



AN HONORS UNIVERSITY IN MARYLAND

Academic Year 2009 - 2010

To New and Returning Tutors:

Welcome and thanks for accepting a position with the Learning Resources Center and the Student Support Services tutorial programs. You should be proud of your academic standing and your personal characteristics that qualified you to be a part of this special group. Your ability to help students academically is a very important element of tutoring. Your service as a role model, however, is equally as valuable.

As a peer-tutor, you will need to know certain procedures, requirements, and expectations of the position. To assist you with your responsibilities, tutor training programs will be offered throughout the year. New tutors will be enrolled in Education 313, Concepts and Practice of Peer Assisted Learning. New writing interns will be enrolled in English 395, Tutoring Internship. Upon completion of these required training programs, you will receive CRLA Level One certification. Returning tutors who are certified at Level One can enroll in Education 314 for “Advanced” Certification and the Level Three “Master” certification. CRLA certification establishes our tutoring programs as internationally recognized programs with professional standards and practices that define effective tutoring. We are proud to be among the 700 college tutoring programs to have received this distinction.

The information in this handbook will be useful throughout the year as well. Additional information on specific tutoring topics will be given during training sessions, semester meetings, and in consultations with a member of the LRC or SSS professional staffs. Meanwhile, if you have any questions or concerns, call or visit the LRC/SSS office in AC IV, B-wing, room 345 at (410) 455-2444 or (410) 455-3250.

The success of the tutoring programs can be measured by the impact that tutors and students have on each other. According to students, they become more academically self-confident, develop better study skills and achieve higher grades with your help. Likewise, tutors say they learn subject matter in greater depth than when they took a course, improve their thinking and communication skills, and develop skills and confidence in working with other people. Tutoring **is** a mutual learning experience! Thank you for caring and sharing.

Sincerely,

The LRC and SSS Staffs

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WHO'S WHO IN LRC and SSS?

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WHY TUTOR?

The Benefits to the Tutor

Most of the available documentation about how tutoring helps the tutor (particularly in regard to academic gains) pertains to elementary and sometimes high school students--and until recently referred primarily to older students in higher grades "teaching" younger students in lower grades (*cross-age tutoring*). However, anyone who has tutored or has been part of a college tutoring program knows that tutors gain substantially from tutoring.

Intellectual Scope and Depth Studies have shown that **tutors learn the subject matter they tutor to an even greater degree than the students they tutor.** It should be evident why this is so. In order to tutor, you must learn the material well enough to answer any questions the student might have. To do that, you will probably have to learn it from a number of vantage points. Merely memorizing concepts will prove insufficient. This continuous process of studying, tutoring, and studying will provide you with a truly solid mastery of the subject.

Further, to find the right way to reach a student, you will have to think about your subject thoroughly. In finding inventive ways to illuminate a topic, you might discover aspects to the subject that you never knew existed. The more confident you feel about your subject, the more you will be able to take creative leaps with it. For example, when tutoring subject-verb agreement, you may begin to think about the psychological or aesthetic ramifications of "person." "What is a subject?" You might ponder, "And, indeed, what is its relationship to the verb?" **You will pass from rote learning to creative thought,** from the level that recites concepts to the level that analyzes and recreates them. This degree of intellectual competence is reached by few people. Traditional education encourages distance between the learner and the teacher, and as long as students see themselves in subservient roles, independent thought is difficult for them. However, when the learner is also the instructor--as is specifically the case in peer-tutoring--independent thought is not only possible, but likely.

Skills Acquisition and Reinforcement By tutoring you practice skills and refine native abilities: you gain and use specific techniques that make your reading, writing, speaking, and counseling more effective. For instance, **tutoring reinforces your ability to communicate clearly, logically, and creatively.** It is not enough to *know* a subject well in order to tutor it well. Sometimes the most brilliant scholars make terrible tutors. If you don't *communicate* your subject well, you will soon be told directly, or by your students' annoyance or absence. Moreover, the tutor cannot (as many teachers can) rely solely on lecture to transmit knowledge. The one-to-one relationship demands that there be an intimate dialogue between tutor and tutee.

Maturity **Tutoring encourages maturity,** not only pedagogic but personal. In assuming the responsibility for a student, you transcend your own problems and involvements. You find you want to be there for your tutees, whether or not you like them or find them interesting. You become assertive when you feel passive, gentle when you feel angry. These attributes may, perhaps, sound saintly; but they are elements of adulthood, learned slowly but surely by those who perform service for others. Thus, the responsibility of tutoring often produces greater character changes. The most obvious is self-confidence, the self-confidence that is gained from mastering a subject well enough to help someone else.

Psychological Insight The greatest benefit of tutoring is not the acquisition of academic knowledge, but **knowledge of oneself and others.** Tutees are people with learning

problems in a particular area or in a number of areas. Intellect and emotion are interrelated. Often students let emotional problems interfere with their studies, just as difficulties with their studies may result in emotional problems. Being sensitive to your tutees' emotional needs should give you insight into your own. If you are a peer tutor, you, too, are a learner and have probably exhibited behavior similar to that of your tutee when you were having trouble learning something. **Understanding which behavior aids and which hinders learning** is a hard-won and valuable lesson.

Career Development Many people think that tutoring is only helpful to those wishing to pursue teaching careers. That is a very limited view. Certainly, one learns to teach by tutoring, but, as must be obvious by now, tutoring involves much more. It allows you the opportunity to develop intellectually, psychologically, and personally, while giving you a firm sense of maturity, self-confidence, and authority. **You will develop the ability to get along with others and the skills of mediation and negotiation.** Even if you do not wind up working in the field you tutor, you will probably find that you feel more comfortable about working in a professional setting as a result of the tutoring experience.

The Benefits to the Tutee

A great part of the reward of tutoring comes from the real service you perform for others. For those times when your interest flags or you are discouraged, remember how important tutors are to their tutees. Indeed, your individual attention and support help your tutees learn better, and can make them feel better about school, about learning, and, generally about themselves.

Improved Learning With the flexibility that individual instruction offers, students in tutoring can set their own learning goals and achieve them at their own pace. **Peer tutoring provides them with someone close to their own level**, someone with whom they can be open; a peer tutor is a more accessible role model than a teacher.

Improved Attitude toward School and Learning If students improve as a result of being tutored, they will certainly feel more a part of the school and more excited about learning than before. But even if tutees don't improve substantially (learning takes place at a different rate for everyone), the individualized attention will give them the chance to be heard, to control their learning environment, and to pursue knowledge actively. An experience such as this must change the way they relate to learning in general. **They will realize that if they actively seek to learn, they will learn more** and find it more enjoyable.

Improved Self-Image As we shall discuss throughout the book, students with learning problems often have little self-confidence and still less self-esteem. Your personal and academic support of students, in effect, addresses both problems. Further, **students who begin to see themselves progressing as a result of their own efforts gain the self-respect** and pride that will fuel their personal and academic growth.

The Tutor Book by Marian Arkin & Barbara Shollar

**University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC)
Peer Tutor Position Description**

Position: Peer Tutor

Department: Learning Resources Center and Student Support Services

Minimum Requirements and Skills:

- Current UMBC student with 28 or more credits
- 3.0 overall grade point average
- Grade of an A or B in the course(s) to be tutored
- Two faculty recommendations
- Personal interview with an LRC Academic Coordinator
- Effective interpersonal and communication skills for working with a diverse population of students, faculty, and staff
- Effective professional work ethics and practices

Responsibilities:

Under the supervision of an LRC Academic Coordinator, the tutor will help UMBC students learn the content for LRC-specified undergraduate courses. Duties will include using tutoring techniques that will enable students to become efficient, independent learners. Additionally, the tutor will adhere to the policies, procedures, and the code of ethics that underlie the mission, organization, and function of the LRC Tutorial Center and the SSS Tutoring Program.

Specifically, the tutor will

- Attend tutor meetings as appropriate.
- Complete Level 1 training either by enrolling in Education 313 or through independent study.
- Give only accurate information to students, qualifying information that is uncertain and consulting with others when information is unknown.
- Model and teach appropriate learning and study techniques to students to encourage independent learning.
- Adjust tutoring techniques to allow for students' diversity.
- Be committed to tutoring for the entire semester(s) of employment.
- Give a one week advanced notice to an LRC Academic Coordinator or the Coordinator for Program Operations should it become necessary to resign during the semester or to adjust the original schedule.
- Complete all record-keeping tasks in an accurate and timely manner.
- Encourage students to follow attendance and cancellation procedures and to complete evaluations as they become available.
- Refer all problems and concerns, particularly student issues that are non-academic, to an LRC Academic Coordinator or to the appropriate SSS Specialist.

TUTOR CODE OF ETHICS

1. Subject proficiency and knowledge have top priority in my position.
2. My student deserves and will receive my total attention.
3. The language we share must be mutually understandable at all times.
4. I will honor the confidentiality of the tutorial relationship. If I feel my student will benefit from revealing what I know, I will do so only with the student's permission.
5. I must be constantly alert in my ability to admit my own lack of knowledge and to seek assistance.
6. Respect for my student's personal dignity assumes acceptance of that individual without judgment.
7. My student will be constantly encouraged but never insulted with false hope or flattery.
8. I will act so that my openness and honesty will produce a similar openness and honesty from the student.
9. I will not impose my personal value system or life style on my student; I can only hope to offer a neutral or worthwhile example.
10. Both the student and I will always understand that my role is never to do the student's work.
11. The use of positive motivation is important for building my student's self-confidence.
12. I count on my student to also be my tutor and teach me ways to do a better job.
13. Punctuality and keeping appointments are essential on my part, not only out of courtesy but also as an example for my student to follow.
14. Records will be maintained as expected and required.
15. I will do my best to stay abreast of the current literature about tutoring as it relates to me professionally.
16. Good tutoring enables the student to transfer learning from one situation to another.
17. Making learning real for the student is what tutoring truly means.
18. My student's independence is my ultimate goal.

Adapted from the National Association of Tutorial Services

The Tutor Training Program

The LRC/SSS tutor training program is certified by the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA). The CRLA is a professional organization that conducts and supports research on the effective practices of college and university learning assistance programs. The LRC/SSS tutor training program holds “Regular/Level 1”, “Advanced/Level 2”, and “Master/Level 3” certifications. The CRLA certifications identify the LRC/SSS program as one that has adopted standards associated with effective tutoring programs. The LRC/SSS program is among the 650 programs to be certified nationwide. LRC/SSS tutors who complete each training level will also be awarded certification for each level.

The LRC and SSS are proud to announce that, in collaboration with the Education Department, we are now offering our training as a half-semester course for academic credit.

This course is an overview to and application of the theory-based techniques and methods of tutoring. Students will learn the roles of the tutor and the tutee and how the interaction of these roles promotes effective tutoring and learning. Areas of emphasis include collaborative/interactive learning, communication skills for tutoring, successful tutoring sessions, varied learners and tutoring situations, and content/skill-specific tutoring. Active learning and participation are essential to course mastery. Therefore, students will model, practice, evaluate, and develop tutoring techniques individually and in groups, and apply the learned principles and strategies in the LRC/SSS tutoring programs. The curriculum will enable student-tutors to develop confident, flexible tutoring styles that empower tutees to become confident, self-reliant learners. The course will also emphasize the positive impact that tutoring has on the tutor’s learning and personal development.

This course is designed as a full semester course, providing 15 weeks of tutor training and certification. The course satisfies the requirements of the College Reading and Learning Association’s (CRLA) International Tutor Program Certification. Students must satisfactorily complete the second 8 weeks to become an LRC/SSS Level 1 certified tutor, earning 1.5 credits. Students are highly recommended to complete the first 7 weeks to receive Level 2 tutor certification and also earn 1.5 credits.

In addition to the information above, the following policies and practices underscore the importance of Tutor Training.

- All new tutors are required to complete Level 1 training by the end of the semester hired; English 395: Tutoring Internship is the required Level 1 training for new writing tutors.
- Tutors hired in the latter part of a semester should follow the training guidelines set by their academic area coordinator.
- The Level 2 and 3 programs are optional but highly recommended.
- Tutors who complete the “Master/Level 3” training are encouraged to become paid tutor trainers.
- Tutor salaries are based on a graduated pay scale according to the degree of training and experience, i.e.
 - First-time tutor with no experience or training, \$8.25 per hour
 - Level 1 training and one semester of tutoring, \$8.75 per hour
 - Level 2 training and two semesters of tutoring, \$9.25 per hour
 - Level 3 training and three semesters of tutoring, \$10.25 per hour
- Pay increases are applied at the beginning of the semester after the training and tutoring requirements have been completed.
- Any exceptions to the training requirements must be approved by an academic area coordinator

**COLLEGE READING & LEARNING ASSOCIATION
REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION OF TUTOR PROGRAMS**

(NOTE: See Page 8 for LRC-Mandated Requirements)

I. REQUIREMENTS FOR REGULAR/LEVEL 1 CERTIFICATION

- A. AMOUNT/DURATION OF TUTOR TRAINING: (one or more of the following)
1. Minimum of ten hours of tutor training
 2. A quarter/semester tutor training course
 3. A quarter/semester of tutor training (non-course work)
- B. MODES OF TUTOR TRAINING
1. Classroom and/or workshop instruction
PLUS any combination of the following
 2. Tutor training videotapes
 3. Conferences with tutor trainer/supervisor
 4. Special tutor projects
 5. Other
- C. AREAS/TOPICS TO BE COVERED IN TUTOR TRAINING (a minimum of eight (8) of the following topics should be covered in Level 1 training)
- * 1. Definition of tutoring and tutor responsibilities
 - * 2. Basic tutoring guidelines
 - * 3. Techniques for successfully beginning and ending a tutor session
 - * 4. Some basic Tutoring Do's
 - * 5. Some basic Tutoring Don'ts
 - * 6. Role Modeling
 7. Setting Goals/Planning
 - * 8. Communication Skills
 - * 9. Active listening and paraphrasing
 - *10. Referral Skills
 - *11. Study Skills
 - *12. Critical Thinking Skills
 - *13. Compliance with the Ethics and Philosophy of the Tutor Program
 - *14. Modeling problem solving
 - *15. Assertiveness training/confrontational skills
 16. Other (please specify)
- D. REQUIRED TUTORING EXPERIENCE
- 25 hours of actual tutoring
- E. TUTOR SELECTION CRITERIA
1. Written approval of a content/skill instructor
- AND/OR**
2. Endorsement of tutor trainer/supervisor
- PLUS** at least one of the following:
3. Grade of "A" or "B" in subject content being tutored
 4. Documented experience equivalent to #3
- F. TUTOR EVALUATION CRITERIA
1. A formal/informal evaluation process is in place
 2. Formal/informal evaluation occurs on a regular basis
 3. The results of the evaluation process are made known to the tutors

***LRC/SSS Program Emphases**

Other: Content Specific Tutoring

Multicultural Awareness

Tutoring students with Disabilities

Group Dynamics for Tutoring

Questioning

**II. REQUIREMENTS FOR ADVANCED/LEVEL 2 CERTIFICATION
(NOTE: TUTOR MUST HAVE COMPLETED LEVEL 1 CERTIFICATION
REQUIREMENTS)**

- A. AMOUNT/DURATION OF TUTOR TRAINING: (one or more of the following)
1. Minimum of 10 hours of tutor training beyond Level 1 (a minimum of 20 cumulative hours of tutor training)
 2. A second quarter/semester tutor training course
 3. A second quarter/semester of tutor training (non-course work)
- B. MODES OF TUTOR TRAINING
1. Classroom and/or workshop instruction
- PLUS** any combination of the following
2. Tutor training video tapes
 3. Conference with tutor trainer/supervisor
 4. Special tutor projects
 5. Other
- C. AREAS/TOPICS TO BE COVERED IN TUTOR TRAINING:
(in addition to reviewing the topics covered in Level 1 a minimum of four (4) of the following topics should be covered in Level 2 training)
- *1. Review of Level 1 topics
 2. Use of probing questions
 3. Characteristics of adult learners/Learning Styles*
 - *4. Cultural Awareness and intercultural communications
 5. Identification and use of resources
 - *6. Tutoring in specific skill/subject areas
 7. Record Keeping/Documentation
 - *8. Other (please specify)
- D. REQUIRED TUTORING EXPERIENCE
25 additional hours of actual tutoring after completion of all Level 1 requirements (a minimum of 50 cumulative hours of actual tutoring)
- E. TUTOR SELECTION CRITERIA
1. Written approval of a content/skill instructor
- AND/OR**
2. Endorsement of tutor trainer/supervisor
- PLUS** at least one of the following:
3. Grade of “A” or “B” in subject content being tutored
 4. Documented experience equivalent to #3
- F. TUTOR EVALUATION CRITERIA
1. A formal/informal evaluation process is in place
 2. Formal/informal evaluation occurs on a regular basis
 3. The results of the evaluation process are made known to the tutors

***LRC/SSS Program Emphases**

**Other: Tutoring Students with Disabilities
Problem Solving for Tutor Challenges**

**III. REQUIREMENTS FOR MASTER/LEVEL 3 CERTIFICATION
(NOTE: TUTOR MUST HAVE COMPLETED LEVEL 1 AND 2 CERTIFICATION
REQUIREMENTS).**

- A. AMOUNT/DURATION OF TUTOR TRAINING: (one or more of the following)
1. Minimum of 10 hours of tutor training beyond Level 2 (a minimum of 30 cumulative hours of tutor training)
 2. A third quarter/semester tutor training course
 3. A third quarter/semester of tutor training (non-course work)
- B. MODES OF TUTOR TRAINING
1. Classroom and/or workshop instruction
- PLUS** any combination of the following
2. Tutor training videotapes
 3. Conferences with tutor trainer/supervisor
 4. Special tutor projects
 5. Other
- C. AREAS/TOPICS TO BE COVERED IN TUTOR TRAINING
(in addition to reviewing the topics covered in Level 1 and 2 a minimum of four (4) of the following topics should be covered in Level 3 training)
- *1. Review of Level 1 and Level 2 topics
 2. How to tutor/deal with Target Populations
 - *3. How to administer and interpret a Learning Style Inventory/Myers Briggs
 - *4. How to structure the learning experience
 - *5. How to train and supervise other tutors (supervisory skills)
 - *6. Group management skills (group interaction and group dynamics)
 - *7. Other (please specify)
- D. REQUIRED TUTORING EXPERIENCE
25 additional hours of actual tutoring after completion of all Level 1 and Level 2 requirements (a minimum of 75 cumulative hours of actual tutoring)
- E. TUTOR SELECTION CRITERIA
1. Written approval of a content/skill instructor
- AND/OR**
2. Endorsement of tutor trainer/supervisor
- PLUS** at least one of the following:
3. Grade of "A" or "B" in subject content being tutored
 4. Documented experience equivalent to #3
- F. TUTOR EVALUATION CRITERIA
1. A formal/informal evaluation process is in place
 2. Formal/informal evaluation occurs on a regular basis
 3. The results of the evaluation process are made known to the tutors

***LRC/SSS Program Emphases**

Other: Tutoring research topics to be developed by tutors

SOME TUTORING PROCEDURES AND TECHNIQUES

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

I. FOR EACH TUTORING SESSION YOU CONDUCT

- A. SIGN IN - use appropriate book
- B. If you have one, check mailbox
- C. Make sure that every student that you tutor has signed in on the computer.
- D. If tutoring by appointment:
 - 1. Post your name and room number on board.
 - 2. Go to your assigned room.
 - 3. For every hour:
 - a. Check appointment book for changes to your schedule.
 - b. Check mailbox for cancellations.
 - 4. Erase name and room number when tutoring session ends.
- E. SIGN OUT - to nearest quarter hour.

II. WHAT TO DO WHEN

- A. YOU WILL BE ABSENT - Please call your coordinator or the main office at 410/455-2444.
- B. YOU WILL BE LATE - Call and give estimated time of arrival.
- C. YOU SHOW UP, BUT YOUR STUDENT DOES NOT – Tutors must report any tutee that is absent in the Attendance Book. After two consecutive absences this tutee will be dropped from the tutoring hour and if possible be replaced by another student. Tutors will be paid half the hourly rate for waiting 15 minutes for tutees who do not cancel an appointment.
- D. YOU DO NOT KNOW WHAT TO DO OR HOW TO HANDLE A GIVEN SITUATION - Check with your coordinator. If that coordinator is absent, contact another LRC staff member.

III. OTHER INFORMATION

- A. YOU ARE A PROFESSIONAL - By accepting this appointment to the tutorial staff, you are undertaking a commitment to those students assigned to your tutelage. You are expected to maintain a professional demeanor and courteous manner while tutoring. You are expected to provide a service of some value to your tutees. This service requires a firm grasp of your subject matter, great patience, good humor, and possession or development of basic tutoring skills. While you are not asked to be an expert, we do ask that you provide only accurate information, which implies qualifying answers when you are uncertain and checking with others when you do not know. Initial, ongoing tutor training, and periodic meetings are for your professional growth. They help you to develop strategies for managing many tutorial situations.

You are also expected to respect your tutees as people, independent of the tutoring relationship. This respect implies a recognition that their time is just as important to them as yours is to you. Excessive tardiness and/or lateness are simply not acceptable. You are expected to arrange your personal schedule so that study times, conferences with instructors, physician visits, etc. do not fall within the times you have already contracted to tutor.

Basic Procedures [continued]

- B. **YOU HAVE RIGHTS ACCOMPANYING YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES** As a professional, your time is valuable. Students who have not appeared for tutoring for two consecutive appointments will be dropped from your schedule. They will be notified by email that they have been dropped, and must make another appointment if they still wish to be tutored. In order for us to enforce this policy, it is imperative that you report such absences in the Attendance Book.

You are not expected to be infallible, but simply to do your best.

You are not expected (nor even permitted) to do the students' homework assignments or take home tests.

You are not expected to take abuse or to deal with personal or psychological problems which may arise during the tutoring sessions. If you have any problems along these lines, see your coordinator at your first opportunity.

- C. **DO NOT ADJUST YOUR SCHEDULE YOURSELF.** Inform your coordinator of any and all changes to be made in your schedule, including make-up hours and students to be dropped for nonattendance.
- D. **DO NOT ADVISE STUDENTS ON DROPPING COURSES.** Make no recommendations. If asked, refer students to their academic advisor. Because of the UMBC retention system and eligibility requirements for various grants, advising is tricky business.
- E. **ONGOING EVALUATIONS** - Please complete and encourage tutees to complete all tutorial center evaluations or surveys when they are available throughout the semester.
- F. **MAKE SURE YOUR TIME SHEET IS COMPLETED ON TIME.** Time sheets are due on alternate Fridays. Watch for notification that time sheets are due. Time sheets which are not completed are not processed, and your payment will be delayed. Time sheets are not considered complete unless they are **signed and dated in ink**. Please be sure that the information on the time sheets is accurate.
- G. **SOME TEXTS, REFERENCE BOOKS, AND ANSWER BOOKS ARE AVAILABLE.** Additionally, chalk, paper, other supplies, and copying privileges can be made available. Ask the coordinators or the office staff in your tutoring location.

TUTORING SESSIONS

The first tutoring session will set the tone for the semester. In your first session, you will want to establish rapport and learn something about the student's learning style and study habits. You will also need to discuss the guidelines that promote effective tutoring sessions to include

- procedures for using walk-in tutoring and/or tutoring by appointment
- when and where tutoring will occur
- the frequency and length of each session
- responsibilities of both the tutor and the student
- the procedure for canceling and rescheduling appointments

Preparation for Tutoring

- Collect materials appropriate to the subject matter, session, format, and/or location of the tutoring situation.
- Review concepts likely to be discussed. Think about ways to help students develop strategies for understanding the information. Pay particular attention to those areas that you know are problematic.

During the Tutoring Session

- Begin each session by determining the student's needs. Ask the student what topic(s) needs to be reviewed during the session. Have the student explain his/her understanding of the topic(s). **ASK EFFECTIVE QUESTIONS** - Ask open-ended questions such as, **WHY.....WHAT.....HOW.....TELL ME MORE ABOUT THAT.....** You want the student to be able to reveal the level and scope of the problem he/she is experiencing. Try to avoid questions that elicit a yes or no answer. **LISTEN** for cues that suggest the student's lack of understanding is based on a misinterpretation of the information, on incomplete, or on inaccurate information.
- Review from a previous session or review prerequisite information to determine the student's readiness for the next topic(s).
- Throughout the session, provide many opportunities for the student to explain (draw, show, calculate, diagram, construct, etc.) the concepts. Active involvement is important for learning. When necessary assign additional practice to be completed by the next tutoring session. A mock quiz is another useful practice strategy.
- Complete each session with a review of the major concepts discussed. Guide the student through the logical sequencing of the information; this procedure is very important to learning and retaining the information.
- Give students objective information about an instructor rather than your subjective view about the instructor; e.g., "She/he assigns weekly homework, two papers, an oral presentation, and gives four exams." Instead of "He/She acted like this is the only course I had."

TUTORING SESSIONS [continued]

- Help students learn strategies for managing multiple course requirements, learning course content, and preparing for exams.
- Talk to students about the progress they are making in the tutorial rather than about a particular grade. You have no input into the grading process, so don't create potential conflicts between you, the student, and an instructor. As students become more effective learners, the chance of higher grades increases.

Group Tutoring:

Working with a group of students creates situations that do not occur during individual tutoring sessions. Although many of the same guidelines for individual tutoring are applicable, there are strategies and procedures that a group tutor needs to use. The research on group dynamics suggests that there are five categories of activity that help to keep a group functioning effectively [MacDonald, 1993].

1. **Setting group standards early:** The tutor should guide students in identifying a common task and clarify group members' roles related to the task.
2. **Accommodating differences:** Small groups can be divided into smaller groups, and even individuals can work alone when students in the same class have differing needs. The course content is the constant; thus, the tutor can pair students, or separate them according to understanding. The tutor can then move between groups or individuals.
3. **Managing time:** Students are often unrealistic about how much can be accomplished in a period of time. The tutor should involve students in allocating time to different tasks. The number of tasks should reflect the difficulty of the subject-matter and the diversity among the group members. This method is also an effective way for individual students to start recognizing their own time-to-task requirements.
4. **Getting and staying focused:** Periodically, group attention wanders away from the subject. Stating or restating the goals for a tutoring session and expecting specific tasks from specific students helps to direct the focus away from unrelated topics.
5. **Facilitating communication:** Giving each person an opportunity to speak and obliging them to listen appropriately is vital to group tutoring. Again, expecting specific, subject-related tasks from specific students helps to facilitate communication **and** learning. Statements like "listen for causes of" or "explain the sequence of" or "give examples of" highlights the effectiveness of listening and learning from each other while also maintaining order within the group.

Tutoring Sessions [continued]

Tutoring Behavior:

1. **BE PATIENT!!** Remember that you are the “expert,” and sometimes it is difficult to realize that others can have difficulty in understanding something that comes so easily to you. Give the student time to respond, and rephrase or reduce a question when necessary.
2. **BE POSITIVE!!** A word of encouragement can sometimes be the key to getting a student enthused. NEVER belittle, patronize, or ridicule a student.
3. **BE FIRM!!** Make your expectations clear and challenge the student to produce the best work possible. NEVER do the student’s work for them!
4. **BE TRUTHFUL!!** If you do not know the answer to a question, don’t be afraid to admit it. You can both seek out the correct answer by talking to the professor or using other resources.

The Tutoring Cycle: Getting Students to Participate Throughout a Tutoring Session

Abridged from The Master Tutor, Ross B. MacDonald (1994)

Step 1: Greeting and Climate Setting

The warmth of the greeting and the arrangement of chairs and tables are important to setting a positive tone. The positioning of members of a group, or you and the student in one-to-one tutoring will determine how much participation you can expect from the tutee(s). Remember, whatever tools you are using, pencils, pens, chalk, chalkboard, should be in the hands of the tutee(s). How will you promote independent thinking and behavior from the beginning?

Step 2: Identifying Task(s)

Given the opportunity, nearly all tutees will voluntarily state what technique it is they wish to work on. Ask them what their needs are rather than the other way around. This keeps them in charge of their learning. Some tutees will be more specific and clearer than others. Those who are less focused can be helped by follow up questions or statements from you or by restatement of their statements. The session will begin to develop a focus and the tutee is doing the focusing.

Step 3: Breaking the Task(s) Into Parts

Most task(s) that a tutee brings to tutoring have several parts or a sequence of parts. Ask the tutee to break the task into parts. For example, a student who needs help with transitions in an essay or has to understand mitosis for biology can be guided to think about the full scope or nature of these concepts as a series of related ideas or a sequence of ideas.

Step 4: Identifying Thought Processes Which Underlie the Task(s)

This step is one of the most critical to a student developing skills for operating independently. This is where the tutor helps the tutee to learn how to learn the type of task with which she is having problems. Giving the tutee the opportunity to talk about a general approach to doing a task helps her to develop and use tools to learn when she is studying by herself. Particularly important here is the use of the course materials, the textbook, handouts, lecture notes, etc., as the source of information. You, the tutor, are not the source of information. If you always explain the information to the student, how will the student learn how to get information from the course materials? Directing the student's attention to the textbook shows her that the information she needs is available to her as a result of her efforts. How important is it to your success as a student that you know how to use your course materials for your own learning? How valuable is it to you when faced with a learning task that you can eliminate a good deal of information, and then focus on the processes, procedures, or concepts that are most likely relevant to completing the task?

Step 5: Setting the Agenda for the Session

Any given tutoring session starts with knowing what the task(s) is and secondly using the available time to complete the task. How do you give the tutee the opportunity to structure the session?

Step 6: Addressing the Task

In this step you and the tutee follow the learning agenda. Again, remember that the source of information is the course material. This is where your use of initiating, open-ended questioning, restating, pausing, silence, coaching, correcting (redirecting thinking) guide the student's learning or problem-solving. The tutee in turn is reading, writing, explaining, describing, demonstrating, calculating, or diagramming information that solves or completes the learning task.

Step 7: Summarizing the Content by the Tutee

This is where the tutee explains and/or demonstrates the information he has just learned. Let the student's explanation run its course without interruption. Doing so helps both of you to evaluate the accuracy and the completeness of his understanding. Letting a student continue even if you hear a misstatement or gap gives him the opportunity to self-correct or to identify what information he is still unsure about. When the tutee does not understand, the tutor's job is to redirect the student back to the source of information. Offer a clear explanation only when the student cannot grasp the concept on his own.

Explaining what he has learned is also a first good step to retaining the information. Explaining helps move the information from short term memory to long term memory. Conjugating verbs in a second language, factoring equations, describing the economic causes of the Civil War and using the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature are all examples of information that is in long term memory.

Step 8: Summarizing the Underlying Process by the Tutee

Your task in Step 8 is to ensure that the tutee can summarize the learning (thinking) process used to complete the task. Ask the tutee to explain how to do the type of task on which you've worked; what do you say or do to initiate this explanation?

Step 9: Confirming the Tutee

Once the tutee has explained the content and the thinking (process) that underlies the learning task, skillful tutors will offer some kind of congratulatory statement. Simple and direct statements that identify specific accomplishments help the tutee know what to keep doing. Tutors also encourage tutees to evaluate themselves (how?). Doing so encourages the student to look to herself for approval (and responsibility), not to you the tutor.

Step 10: Planning for the Future

How do you get the tutee to plan for his future learning in the subject or the next related learning task? By planning for the future, the tutee reinforces the connection between what he learned in the tutoring session, the information presented in class, and what he is reading or studying on his own.

Step 11: Arranging and Planning the Next Session

This step typically involves setting a time and place for the next tutoring session. Your particular tutoring format, i.e., fixed appointment or drop in, will dictate the need for scheduling. You can, however, give the student the opportunity to think ahead and to plan interim activities before the next tutoring session. Promoting the notions of time management, routine review, related practice, studying, reading, and more tutee involvement (preparedness) helps in the next tutoring session. As always, **if you ask open-ended questions, you give the power to the tutee, reinforcing his independence from you.**

Step 12: Closing and Good-bye

This step will happen naturally. The goal is to leave on a positive note. It will only take a couple of seconds to give a sincere good-bye. You may also want to recognize some specific contribution or accomplishment the tutee made in the session. What might you say?

Well, what do you think? How are these steps (ideas) demonstrated in your tutoring sessions? How could you incorporate more of these steps in your tutoring session? How different would the strategies be for group tutoring compared with one-to-one tutoring?

TUTOR EVALUATION & RECOGNITION

Evaluation is an integral activity of the LRC Tutorial Center. The LRC staff is committed to the idea that tutoring is an effective way for many students to learn. Consequently, students evaluate the tutors and the program, and likewise the tutors evaluate the students and the program. Additionally, the LRC Academic Coordinators monitor tutoring effectiveness by observing tutors and tutoring situations throughout the year. Coordinators review the tutors academic transcripts each semester to maintain academic integrity for the program and to ensure that tutors are progressing towards their own academic goals as well.

Based on the student and staff evaluations, a tutor is invited to continue the next semester, counseled when a less than satisfactory rating is received, or is released from tutoring duties to improve his/her academic standing. Some tutors are nominated to receive “**Excellence in Tutoring Award.**” The awards are presented to those graduating seniors who have shown consistently outstanding tutoring and academic performance for four or more semesters and have achieved Level 3 tutor training. Others tutors received the “**Outstanding Tutor Award**” which was given to those tutors who again showed outstanding tutoring for four or more semesters and had achieved Level 2 tutor training. The 2008 – 2009 awardees were

Excellence in Tutoring Award

- ◆ Hannah Cobb, 2006 – 2009 in the Writing Center

Outstanding Tutor Award

- ◆ Stephen Mallary, 2004 – 2009 in Spanish and French
- ◆ Stephen Mobley, 2005 – 2009 in Computer Science and in the Math Lab
- ◆ Katherine Millionie, 2007 – 2009 in the Writing Center
- ◆ Cameron Mozafari, 2007 – 2008 in the Writing Center

REMEMBER!

TUTORING IS A MUTUAL LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Tutors say, “Tutoring works when the student...

- attends regularly and on time.”
- is pleasant and eager to learn.”
- comes to tutoring with specific questions to be answered.”
- gets involved with learning, is motivated and interested in the subject.”
- understands that learning takes time and requires consistent study.”

Tutees say, “Tutoring works when the tutor...

- attends regularly and uses time efficiently.”
- maintains a good rapport, is patient and supportive.”
- encourages discussion and participation and listens attentively.”
- makes the material interesting.”
- suggests specific study and test-taking strategies.”

APPENDIX
Sample Forms

University of Maryland Baltimore County
Learning Resources Center (LRC)
and
Student Support Services (SSS)

Peer Tutor Contract

Tutoring is a professional responsibility. By accepting a tutoring position with the Learning Resources Center and/or Student Support Services, you are committing to the departments' mission to provide consistent and effective tutoring to UMBC students.

As an LRC and/or SSS tutor, I will

- Adhere to the LRC/SSS philosophy of treating all students with dignity and respect
- Be available to my students for the entire semester(s) of my employment
- Provide a **one week** advanced notice to my supervisor if I must resign during the semester or adjust my original schedule
- Maintain prompt and reliable attendance for all tutoring sessions
- Contact the LRC Office (410/455-2444) or the SSS Office (410/455-3250) if I will be late or absent
- Complete all record keeping tasks accurately and on time, including completing and signing time sheets and evaluations
- Attend all tutor training activities and meetings as appropriate
- Complete Level 1 training by the end of the semester hired (Refer to the Tutor Handbook for a full policy explanation.)

I have read and fully understand the conditions of my employment. I recognize that my failure to comply with these expectations will result in the re-evaluation of my suitability for LRC and/or SSS employment.

Tutor Signature

Date

Supervisor Signature

Date

University of Maryland Baltimore County
Learning Resources Center
Tutor Evaluation Form

Tutor's Name _____ Date _____

1. What is your class standing?
_____ Freshman _____ Sophomore _____ Junior _____ Senior
2. What courses did you tutor this semester? (Please specify course number.)
3. How many hours per week did you tutor? _____
4. Where did you tutor most?
_____ Labs _____ Tutoring rooms _____ Different floors in AC IV Bldg
5. How many of your tutees came on a regular basis? _____
6. Did your tutees know what they needed help with? How realistic were tutees about the amount of time needed to learn or study the concepts?
7. How would you describe the tutees' attitude in tutoring sessions. Please describe in detail.
8. What improvements would you suggest for the tutorial in which you work (i.e., Math Lab, Writing Center, Evening Center, or Appointment Tutoring)?
9. For Appointment Tutors Only:
 - a. Did you find that a once a week meeting was sufficient for most tutees? Explain why or why not.
 - b. If you worked with a group of students, did you find the size of the group workable? Explain why or why not.
10. Overall, how would you rate the tutorial in which you work?
_____ Very Good _____ Satisfactory _____ Unsatisfactory
11. What is the most important thing you learned about tutoring or about the subject you tutored this semester?

Course-Specific Troublespots

What specific course concepts, tasks, or skills do students have trouble learning or applying in the courses you tutor? List below the most frequently difficult topics, principles, theories, formulas, skills, assignments, and tasks for students to master in each of the courses you tutor. You may attach additional sheets if necessary.

Course 1 _____

Course 2 _____

Tutorial Center Evaluation Form (Scheduled Appointment)

Tutee: Please help us maintain and improve our services by completing the following evaluation. When finished, give the form to the Office Staff or leave it in the box on the counter. Thank you for your cooperation.

Please check or write in your response to the following questions.

What is your classification? _____ Freshman _____ Sophomore _____ Junior _____ Senior

How did you find out about the Tutorial Center?

_____ Announcement in class _____ Retriever ad or poster
 _____ Referred by instructor _____ Other _____
 _____ Friend or classmate

Was the LRC/SSS Office Staff friendly and helpful?

_____ Yes _____ No (please explain)

What course did you want tutoring assistance in and why?

How long did it take before LRC notified you of your scheduled tutoring session?

_____ 1-3 days _____ 4-6 days _____ 7+more days

If it was longer than a week, were you notified of the reason for the delay?

_____ Yes _____ No

I have used the Tutorial Center in a previous semester.

_____ Yes _____ No

Estimate the number of times you have met with your tutor. _____

Overall, how would you rate the services of the Tutorial Center:

_____ Very Good _____ Satisfactory _____ Unsatisfactory

How would you improve the services of the Tutorial Center?

Please circle the most appropriate response.

A = always **U** = usually **S** = sometimes **R** = rarely **N** = never **NA** = not applicable

- | | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1. | The tutor had a helpful attitude (i.e., was patient, supportive, and empathetic) | A | U | S | R | N | NA |
| 2. | The tutor exhibited a positive attitude toward the course. | A | U | S | R | N | NA |
| 3. | The tutor appeared to enjoy tutoring. | A | U | S | R | N | NA |
| 4. | The tutor spoke clearly and distinctly. | A | U | S | R | N | NA |
| 5. | The tutor encouraged discussion and conversation. | A | U | S | R | N | NA |
| 6. | The tutor paid attention when I spoke. | A | U | S | R | N | NA |
| 7. | The tutor knew the subject matter. | A | U | S | R | N | NA |
| 8. | The tutor made the material understandable. | A | U | S | R | N | NA |
| 9. | The tutor knew when I didn't understand the subject. | A | U | S | R | N | NA |
| 10. | The tutor suggested ways to improve my study habits. | A | U | S | R | N | NA |
| 11. | The tutor managed group tutoring well. | A | U | S | R | N | NA |
| 12. | The tutor made efficient use of our time together. | A | U | S | R | N | NA |
| 13. | I am getting a higher grade in this course because of tutoring. | A | U | S | R | N | NA |
| 14. | I might have dropped this class if I had not received tutoring. | A | U | S | R | N | NA |

My tutor's name is _____

Please suggest areas of improvement for the tutor.

Math Lab Evaluation

Dear Math Lab Client: Please help us maintain and improve our services by giving us a frank evaluation of your visit(s) here. Please do not give us your name. When finished, leave this form on the main desk.

1. Class Standing: ___ Freshman ___ Sophomore ___ Junior ___ Senior ___ Other
2. Which math course are you taking?
 ___ LRC 099 ___ MATH 106 ___ MATH 140 ___ MATH 141
 ___ MATH 142 ___ MATH 150 ___ MATH 151 ___ MATH 152
 ___ MATH 155 ___ OTHER (please specify) _____
3. How did you find out about the Math Lab?
 ___ announced in class ___ friend or classmate ___ referred by instructor
 ___ Retriever ad or poster ___ other (please specify) _____
4. Math Lab hours were _____ convenient _____ inconvenient because _____.
5. About how often did you visit the Math Lab?
 _____ more than once a week _____ once a week _____ less than once a week
6. About how long did you have to wait for a tutor to help you?
 _____ 0-5 min. _____ 5-10 min. _____ 10-20 min. _____ longer than 20 min.
7. About how long did you usually stay in the Lab?
 _____ just a few min. _____ about a half hour _____ more than half an hour

In the section below, circle the most appropriate answer.

A = always U = usually S = sometimes R = rarely N = never

When I visited the Math Lab,

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Tutors responded to my concerns in a way I could understand. | A | U | S | R | N |
| 2. Tutors encouraged my participation in improving my skills. | A | U | S | R | N |
| 3. Tutors were friendly and receptive. | A | U | S | R | N |
| 4. Tutors appeared qualified to tutor math. | A | U | S | R | N |

If you have been to us more than once, please answer questions 5 to 12.

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5. Learning math concepts is easier for me now. | A | U | S | R | N |
| 6. I am more confident about my ability to learn math. | A | U | S | R | N |
| 7. I budget sufficient time for math studying. | A | U | S | R | N |
| 8. I am better able to detect my own errors. | A | U | S | R | N |
| 9. I complete practice problem sets more easily. | A | U | S | R | N |
| 10. I complete word problems more easily. | A | U | S | R | N |

Please answer the following questions as specifically as you can. Use the back if necessary.

1. What did you especially like about the Math Lab's services?

2. What suggestions do you have to improve the Math Lab's services?

Please check the answer which most accurately represents your feelings.

Overall, my experience in the Math Lab has been

___ Very Good ___ Satisfactory ___ Unsatisfactory