt with an important principle, generalization, theory or procedure, ask them to write down on index cards (or note paper) at least one possible, real-world application for what they have learned. This helps them to connect newly learned concepts with prior knowledge and increase relevance of what they are learning.

## Flashcard Creation

After students have successfully worked through a concept or problem, give them a few flashcards they can create and use to study.

## Peer-Assisted Learning (PAL) Sessions

Peer-Assisted Learning (PAL) sessions are systematic, planned large group tutoring sessions geared towards a specific course or subject that tutors often facilitate on a regular basis.

Coordinators work with tutors to map out and schedule PAL sessions. Before conducting a PAL session, tutors are expected to complete a PAL-specific training. PAL Tutors must come in 10-15 minutes before the session to prepare content and session materials. As tutees arrive, greet them with a smile and introduce yourself. While waiting to start, ask tutees to introduce themselves to one another.

Working with a group of students creates situations that typically don't occur in 1:1 sessions. Although many of the same guidelines for individual tutoring are applicable, there are strategies and procedures that a group tutor needs to utilize. According to findings from a study on group tutoring and group dynamics, **there are 6 tutoring techniques that all tutors who tutor groups must know (MacDonald, 1993). They include:**

1. **Promote student-student interaction or independent work:** Structure the learning experience by clarifying whether tutees should explore a problem with peers or on their own.
2. **Deal with distractions immediately:** Revert attention back to the task at hand or kindly ask tutees to refocus using task as justification.
3. **Intrude on a group only when needed:** Intrude only as much as needed to keep the group on task. Tutors plan, guide, and assist the session while tutees actively partake in the learning process.
4. **Reinforce participation: Group tutoring is most effective when all tutees are actively involved in the learning process.** Constantly encourage participation; Recognize participation by stating “good job”, “thanks for your help with...”
5. **Students are the primary resource:** Whenever possible, refer to and use members in the group as a resource instead of yourself.
6. **Practice preventative maintenance:** Promote sensible grouping by coordinating appointments, defining tasks for next session, and reporting problems or concerns immediately to your supervisor or the TLC director.

# Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) Techniques

## Group Brainstorming

This technique promotes discussion of ideas and concepts. **Use a variety of learning prompts to facilitate group brainstorming.** It is effective because it helps tutees come to the realization that they (1) don't really understand something and/or (2) actually understand more than they thought. If they can successfully explain a concept to someone else, they have accomplished two things: comprehension of the concept and utilization of another "sense" to reinforce that knowledge.

## Paired Problem-Solving

In group tutorial sessions, use paired problem-solving 1) to avoid one tutee being put on the spot, which could cause embarrassment, 2) to keep one tutee occupied while working with the other tutee.

- Have 2 tutees work on different or the same problems and compare methods and results.
- When discussing the answer, stress the importance of writing down all the steps in an orderly, neat fashion.



# PAL & Small Group Tutoring Do's & Don'ts

## Group Tutoring Do's

- Arrive early to gather your supplies, clear the area, & create a welcoming atmosphere
- Keep a **POSITIVE ATTITUDE**
- Arrange the chairs in a way that makes it easy for tutees to come in and leave
- Respect all questions and responses by tutees, no matter how basic
- Stress confidentiality among the group
- Sit or stand in an area that's visible to all tutees and in a place they can hear you
- Guide the conversation, but remember to limit your talking to 20-25%
- Provide direction, not dictatorship. **You are a resource responsible for facilitating the learning process**
- Encourage participation & provide words of encouragement & positive reinforcement
- Divide tutees into pairs when applicable
- Set group standards as tutees come into the drop-in session
- Manage time by allocating a specific amount of time for each task
- Maintain the focus of the group by stating and restating the session goals
- Establish an emotionally safe context for sharing and learning
- Keep the session moving forward
- Take a vote when making a group decision
- Provide closure for each tutee when ready to leave the session

## Group Tutoring Don'ts

- Don't interrupt
- Don't give in to irrelevant topics or arguing
- Don't always be the one answering questions. Encourage tutees to answer questions
- Don't play favorites if one tutee is more receptive or nice than another
- Don't spend 30 minutes with one tutee and then 5 minutes with everyone else – be fair
- Don't just stand and lecture – get tutees actively involved in their learning process

*Source of data: Philosophy & Code of Ethics – “Everything You Always Wanted to Know About How to Tutor”; Tutor Code of Ethics – National Asso. of Tutorial Services; Role-Model Peer Tutor – “Everything You Always....”; Tutor Responsibilities – Renesselaces PolyTechnic Institute/Derek Phillips; Strategies for Tutoring (Siv Levels of Thinking – “Everything You Always...”; Question Strategies & Critical Thinking – “Everything You Always....” / Tutor Training Handbook/Nicolet Area Technical College; Instructional Strategies & Techniques – “Everything You Always....”; Communication Skills/Step 4/Subsequent Sessions/Do Tips – Mary Washington College's; one Don't Tip – Academic Success Center; Group Tutoring, 5 Steps titles & tips – Nicolet Area Technical College; two tips – San Francisco School Volunteers; Group Tutoring tips – Cal Poly Pomona/CityCollege of San Francisco.*

---

# TUTOR POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Each tutor of the Tutoring & Learning Center is expected to understand what's expected of them as a tutor and adhere to the center's policies and procedures and complete all assigned responsibilities. All assignments and written reports must be completed and submitted by published deadline dates.

To ensure the tutoring strategies and techniques and the policies and procedures in this manual are adhered to tutor evaluations are sent via e-mail to tutees who receive tutorial assistance. The form includes an assessment of the tutor's performance, our administrative staff, the center's environment, and the TLC services. It allows us to review the tutors' and center's performance and improve our services when possible. The evaluation form is sent to tutees via e-mail at least three weeks after the final exam period.

## Tutor Job Responsibilities

**All tutors are expected to:**

- Review and adhere to all policies and procedures outlined in this manual and in training
- Review and implement the tutor tools, techniques, and strategies outlined in this manual
- Check and respond to all forms of communications from TLC employees
- Read the Employee Safety Programs Handbook
- Complete all required paperwork & attend a training prior to starting
- Complete electronic payroll timesheets on time and accurately\*

*Budget integrity is a must! All timesheets must be completed by Friday, 12:00 noon on the pay period ending date (pped). However, it is best to have all timesheets completed on Thursday, a day before the pped. Tutors will be notified if timesheets are due on a day other than Friday. Please do not complete timesheets after Payroll has applied the "freeze date."*

**\*New tutors must complete a yellow (regular) or pink (federal work study) paper timesheet until their electronic timesheet is on-line.**

## Tutoring Policies

### Each tutor is expected to:

- Wear a name badge when tutoring
- Dress appropriately for all tutoring sessions (i.e. no ripped jeans, leggings, gym shorts, sweatpants, etc.)
- Return all supplies used in a tutoring session to its home
- Notify the TLC of any student who routinely misses scheduled appointments.
- **Log in/out for work using TutorTrac** & ensure the tutee/student logs in/out on TutorTrac
- If unable to log in/out due to TutorTrac difficulties, sign-in using your center's online sign-in sheet and email coordinator the exact dates/times worked.
- Record her/his session notes after completing a tutoring session.

## Scheduling Policies

- Tutors with drop-in hours must get approval from their supervisor to schedule any individual appointments.
- Tutors must provide **one hour** of tutoring for appointment-based sessions.
- Each tutor must notify the supervisor when he or she wants a change on his or her availability schedule.
- Each tutor must notify the center immediately when a cancellation of a tutoring session is expected.

## Attendance Policies

- Each tutor is expected to arrive **promptly** for scheduled work hours. Frequent tardiness and/or early departure are unacceptable.
- Each tutor must record accurate tutorial hours on her or his electronic timesheet & complete his or her timesheet before the pay period ending date.
- Each tutor must **keep cancellations of scheduled work hours to a maximum of 3 (three) per semester**. It is our goal to provide dependable & adequate service to students and too many cancellations can result in termination of employment.
- When tutors are unable to attend their scheduled work sessions, they must (1) try to find a tutor who can fill your place **and** (2) contact the TLC and your center's coordinator **at least 24 hours** in advance.
- Each tutor must provide a make-up session for cancelled tutorial appointments.
- A no-show by tutors for appointment-based or drop-in tutoring is unacceptable and can result in termination of employment.
- Sometimes students do not appear for scheduled appointments. Tutors, however, must remain in the center for a **half-hour grace period** and then log out of TutorTrac.

## Tutor Warning Policy

We hold our tutors to high standards and expect them to respect the Towson student's time. We understand that there are unexpected issues that may arise, but we would like to prevent any continued tardiness, absences, or late cancels. As such there is a warning policy to help prevent these continued issues-

- **1<sup>st</sup> warning-** A verbal warning from your Coordinator to discuss what the expectations of our tutors are, and what the future warnings would be. This would also be documented in your folder for future reference.
- **2<sup>nd</sup> warning-** A formal written documentation from your Coordinator that will be signed both by you as the tutor, your Coordinator, and the Tutor Training Coordinator. This will also be kept in your folder.
- **3<sup>rd</sup> warning-** A suspension of two shifts without pay.

## Session Note Policies

Each tutor is expected to:

- Complete Session Notes online via TutorTrac for all tutoring sessions lasting 20 minutes or more. ***Tutors have 10 calendar days after the session to enter notes.***
- When TutorTrac is down, complete Session Notes using written form
- **For all types of tutoring (drop-in, peer-assisted learning, scheduled appointments), session notes must include:**
  - 1) the content covered
  - 2) any specific strategies used (ex. independent learning, problem-solving, critical thinking, study skills)
  - 3) the success and difficulties of the tutoring session
  - 4) follow up information for next session



Although session notes will differ for appointment-based and drop-in tutoring, all notes will include the 4 items above.

### Scheduled Session Note Example:

Examined tutee's recent exam and looked over errors and discussed mistakes and any points of confusion. Also we practiced improving reading skills in German and comprehension skills. Next time, will continue to examine particular difficult grammar topics being discussed in class and also to continue reading exercises to help improve tutees reading and comprehension per his request. I also encouraged the tutee to keep a daily journal written entirely in German, this will improve writing skills. Of course this is only a suggestion and not a requirement. Tutee developed an understanding of the mistakes made on the exam and became clearer on grammar topics (i.e. word order with wenn). Tutee needs to look at sentences as a whole.

### Poor Example of a Session Note

Today we discussed hormones. Tutee had questions. The tutee has a quiz next week and I told her to study. The tutee is coming along.

## Drop-in Tutoring Session Note Example:

Today I helped a student in MATH 111. We covered how to use Gauss-Jordan to row reduce a matrix. I also helped a few students in Calc I and we went over curve sketching. The Calc students showed progress from the last time that they visited the lab.

The tutor's feedback is mandatory and essential. The coordinator will monitor the Tutor Notes and make suggestions as necessary, communicate with tutors to monitor performance of their tutee(s), and perform follow-up on tutees. The tutor will be referred to the Learning Specialist if further tutoring or study skills strategies are needed.

## Tutoring Center Guidelines

The Tutoring & Learning Center requires all tutoring sessions to be held in the assigned tutorial areas (cubicles and conference rooms) within the same building where the center is located.\* Therefore, a quiet atmosphere should be maintained in the center to facilitate tutoring. Attentiveness to one's volume can reduce the noise level. Tutors can contribute to preserving the cleanliness and appearance of the facility by discarding their waste material and pushing chairs back under tables.

**Tutors are expected to use computer equipment in the tutoring areas responsibly.** The purpose of the equipment is to provide access to standard Microsoft Office programs and the Internet as a support tool for tutorial sessions. Additional software installation is **prohibited** without prior permission because of spyware, viruses, and other problems that can result. **When finished using a computer, please make certain to log off, but keep the computer turned on.** Security from viruses and other computer problems also requires that each computer remain on to receive automatic campus updates. A specific computer is reserved for logging in and out of TutorTrac. Please do not add tutorial notes from the log-in computer. Many tutoring areas have additional computers as resources. Tutors are encouraged to use the additional computers to add tutorial notes.

*\*Other locations must be approved by the center's director based upon necessity.*

**Please refrain from saving personal files on the computers because files are frequently eliminated during routine equipment maintenance.** If a tutor needs to save a file for future work, please store it on individual One Drives.

## Peer Tutor Job Description & Qualifications

Peer tutors are TU students that:

- Provide small group or drop in learning assistance in specific course(s) to students
- Maintain a weekly schedule of available hours in one or more of the tutoring locations
- Keep regular and accurate records of tutoring sessions using the TutorTrac software and/or relevant forms
- Attend all mandatory tutor-training sessions
- Assist with additional duties as needed (ex. coordinating events, administrative tasks, and organizing & creating materials)
- Adhere to the tutoring center guidelines and TU tutor policies and procedures

## **Tutor Job Qualifications**

- Each tutor must be recommended by a faculty member from TU or another institution.
- Each tutor must provide at least 3 hours of availability each week
- Each tutor must have earned a grade of a B+ or better in relevant courses selected for tutoring
- Each tutor must have a 3.0 cumulative grade point average\*
- Each tutor must achieve CRLA Level 1 certification within 1 academic year (or at minimum, obtain 10 hours of CRLA Level I tutor training)
- Each tutor must submit 2 (two) recommendation letters from TU faculty prior to tutoring
- Each tutor must have earned a GPA from Towson University\*\*
- Each tutor must be responsible and a reliable adult with a desire to help others
- Each tutor must maintain professional and appropriate behavior at all times

*\*Exceptions can be made for qualified tutors without cumulative grade-point averages of 3.0 and who demonstrate an earnest desire to provide competent tutorial service to TU students. If granted, the tutor will be monitored on a probationary basis and expected to increase his or her grade-point average after one semester of tutoring.*

*\*\*Some exceptions are made for first year students transferring from a (1) CRLA certified college or (2) 4-year University. If granted, the tutor will be hired on a probationary basis for the first semester.*

# Tutor Hiring, Payroll, & Salary Procedures

## Tutor Hiring Process:

All potential tutors for **any** tutoring center location (BLA, Math, Science, CIS, & Music) must (1) be interviewed, (2) complete job application, (3) submit 2 letters of recommendation, (4) be approved for employment by corresponding tutoring center coordinator **and** an TLC staff member, (5) complete HR/payroll forms and get payroll clearance by setting up a time to meet with the TLC Program Specialist, and (6) attend an orientation training before they can begin tutoring.

## **On or before the interview, the following forms must be completed and submitted to the center coordinator or TLC:**

- Completed Job Application including listing of 2 professors that teach the course(s) tutor is going to tutor. The recommendation is maintained in the tutor's file for employee reference material. Completed recommendation letters will be requested by the coordinator.

## **Prior to starting tutor Orientation, these Human Resources forms must be completed:**

- **I-9 Completion** – All potential tutors hired and approved by the Program Coordinator or Satellite Coordinator must report to Human Resources (OHR) and bring the appropriate identification.
- **311 Payroll Clearance Form** - All student employees must complete this form and submit it to the Payroll Department and provide appropriate identification

## **Prior to working as a tutor, the following forms must be completed and submitted to the center coordinator or TLC:**

- Signed Tutor Contract
- Signed Tutor Code of Ethics
- Tutoring & Learning Center Student Employee Checklist
- Tutor Availability – This must be completed by all tutors on the job application. The available hours are selected by the supervisor for the center's on-line schedule

## Tutor Payroll Procedures:

- All new tutors must report to Human Resources (OHR) for handling of Form I-9 and bring the following required identification:
  - \***non-international students:** social security card, birth certificate or passport and a TU identification card or driver's license;
  - \***international students:** passport, I-20, I-94, TU identification card or driver's license. An international student must report to OHR a second time to complete the I-9 process after obtaining a social security card from the Social Security Administration.

The Payroll Department is open for clearance purposes Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. The first paycheck is delivered by mail (your local address) approximately 4 to 6 weeks after clearance process is complete.

- All tutors must notify the Payroll Office any change of address.
- All tutors who have a change of address and/or phone number must complete an application addendum and submit it to their supervisor.

## Tutor Salary

The starting salary for regular student-employee tutors hired in the fall or spring is **\$16**. All tutors will receive rate-of-pay increases after completion of 1) CRLA Level 1, Level 2, or Level 3 certification training hours and 2) required tutor-work hours.

- \*\$16.50, Level 1 – 10 hours of tutor training and 25 hours of tutoring work hours
- \*\$17.00, Level 2 – 20 hours of tutor training and 25 additional tutoring work hours with students as a Level 1 tutor
- \*\*\$17.50, Level 3 – 30 hours of tutor training and 25 additional tutoring work hours with students as a Level 2 tutor

*\*These are based upon a compilation of hours.*

*\*\*Rates are subject to review based on length of employment and TLC budget.*



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR TUTORS

We want you to feel prepared and ready for successful, rewarding experiences as tutors. In addition to this manual, tutors have access to:

- TLC Tutor Community on Blackboard
- Center-specific resources, handouts, & textbooks
- Tutoring center supplies (i.e., scratch paper, dry-erase markers, etc.)
- Training and Self-Development Opportunities
- Leadership opportunities



### Important Links

- [Tutoring & Learning Center](#)
- [TutorTrac](#)
- <http://blackboard.towson.edu/>

### Helpful Links

- <http://www.howtostudy.org>
- <http://www.d.umn.edu/student/loon/acad/strat/>
- <http://www.ucc.vt.edu/stdysk/stdyhlp.html>
- <http://www.vark-learn.com/english/page.asp?p=questionnaire>
- <http://www.engr.ncsu.edu/learningstyles/ilsweb.html>

### On-campus Resources

The TU Writing Center  
Liberal Arts Building, Room 5330  
Dr. Wayne Robertson, Director  
410-704-3426



Stay informed of all  
important events &  
announcements