

1. Tutor code of ethics - adapted from the National Tutoring Association and National Association of Tutorial Services

I understand that my role as a tutor is to never do the student's work for him or her.

I will give honest feedback to the students I serve and will not insult my students with false hope or empty flattery; I will always demonstrate faith in the students' learning abilities.

I understand that my relationship to the students is professional and not personal.

I will show respect for the students' cultural backgrounds and personal value systems.

I recognize that I may not have all the answers to student questions. In this event, I will seek assistance in finding answers to the student's questions and/or direct the student to an appropriate resource for the information.

I will maintain accurate records of tutoring sessions as expected and required.

I will respect the students' personal dignity at all times.

I will be on time for my tutoring shift, not only out of courtesy, but to be a good example for the students to follow.

I will keep all information about the students with whom I work confidential.

I understand that my ultimate goal is to assist the students in learning how they best learn and to help the students develop the skills to achieve their best, most efficient learning.

I will share any concerns I have with my supervisor.

I expect to learn along with the students.

I will remain flexible to my approach to student learning, respectful of the various learning styles.

I will share techniques for improved study skills with the students.

I understand my ultimate tutoring goal is my student's independence.

2. Math Resource Center Website

We have many resources at www.lc.edu/ssc ranging from worksheets for individual courses to general study skills information to hours of operation for the MRC. Please familiarize yourself with the site and point students there whenever you can.

3. Learning styles quiz

It is a good idea to know how you best learn: through seeing, hearing, or doing, or a combination. Point out to students that it is important and that they should use the study techniques that benefit them the most. Be aware that your learning style may differ dramatically from a student's. Refer students to the MRC website for a learning style inventory and strategies for more effective studying.

4. Building blocks for effective tutoring

Good tutoring is based on mutual respect and trust. never on an attitude of condescension. Curb any inclination to impress. You are there to help.

Use Reflective Questioning. This technique will help you with many of the other building blocks that follow. When you are asked a question, rephrase it, break it into parts and reflect it back to the group or student for response. The purpose of this is to generate discussion, get students to make connections *themselves* and pull information together. It may be easy for you, a knowledgeable tutor, to answer questions directly. However, if students reason out the answer or put the pieces together themselves, they are far more likely to remember.

Teach students how to learn. Don't just solve the student's problem. Work the concepts.

Make sure the student understands the problem and the associated vocabulary.

Be aware of student needs. Pay attention to student reactions and learn to "read" them.

Tutor to the situation. Don't go beyond the immediate need.

Develop a sense of empathy. Recall a class that was difficult for you and remember that not all students find the same subjects easy to understand.

Use different approaches in problem solving.

5. Guidelines for effective tutoring

Develop a sense of trust. Do not laugh or make fun of the student. Everyone has a subject or class that they do better in than others.

Tutors should make things easy for the student to understand. Give different examples. Think of alternative ways to explain the idea or subject. Simplify the process as much as possible. Often students over-complicate the material.

Do not say things like “This is simple” or “Obviously, we do this...” Those statements make students who do not understand think they are stupid and they become more reluctant to ask questions.

Do not be afraid to admit that you don't know something. Ask for help if you need it.

Ask questions that require more than a yes or no answer. *Examples:* Can you tell me why this happens? Why is it done this way? What do you think should be done next?

Do not rush to answer your own questions. Give the student enough time to think and answer, thirty seconds or so. At first, waiting this long may feel uncomfortable but you will get used to it. If the student does not have an answer, ask a leading question rather than answering your own question.

Your students should be able to explain what they have learned to you and what they do not understand or feel they can't learn. Ask the student to explain what they've learned from you.

Be a good listener and a good role model. Try not to interrupt the student, even if you think you know where they are going.

Have fun while tutoring and learning.

Never do the student's homework or answer the questions for them. This does not help them or teach them.

Build on what the student already knows. Ask what a student understands, not what they don't understand.

Encourage and model a good attitude toward math. A bad attitude along with a fear of failing can destroy a student's chances of passing their math class.

Emphasize that mistakes are to be corrected, not seen as evidence of eventual failure.

Praise students for good work with your remarks and non-verbal cues. Try to curb negative remarks and facial expressions.

6. Math and test anxiety

Remember that many of our clients have math or test anxiety. If they complain of studying but not remembering at test time or just being anxious when they think about math, suggest they attend the math anxiety workshops we hold every semester. You can also point them to the MRC website for the workshop handouts. Become familiar with them yourself so you can more readily point students to them.

7. Steps for assisting math students

Step one:

Always look at the problem in the book. Never trust that a student has set it up correctly.

Step two:

Look at the student's notes from class. It is best to try to explain a topic like the teacher did in class.

Step three:

Ask student to explain the procedure s/he is using to solve the problem. You can troubleshoot and listen for erroneous logic or incorrect procedures at that time. If they say they do not know where to start, ask about similar problems or refer them to an example seen in their notes or book.

Step four:

Reinforce any correct procedures (e.g. "This part is done correctly", or "You're on target here".) Then identify incorrect logic and ask the student to consider what else s/he might try. You can provide a hint, but avoid explanations until after the student has attempted a guess. (e.g. "When you evaluate an integral, what do you evaluate first, the upper or lower part?")

Step five:

To check for understanding have the student re-explain the procedure to you. Avoid asking questions like, "Does that make sense to you?" and "Do you understand now?" You will likely get a meaningless "yes" instead of truly knowing what the student knows. Having to put a concept into words will help the student internalize it.

Step six:

Disengage! Encourage the student to work the next problem on his/her own, but let him/her know you will check back. Do not get drawn into working the next problem with an insecure student. S/he needs to develop the ability to apply what s/he is learning without your supervision.

8. **Effective communication skills**

Listening is a very important skill, especially for tutors. Many tutors tend to talk too much during a tutorial session. This defeats the purpose of tutoring, which is to allow students to learn by discussion. Rather than turning the session into a mini-lecture, tutors must actively listen and encourage their students to become active learners. Giving a student your full attention is sometimes difficult because you start to run out of time, or you find yourself thinking about your next question; however, the time you spend actively listening to your student will result in a quality tutoring session. Use eye contact and look for non-verbal cues that the student is confused. Do not necessarily wait for them to say so.

9. **Incorporating study skills into tutoring**

Encourage students to take good notes, bring them to the MRC, ask questions in class, set up a quiet, organized environment at home for homework, use the instructor's office hours, and do their homework promptly after class so it is fresh in their mind. If their notes look disorganized, suggest that they work on improving their note taking skills. Encourage students to replace long periods of study with shorter but more frequent study sessions.

10. **Steps for doing math**

Step one:

Read the problem twice and instructions carefully. You may want to underline important words in the problem such as "sum" or "area".

Step two:

Write down information or copy original equation from book. A table may help organize the information. Drawing a picture often helps with story problems. Devise a game plan for solving the problem.

Step three:

Work the problem, recording steps neatly. Do not scrimp on paper. If you are unsure of a rule, look it up or see if it works with actual numbers.

Step four:

Check your answer in the original equation and to make sure it makes sense.

11. Strategies for distracted and disorganized learners

Remind the student to label the sections and problem numbers in their notebook, not to scrimp on paper, use flash cards to study hard-to-remember equations, keep a to-do list and mark things off when completed, create a quiet, comfortable study area, and turn off electronic distractions.

12. Veteran tutor words of wisdom

13. Technology in MRC

What are the main technology issues the tutors face? We will discuss MyMathLab among other topics.

14. FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act)

You are required by law to treat any information about your student clients with confidentiality. Do not talk about the students' grades or abilities to others in person or on the internet. Treat this information with the respect you expect your own grade information to be treated.

You are a valued member of the Math Resource Center team. If you have any concerns or suggestions, do not hesitate to talk to one of us. Thank you for your hard work and dedication.

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