The Nuts and Bolts of Tutoring

Tutor Training Spring 2010
### Who We Are

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Learning Center</th>
<th>Writing Center</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basement of Administration Bldg.</td>
<td>First floor of Computing / Mathematics Bldg.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tutoring in all other subjects</td>
<td>Tutoring in writing</td>
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<td>Approx. 85-90 tutors</td>
<td>Approx. 10-12 tutors</td>
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<td>One-on-one sessions with assigned tutors</td>
<td>One-on-one sessions</td>
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<td>Study groups/ office hours</td>
<td>Evening workshops</td>
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<tr>
<td>Director: Erin Evans</td>
<td>Coordinator: Rachel Liberatore</td>
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<td>Assistant Director: TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate Asst./ Tutor Coord: Amanda Corbett</td>
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<td>Secretary: Janelle Bentz (new)</td>
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**New this year:**

- Office hours in the residence hall, Schumo Center, & Computer Lab A in Computer Center
- Interview, train, and evaluate tutors
- Wage increase with training
- Tutor celebrations!

**New this year:**

- Computerized appointment-based system
- FT coordinator focused on Writing Center
- Training aligned with CRLA standards
- Wage increase with training
Directors’ Roles

- Provide you with the training/information to be effective as a tutor & develop you as leaders/managers
- Provide you with the materials/tools to do your job
- Help you with problems, concerns, etc. in a way that treats all involved with respect
- Communicate and coordinate with faculty and administration to make the WC and ALC effective for all and valued across campus
Orientation Agenda

• Introductions to the team
  • Part 1: Importance of tutoring
  • Part 2: Role as Tutor & Employee
  • Part 3: Components of Effective Tutoring
Part 1: Why does tutoring matter?

- Positive reinforcement & enhanced achievement
- Can make a difference in student success
- Improves knowledge and understanding of subject
- Provides study skills tips (note-taking, time management, and organization skills)
- Provides role modeling and a safe environment
- Increases confidence & learning for all
- Important helping role
Tutoring & the Albright Community

- Student/Tutee
- ALC & Tutors
- Faculty
- Provost, VPs, and President
Why have trained tutors?

• Research tells us that trained tutors make the most substantial impact on learning/teaching

• Creates an academic leadership role that is recognized as a significant campus contribution

• Prepares you with tutoring techniques and an understanding of teaching theories

• Makes tutoring at Albright more “professionalized” and higher status; great for your resume and to prepare you for the professional work world
PAID Tutoring Training
Based on CRLA (College Reading and Learning Assoc.) Guidelines

- Level 1 Certification for Albright
  - 13+ hours of training in one year + 25 contact hours
  - Tracked through blackboard and timesheets

- Wage increase following successful completion of training (takes effective your 2nd semester of tutoring)
PAID Training

- Spring 2010 Training Schedule
  - Observation of upper-class tutor
  - Mandatory paid training
  - Optional paid training
  - Subject area tutoring meetings

- Blackboard Reflections & Evaluations
Part 2: Roles & Responsibilities

ACTIVITY:

Generate a list of characteristics/roles for “friends,” “teachers,” and “counselors”

Compare/contrast to tutor role
ROLE OF TUTORS:
1. Helper
2. Peer Learning
3. Teacher
4. ALC/WC Employee
## Other Roles

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Not!</th>
<th>Instead....</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proof-reader/editor/fixer</td>
<td>Author-in-the-flesh</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Strategy instructor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Answer-giver</td>
<td>Question-asker, prompter, practice buddy</td>
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<td>Doctor of Homework</td>
<td>Recognizer of strengths</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Motivator</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Coach and Study Skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Absolute expert</td>
<td>Resource user</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sharer of experience</td>
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<td>Creative strategizer</td>
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Ethical Concerns in the Tutor Role

Confidentiality
Maintain confidentiality about students and their work.

Safety
Make sure tutoring situation is safe for you and tutees. Contact Campus Security or directors if needed.

Referrals
Refer students to other resources (Career Services, Counseling Center, etc.) when they would benefit from those services. Offer to give them contact information or to help them find the resources.

Communication and Collaboration
Communicate openly with directors about important center matters. Be someone other tutors can rely on.
When problems occur...

• What kind of problems /concerns should you bring to the directors?

• What kind of problems do students share with the directors about their tutors?

• Is cancelling office hours okay? (subs?)

• When should you call campus Public Safety (from campus phone: 311 or 911 – and add this to your cell phone: 610-921-7670)

• What should you do if problems occur during evening/night hours and the directors/secretaries aren’t on site?
Referring Students

The centers will keep brochures and contact information for these and other campus resources. Encourage students to use these resources. For serious situations, you may want to ask the directors to contact one of these services on behalf of a student.

**Academic Learning Center:** (Basement of Admin. Bldg.) Tutoring in most subjects, help with study skills and time management, disability resources

**Writing Center:** (Math/Computing #105) Writing, revision, editing strategies

**Counseling Center:** (White building behind The Gable Health and Counseling Center, Linden/Richmond St.) Emotional, social, academic and other concerns

**Career Development Center:** (Selwyn, 2nd floor) -- Resume and scholarship application writing and review

**Library:** Research Help
Part 3: Components for Effective Tutoring

- Major principles
- Parts of a session
- Working with learning diversity
Major Tutoring Principles

• Tutoring is a commitment to learning & involves weekly sessions

• Establish rapport and a respectful & safe atmosphere

• Be “student focused”:
  • Ask student about specific problems & allow them to explain
  • Keep the tutee actively involved in all parts of session
  • Allow tutees to progress without interrupting
  • Help tutee building from their strengths

• Help tutee become an independent learner & direct to resources
Parts of a Session

- Greeting and Setting the Stage
  - FIRST SESSION CHECKLIST
- Selecting a Focus for the Session
- Leading the Session
  - POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT
- Closing the Session
Greeting and Setting the Stage

- Some have no expectations due to novelty of tutor experience
- Others have diminished expectations due to a poor experience
- Others have high expectations due to working with a highly effective tutor

STRATEGY: determine if student has a blank slate v. an established perception of tutoring. Your job is to figure out if the students have a list of problems and questions or present as a person needing guidance.

- Walk-in hours/Study group sessions:
  - Recognize waiting tutees even if you’re working with someone else--let them know when you will be available. OR invite them into session.
1st Session Checklist

- Be intentional - inquire into the student’s academic background. Ask about class year, number of courses taken in the discipline during high school, and generally ask about classes taken that are related to the subject area (what is their knowledge base)?
- Explain tutor role (especially to underprepared student),
- Introduce yourself, and learn this is the first time for tutoring (either way they are likely new to you)
- ROLE PLAY Introduction
Selecting a Focus

• Ask tutee if they have a preferred area of focus (ex. Problem areas)

• Use class materials as a resource (text, handouts, notes, power point)

• Skim and discuss tutee’s preliminary work

Note: Focus on the “big stuff” as much as possible-- the paper’s main ideas and organization, the overarching math concepts most likely to be on the test, etc.

What if student doesn’t know what they need yet knows (s)he is struggling? How would you select a focus?
Leading the Session

• Keep student actively involved: consider having the student read aloud, ask questions, give you their ideas, write on their own papers, be the scribe, etc.

• In selecting tutoring strategies, remember overall goal of guiding student towards independent work

  Model/demonstrate → have tutee try → offer feedback recognizing strengths and goals

• Ask open-ended questions to inspire their thoughts
• Offer possibilities or choices rather than commandments.
Strategies: Be Versatile

Be creative in your techniques; there are many ways to keep the tutee active, respect the tutee and their work, and guide the student towards increased independence.

Some Possibilities:
- Review syllabi, dissect the assignment (important place to start)
- Brainstorming/listing/composing/creating a chart
- Discussion where you ask open-ended questions to inspire their ideas
- Acting out a concept
- Relate to real world examples
- Drawing as illustration
- Studying a book or resource guide together
- Practicing by modeling (showing), having student try, giving feedback
- Finding more resources together on the internet

...What other methods can you think of?
Positive Reinforcement

Activity:

- How do teachers contribute to a negative learning environment?
- How do teachers contribute to a positive one?

NC STATE VIDEO
Closing the Session

• Review main focus of lesson, strategy practiced, etc and assign additional homework (if appropriate)

• Seek feedback from tutee; what worked/didn’t, set an agenda for future meetings; refer to prof, ALC, etc.

• Fill out center forms for record-keeping and to summarize the tutoring session (paycheck depends on it).

• Schedule a set time to meet each week.

• ROLE PLAY EFFECTIVE OPENING
Why Does Accurate Record Keeping Matter?

Your paycheck depends on it – timesheets must include tutee info, contact hours, etc.

Benefits ALC and WC
Accurate data help us hire new tutors, get funding from the college, improve business operations

Benefits You
• You get paid correctly and on time, you can work towards certification (good for your resume!),
• Smoother tutoring sessions
• Supervisors know what is happening and can help you with problems or honor your successes
Recap: Effective tutoring

- Give undivided attention to the tutee, minimize interruptions, and allow natural progress
- Demonstrate empathy for the tutee’s problems
- Act honestly when an answer is unknown; use class materials as resources
- Act as a motivator, provide positive reinforcement, and add humor to the session
- Promote safe and cooperative learning for the tutee
- Always open & close the session by using checklist
Things to Remember...

- You can only do your best: tutees are not always prepared as you want them to be; they are likely not as patient as you hoped, and their sense of humor may be stifled by nerves.
- You cannot help everyone and improved grades are not guaranteed.
- Know the tutors in your discipline area; use each other as a resource and sounding board.
- If you begin to complain about your tutees or dread your sessions, it’s time to seek some supervision.
- Your contributions are appreciated.
Questions

Always use the ALC/WC as a resource.
All questions welcome!