



**TOWSON UNIVERSITY**  
**CRLA TUTOR TRAINING**  
**PROGRAM**



Academic Achievement  
Center

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Director

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## ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES

### Academic Achievement Center

Cook Library - 524  
410-704-2291  
Coordinator: Ms. Liz Scarbrough

### Computer Science Tutorial

7800 York Road – 407  
410-704-2424  
Coordinator: Mr. Richard Webster

### Mathematics Tutorial

7800 York Road - 105  
Coordinator: TBD, 410-704-2291

### Natural Sciences Tutorials

Smith Hall – 538  
410-704-3054  
Coordinator: Ms. Liina Ladon  
Check AAC website for drop-in schedules.

### Music Tutorial

Center for the Arts – 3088  
410-704-2819  
Coordinator: Dr. Kalin Kirilov  
To register for a music tutor, visit:  
[www.towson.edu/aac/musicform.html](http://www.towson.edu/aac/musicform.html)

## English Department Writing Services

### Writing Lab ~

Native English speakers  
Linthicum Hall – 308  
410-704-3426  
Director: Dr. Deborah Shaller

### Writing Support Program ~

Sentence-level and grammar skills  
Linthicum Hall – 201B  
410-704-2857  
Director: Ms. Margaret Benner

### ESOL Writing Services ~

English as second language  
Administration Building – 216  
410-704-5016  
Director: Dr. Carol Phippen

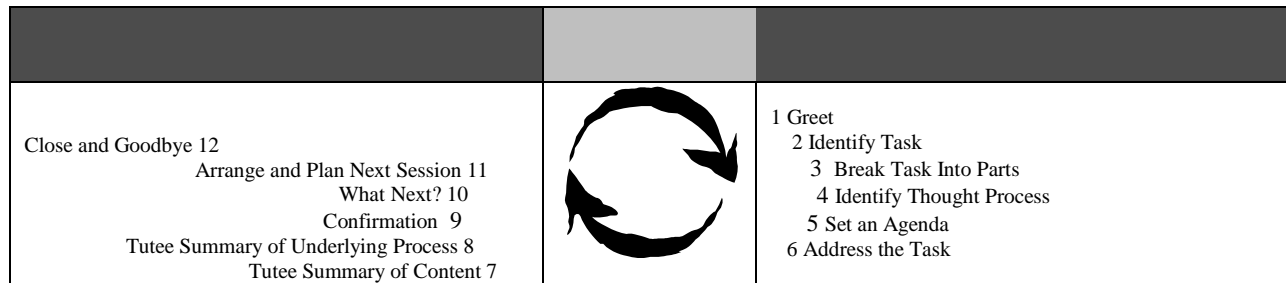
### Writing Program's Computer Lab ~

Computer software for writing-skills improvement and analysis.  
Linthicum Hall – 207  
410-704-3834  
Director: James Hardin

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# The Tutoring Cycle



**The 12 steps in the diagram will guide you through a tutoring session, help you to tutor more effectively, and help the student to become a more independent learner.**

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

## **Step 1: Greeting and Climate Settings**

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, chalkboard, etc.) should be in the hands of the tutee(s). **How will you promote independent thinking and behavior from the beginning?**

## **Step 2: Identification of Task(s)**

Given the opportunity, nearly all tutees will voluntarily state what it is they wish to work on. Let them direct your attention to their needs rather than the other way around. This keeps them in charge of their learning. Some tutees will be more specific and clearer than others. Following up questions or statements can help those who are less focused 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. Permit the tutee to break the tasks 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: Identification of 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 tasks he is having problems with. Giving the tutee the opportunity to talk about a general approach to doing a task helps him to develop and use tools to learn when he is studying by himself. 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 him that the information he needs is available to him as a result of his 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: Set 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 of material. This is where your use of initiating, open-ended questioning, restating, pausing, silence, coaching and correcting (redirecting thinking) guides 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: Tutee Summary of Content**

This is where the tutee explains and/or demonstrates the information he has just learned, as he understands it. Let the student's explanation run its course without interruption. This helps both of you to evaluate the accuracy and the completeness of his understanding. Letting a student continue even if you hear a mis-statement or gap gives him the opportunity to self-correct or tell him what information he is still unsure about. When the tutee does not understand, it is the tutor's job 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: Tutee Summary of Underlying Process**

Your task in step 8 is to be sure that the tutee can summarize the learning (thinking) process used to complete the task. Get the tutee to explain how to do the type of task you've worked on. What do you say or do to initiate this?

### **Step 9: Confirmation**

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?). This encourages the student to look to himself for approval and responsibility---not to you, the tutor.

### **Step 10: What next?**

How do you get the tutee to plan for his future learning in the subject or the next related learning task? This reinforces the connection between what he learned in tutoring, 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. setting the appointment or walk-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. This promotes the notations of time management, routine review-related practice, studying, reading, and also, more tutee involvement (preparedness) in the next tutoring session. As always, if you ask open-ended questions you give the power to the tutee, this reinforces his independence from you.

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

This 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 has made in the session. What might you say?

# Philosophy of a Peer Tutor

A peer tutor is an employee of the Towson University and represents the Academic Achievement Center. The tutor expected to focus on the positive aspects of the learning experience and assist the students by 1) providing unparalleled service to students struggling with their academic studies, 2) providing a student's perspective on learning and strategies for academic success, 3) explaining the steps taken to understand the information and concepts, 4) facilitating tutees' insight into the underlying thought process to promote independent learning, 5) and building students confidence as they integrate effective learning and study strategies.

## Code of Ethics

Ethics are standards of conduct based on shared values and principles. Having a code of ethics is essential for a tutor to be effective. A code of ethics helps a tutor anticipate interpersonal and potential problems and prepares tutors to develop appropriate responses to situations before they occur.

1. My major motivation is building my student's self-confidence.
2. Subject proficiency and knowledge ability have a high priority in my task as a tutor.
3. My student deserves and will receive my total attention.
4. The language my student and I share must be mutually understandable at all times.
5. I must be able to admit my own weaknesses and I will seek assistance whenever I need it.
6. Respect for my student's personal dignity means I accept the individual without judgment.
7. My student will constantly be encouraged but never insulted with false hope or flattery.
8. I will strive for a mutual relationship of openness and honesty as I tutor.
9. I will not impose my personal value system or lifestyle upon my student.
10. I will not use a tutoring situation to proselytize my personal belief system.
11. Both the student and I will understand that my role as a tutor is not to do the student's work.
12. I count on my student to also be my tutor and to teach me ways to do a better job.
13. I will always do my best to be punctual and keep appointments, not only out of courtesy but also as an example for my student to follow.
14. I will maintain the daily log and any other records as expected and required, realizing that others need them to do their tasks.
15. Making learning real for the student is what tutoring is all about.
16. My goal is to help the student attain independence in the college setting.

# Verification of Requirements for CRLA Tutor Certification



	<b>Mandatory Training</b>	<b>Additional Training</b>
<p><b>Level 1</b></p> <p><b>Total Avail Hrs: 22</b></p>	<p>Attend two 5-hour tutor training workshops – one per semester</p>	<p>Tutor Training Videotape 1-hour – maximum of one per semester</p> <p>Attend a 1-hour training session with graduate assistant or a seasoned tutor – maximum of once per academic year</p> <p>Attend any one of the 2-hour supplemental tutor training workshops – maximum of once per semester</p> <p>Attend the 3 hour annual student development conference hosted by University of Baltimore – maximum of once per year – can be used in lieu of one mandatory tutor training workshop</p> <p>Co-facilitate two 1-hour study skills workshops – one per semester</p> <p>* Additional training time is permitted as necessary, but it will not count toward certification hours</p>
<p><b>Level 2</b></p> <p><b>Total Avail Hrs: 18</b> math tutors, 16 all other tutors</p>	<p>Attend two 5-hour tutor training workshops – one per semester</p>	<p>Tutor Training Videotape 1-hour – maximum of one per academic year</p> <p>Attend a 1-hour tutor training with graduate assistant or an advanced tutor- maximum of once per academic year</p> <p>Attend any 2-hour supplemental tutor training workshops – maximum of once per semester</p> <p>Lead structured study group for Developmental Math - only applies for math tutors for a 1-hour session per semester</p>
<p><b>Level 3</b></p> <p><b>Total Avail Hrs: same as Level 2</b></p>	<p>Attend two 5-hour tutor training workshops – one per semester</p> <p>One observed tutor session per year- counts as 1hour</p> <p>Develop and distribute a discipline related survey to level 1 and level 2 tutors; complete data analysis and present findings to the tutor coordinator- conducted at the end of the academic year – counts as 2 hours</p>	<p>Tutor training Videotape on target populations (i.e. adult learners &amp; students with disabilities) – maximum of one per year</p> <p>Lead structured study group for Developmental Math 101 or 110 – only applies for math tutors for a 1-hour session per semester</p> <p>Observe and evaluate tutorial session of any non level 3 tutor – one per semester</p> <p>* All level 3 tutors will assist the tutor coordinator with overseeing and training non certified, level 1 and level 2 tutors.</p>

# The Characteristics of an Effective Tutor

Tutors are expected to:

- be knowledgeable of course material.
- be reliable, committed and punctual.
- be honest if you do not know the answer.
- be patient and considerate.
- be observant and pay attention to what tutees enjoy and how they learn.
- be an active and attentive listener.
- be knowledgeable of tutees' strengths and weaknesses.
- be an encouraging and enthusiastic tutor.
- be an effective communicator.
- be professional, confident and humble.
- be creative and make learning active and enjoyable.
- be respectful of tutees' privacy and difference of ethnicity and opinions.
- be open-minded and non-judgmental.
- be supportive of tutees' efforts and their accomplishments.
- be hopeful but don't make empty promises.

# Tutor Responsibilities:

## Do's and Don'ts of Tutoring

### DO:

- 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,
- encourage tutees to become independent learners. Make learning active, fun, visual and hands-on,
- encourage your tutees to verbalize their ideas; tutees should be taking about 75% of the time during the session,
- use positive reinforcement effectively and give positive feedback, but don't make empty promises,
- 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,
- use positive body language and create an atmosphere conducive to learning,
- if needed, show your tutees how to use the course syllabus as a basis for goal setting,
- encourage tutees to meet with their instructors to discuss any concerns,
- be willing to share your experiences when you think it's appropriate,
- demonstrate the ability to establish a rapport with people from diverse backgrounds,
- discuss assignments and even suggest and reinforce necessary study skills, but do not complete tutees' assignments.

### DON'T:

- promote cheating or plagiarism in any form by assisting in or completing tutees' homework, class projects, writing assignments, or take-home tests,
- insult or use derogatory remarks about the tutees' performance during a session and about the instructional program or instructors,
- be bias, "talk down" or belittle tutees,
- advise students on dropping courses: refer students to their academic advisor,
- discuss your tutees' problems with other students or with their instructors without the tutees' permission,
- get frustrated or mad at struggling tutees. If they are beyond your capabilities to help, suggest they speak to the AAC director,
- be quick to judge, make stereotypes of character, ability and intelligence,
- assume the role and responsibilities of the instructor.

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

- You are not expected to take abuse or to deal with personal or psychological problems, which may arise during the tutoring sessions.
- You are not expected to know all the answers to every question all the time because you are not the instructor.
- You are not expected to be a miracle worker; tutoring is a two-way street.
- You are not expected to tolerate disruptive or threatening behavior.

If you have any problems along these lines, see the AAC director.

## Examples of Study Strategies

The following strategies are examples of some simple techniques you can give students. The strategies are not described in detail.

<b>Strategies for Attention And Concentration</b>	<b>Strategies for Memory</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage students to sit near the front of the class.</li> <li>• Encourage students to take notes to force attention.</li> <li>• Encourage students to study in a quiet place.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage students to study notes after each class.</li> <li>• Encourage students to study in a rhythm to memorize a list.</li> <li>• Encourage students to make flashcards with a key word on the front and the explanation on the back.</li> <li>• Encourage students to make up sentences in which the first letter of each word stands for what they are memorizing.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategies for Listening And Note-Taking</b>	<b>Strategies for Test Preparation And Test-Taking</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage students to listen for clues that tell them that the speaker is giving a key point. (The speaker may say, “The first point is...”)</li> <li>• Encourage students to categorize a lecture into parts. (The speaker may say there were five causes of a certain event, indicating five discussion topics.)</li> <li>• Encourage students to underline, star main points, and use different color inks.</li> <li>• Encourage students to use abbreviations for commonly used words. (For example, use the letter “r” for the word <i>are</i>, “rxn” for <i>reaction</i>, “dvlp” for <i>develop</i>, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage students to make sure that they know what the test will cover.</li> <li>• Encourage students to use relaxation techniques prior to the test. (For example, mediation.)</li> <li>• Encourage students to read all directions carefully.</li> <li>• Encourage students to check their answers.</li> <li>• Encourage students to look over the entire exam before they start and plan how much time will be allotted for each section.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategies for Planning And Organization</b>	<b>Strategies for Using Resources (text, library)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage students to keep a calendar with daily responsibilities.</li> <li>• Encourage students to write assignments and due dates in an assignment notebook and on a calendar.</li> <li>• Encourage students to list items that they have to do in order of their importance.</li> <li>• Encourage students to break a large project into smaller steps and set deadlines for each step.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage students to read study questions before they read the text, in order to gain a purpose for reading.</li> <li>• Encourage students to use all study aids in the book (table of contents, index, appendix, outlines, etc.).</li> <li>• Encourage students to seek assistance from reference librarian when looking for resources.</li> <li>• Encourage students to seek all possible resources (periodicals, indexes, pamphlets, etc.).</li> </ul>

# Question Strategies for Tutoring:

## Six Levels of Thinking

Questioning initiates different levels of thinking. When the higher levels of thought are emphasized, the most effective and meaningful learning takes place and the information is stored in long-memory. As a tutor you will find it useful to ask lower order questions at the beginning of a session to establish the level of content that your tutees know. As the session progresses, ask higher order questions that require the tutees to summarize patterns and suggest strategies for learning and retention.

### *Lower Order:*

**Knowledge**---requires memory only, repeating information exactly as memorized (define, recall, recognize, remember, who, what, where, when)

**Comprehension**---requires rephrasing, rewording and comparing information (describe, compare, contrast, rephrase, explain the main idea)

**Application**---requires application of knowledge to determine a single correct answer (apply, classify, choose, use, write an example, solve, how many, which, what is)

### *Higher Order:*

**Analysis**---identify motives or causes, draw conclusions, determine evidence (support, analyze, conclude, why)

**Synthesis**---make predictions, produce original communications, solve problems (more than one possible answer) (predict, produce, write, design, develop, synthesize, construct, how can we improve, what happens if, how can we solve, can you devise)

**Evaluation**---make judgments and offer opinions (judge, argue, decide, evaluate, assess, which is better, give your opinion, do you agree, would it be better)

## Reversing Questions/Transferring Information

The following questions could be asked to help tutees focus their attention on the general principles of the new material covered. These are especially useful in the math/science areas and can be adapted for other disciplines.

- What are the different kinds of problems and how can they be recognized?
- What is the format of the problem? Do the directions indicate the specific technique to use?
- How are these different problems related?
- How can this problem be restated?
- What are some other ways to word the question?
- What changes in the wording of the directions that would indicate different procedures?
- Is there only one method to work this type of problem or are there several techniques applicable? If several techniques are appropriate, how does one choose which to use?
- What means (if any) are available to check your answer other than reworking the problem the same way?
- How are the problems from this section/chapter different/alike for the problems of previous sections/chapters?

### *Post Exam Survey:*

The following are some questions tutees might like to think about after taking an exam. Answers to these questions may help them focus on effective exam preparation strategies:

- What part of the exam was the easiest for you? Why? (essay, multiple choice, true/false, short-answer type questions.) If so, explore the appropriate areas as you continue with the questions.
- Which part of the exam was the most difficult? Why?
- Which of the following activities did you complete prior to the exam? All required reading assignments, preparation and review of all reading notes, preview of lecture notes, self-testing of material to be covered by the exam, prediction of possible questions by you prior to the exam, or study with friends.
- Which of the above activities did you find most helpful in preparing for this exam? What activities work best for different types of questions? (true/false, multiple choice, etc.)
- How much time (in hours) did you spend preparing for the exam?
- Did you feel prepared when you walked into the exam? Why or why not?
- How much you study differently for the next exam?

# Instructional Strategies and Techniques:

## Facilitating Independent Learning

### Reviewing the Notes:

How does the professor indicate what's important to know? What shape are their notes in? Are their notes organized? Will they be able to read their notes to prepare for an exam?

- 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.
- Share your thoughts and ideas on note-taking. What helped you and how do you process your notes?
- Refer tutees to Listening & Note-taking workshop.

### Reviewing the Textbook:

- Discuss the process of previewing and reviewing chapters.
- Talk about the benefits of taking chapter notes vs. highlighting/marketing 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.
- Ask them to identify how content from a previous chapter relates to the next chapter.
- Ask them to compare lecture notes to the text. How does the textbook differ from or similar to the lecture?
- Refer tutees to Textbook Skills workshop.

### 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 Preparation for Finals Week – Part I & Part II workshops.

### Working on Vocabulary and Terminology:

- 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.

## Brainstorming Ideas:

This method promotes discussion of ideas and concepts. Often tutees will discover that they really do not understand something as a result of the discussion and it will prompt them to dig further for information. 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:

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

## Utilizing Visuals:

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.
- Try to incorporate ideas/strategies where tutees constantly reinforce their “doing it” and most of all----“thinking it!”

## Utilizing Other Independent Learning Techniques:

- **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.

# Communication Skills

Tutoring requires the ability to communicate effectively. One of the key components of being a good communicator is **active listening**. Here are some tips as you practice active listening.

- Concentrate on what your tutees are saying.
- Slow down when explaining difficult material.
- Be patient and emphasize the material when tutees are confused.
- Look at your tutees when they are speaking and maintain good eye contact.
- 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.
- Use words that promote discussions, such as “Tell me more,” “And?”
- Repeat one or two key words or phrases to let the tutees know that you are listening.
- Show patience by waiting for responses after asking questions.
- Respect all questions or responses by not interrupting answers or changing the subject.
- If necessary, help tutees answer their own questions.
- Pace your explanations so that tutees can participate.
- Make sure that your tutees understand before you move on.

# Individual and Group Tutoring

## Step 1: Know What is Expected of You As A Tutor

## Step 2: Setting Up the Tutor Session

- **Seating Arrangement:**

**Individual/Group Session:** Arrange seating and notes in a way that encourages interaction and visibility. Use board work or presentations where viewing tutees can provide comments.

- **Introduction:**

**Individual Session:** 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.

**Group Session:** Introduce yourself and ask tutees to introduce themselves to one another.

## Step 3: Meeting Your Tutees Need

- **Identifying Need:**

**Individual Session:** During the first tutoring session, identify underlying problems.

**Group Session:** Come in few minutes before the session and be prepared to identify and know what problem to tackle first.

- **Displaying Concern:**

**Individual/Group Session:** Encourage tutee or tutees to participate in group session. Include humor in the session to create a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere.

- **Exercising Confidence and Control:**

**Individual/Group Session:** Be respectful and provide direction to tutee or tutees---not dictatorship.

Don't allow tutees to dominate participation or discussion. Try to involve and draw everyone in the learning activity, but do not force a non-participant. In group tutoring session, **utilize Paired Problem-Solving.**

## Step 4: The Ingredients of a Good Tutoring Session

- **Display Preparation by:**

- 1) beginning tutorial application with, "What problems are you experiencing in the course?"
- 2) prioritizing the problems if tutees are experiencing more than one problem in the course.

- **Facilitate Learning by:**

- 1) maintaining the main objective of a tutoring session which is to help the tutees learn the content area of the problem(s) they are experiencing in the course.
- 2) utilizing independent learning techniques and helping tutees gain confidence in their own ability.
- 3) guiding tutees to discover the answers or solutions on their own---don't be an "Answer Fairy" by just providing answers.
- 4) utilizing visuals and being creative and imaginative in your tutoring method---to an extent possible.
- 5) using positive reinforcements to help tutees have a sense of accomplishment and incentive to do more.

- **Facilitate Critical Thinking by:**

- 1) asking the tutees to explain what they are doing on a particular task or assignment,
- 2) getting the tutees to articulate the problem/difficulty they are experiencing by:
  - a. encouraging and helping the tutees talk through solutions to problems and look for more than one answer.
  - b. pulling or drawing knowledge from the tutees by framing questions, which will elicit the desired kind of thinking (i.e., Why.....? How.....? What are the factors? What contributes to.....? What is the cause and effect?).
  - c. not automatically answering questions but turning the question back to the tutees (i.e., What do you think? What ideas do you have about that? What has been your experience?).
  - d. encouraging specific responses and 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.

- **Facilitate Participation by:**

Encourage participation and interaction by actively involving the tutees in the tutoring session according to the following:

- 1) Asking them questions in reference to material discussed. The tutor should:
  - a. use question strategies when the tutees need to be guided.
  - b. select questions that do not give information but require thought.
  - c. phrase questions so that they are understandable.
  - d. rephrase the question if the tutees ask for clarification or do not understand, but avoid asking the same question again.
  - e. not ridicule incorrect answers, but guide the tutees to the text or content, or ask them to explain their answer, or ask them another question that breaks the content into a smaller part, or provide another approach.
  - f. praise correct answers and ask additional questions to confirm understanding.
  - g. not answer your own questions.
- 2) Asking tutees to demonstrate their understanding by
  - a. working through a problem you have created.
  - b. giving concrete examples or an illustration.
  - c. explaining in their own words.
  - d. elaborating further or expressing the point in another way.
- 3) Respecting all questions or responses offered by tutees.

- **Facilitate Reinforcement by:**

- 1) providing relevant solutions to course problems,
- 2) suggesting various study skills/independent learning strategies and techniques that may be helpful in assisting tutees to master course work and personal objectives,
- 3) clarifying or giving assignments as appropriate (i.e., requiring them to go to the library to find out more about a particular topic, outlining textbook chapters, etc.),
- 4) building motivation and self-confidence by suggesting small goals that tutees can easily achieve,
- 5) showing tutees how to use course syllabus as a basis for goal setting,
- 6) referring tutees to course objectives.

### **Step 5: Ending the Tutoring Session**

- 1) Positively assess the work that was done during the session or spur your tutees into giving a summary of what has been covered.
- 2) Inform tutees what material will be covered in the next session.
- 3) Remind tutees of strategies or skills to practice and assignments you would like for them to complete for the next session.
- 4) Encourage the tutees to attend the next session and re-schedule the appointment.

### **Subsequent Tutoring Sessions:**

- Ask tutees to describe in their own words what was accomplished during previous tutoring session,
- Ask tutees what they have accomplished during class lecture, visiting instructor, taking notes, etc. that have contributed to their understanding of the problem they were experiencing in the course.
- Resume tutorial assistance in course problems that were prioritized.
- Repeat only necessary procedures in **Step 2** and **Step 3** and repeat all necessary requirements listed in **Step 4** and **Step 5**.

# 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 utilize. The research on group dynamics suggests that there are five categories of activities that help to keep a group functioning effectively [MacDonald, 1993].

1. **Setting group standards early:** The tutor should guide students to identify 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 can 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 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 Re-stating 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 student an opportunity to speak and obliging him/her 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.

## Session Notes

*You will have 10 calendar days after the tutorial session to enter notes.*

After each tutorial session that lasts for more than 20 minutes, please enter a session note.

Please include:

- the content areas covered
- any strategies used
- the success and difficulties of the tutoring session
- follow up information, for next session

## Sample Session Notes

Today we reviewed solving quadratic equations using the square root method. We also reviewed the quadratic formula and its applications. The session began with me giving the tutee a few problems from before to see if he retained those skills. Afterward, we discussed the principles of quadratic equations and worked a few problems applying the square root method. I asked what he already knew about the quadratic formula and its uses. To get a better idea of what he knew I gave him two problems where he had to apply the quad. formula. We discussed the corrections. I gave him a few problems to work on at home and told him to read ahead to the section "Analyzing the Discriminant." The tutee seems to be working on more problems at home and comes prepared with specific questions. He still needs to work on applying what he already knows when solving each problem.

## Actual Session Notes: Excellent

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.

## Actual Session Notes: Poor

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.

# Learning Styles: Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic Learners

After tutees complete Learning Style Inventory and report learning style score, suggest/ apply learning strategies in accordance to preferred learning style.

In addition:

- Refer tutees to Approaches to Learning, Goal Setting & Time Management workshop
- Refer tutees to Memorization & Testing Skills workshop

## LEARNING STYLE

...the way YOU concentrate on, absorb and retain new or difficult information or skills.

### Suggested Learning Strategies Based Upon Preferred Learning Style



If YOU prefer to read about the subject ...**VISUAL LEARNER**

- I. Take notes during the tutoring session.
- II. Use a board or notepaper to write questions and answers.
- III. Use color-coded highlighting.
- IV. Use graph paper to create charts and diagrams of key points.
- V. Refer to textbook at appropriate times (text, diagrams, charts, pictures).
- VI. Write your explanations of course concepts.
- VII. Make flash cards. Writing the cards and viewing them increases comprehension.

If YOU prefer to see a demonstration of the subject... **KINESTHETIC/TACTILE**

- I. Pick up book as you are reading or talking.
- II. Write pertinent information while reading or talking.
- III. Find other books/resources that clarify course material.
- IV. Sit near front of classroom and take notes (keeps focus).
- V. Point to subject matter in text, on board, etc. while explaining.
- VI. Make models, charts, etc. that demonstrate key concepts.
- VII. Use a computer to reinforce learning.
- VIII. Write lists of significant events, terms, concepts and processes repeatedly.
- IX. Utilize hands-on experience when possible.
- X. Use flash cards for each step in a problem-solving process. Keep flash cards in order until sequence becomes automatic.
- XI. Use audiotapes. Tapes can play while you walk or exercise.
- XII. Stretch periodically and move in your seat.

## **If YOU prefer listening to someone talk about the subject... AUDITORY LEARNER**

- I. Explain material to your tutor as if you were a tutor.**
- II. Read explanations out loud.**
- III. Make audiotapes and review them while driving, jogging, etc.**
- IV. Speak out loud and reason through a solution out loud when learning new information.**
- V. Make up songs and rhymes to remember course facts, dates, names, etc.**
- VI. Participate in study groups.**
- VII. Write out, in sentence form, any sequence of steps that must be learned, then read sentences out loud.**
- VIII. VIII. Discuss the material with someone.**

*Adapted from <http://www.owecc.net/tutortraining/learningstyles.html>. Distributed by Towson University's Academic Achievement Center, 8000 York Road, Towson, Maryland 21252*

*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 – Rensselares Polytechnic Institute/Derek Phillips; Strategies for Tutoring (Six 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/City College of San Francisco.*



**ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT CENTER**  
**Appendix A: Policies and Procedures**

*Updated: September 2009*

# INTRODUCTION

Hello and welcome to the Academic Achievement Center's team! This appendix can be a useful reference source when questions arise about the center's policies, procedures and services.

The Academic Achievement Center (AAC) was established in October 2002. The center was formerly called the Tutorial Services Center, then Tutorial and Testing Services Center, and renamed the above after merging with the Office of Developmental Education. A tutorial center was first established on Towson's campus in September 1969. Today, 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 AAC'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.

## AAC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Each tutor of the Academic Achievement Center is expected to 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.

## ROLE OF PEER TUTOR

A peer tutor is an academically accomplished student leader who represents the Academic Achievement Center, maintains professional and appropriate conduct during work hours, respects and adheres to the AAC policies and procedures presented in this Tutor Manual as well as the Tutor Training Manual (Philosophy of A Peer Tutor, Code of Ethics, Role-Model Peer Tutor: The Characteristics of Effective Tutoring, Tutor Responsibilities Do's and Don'ts of Tutoring, The Tutoring Cycle (individual and group tutoring), Examples of Study Strategies, Strategic Tutoring Checklist and Suggested Learning Strategies Based Upon Preferred Learning Style).

### Tutor Qualifications:

- Each tutor must be recommended by faculty members from TU or another institution.
- Each tutor must have earned an A or B+ grades in relevant courses selected for tutoring.
- Each tutor must receive CRLA Level I tutor training.
- Each tutor must have a 3.0 cumulative grade point average. However, **exceptions can be made for qualified tutors with cumulative grade-point averages of 3.0** and who demonstrate an earnest desire to provide competent tutorial service to TU students. However, the tutor will be monitored on a probationary basis and expected to increase his or her grade-point average to 3.0 after one semester of tutoring.

## **Tutor Training and Certification:**

The Academic Achievement Center was awarded CRLA National Tutor Certification in May 2004. The College Reading and Learning Association's (CRLA) International Tutor Certification Program (ITCP) certifies tutor programs for colleges and universities 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. Currently, there are just 5 Maryland institutions, including Towson University, that have level 3 certification. The AAC has the rare accomplishment of being awarded all 3 levels in one application cycle.

Each tutor is required to obtain CRLA Level 1 certification. The Academic Achievement 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.

## **Tutor Responsibility:**

- Timesheets must be completed on time and accurately; budget integrity is a must! The Payroll Department wants all timesheets 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. Sometimes Payroll requires timesheets on a Wednesday or Thursday. Please do not complete timesheets after Payroll has applied the "freeze date." You can view the deadlines by going to [http://www.towson.edu/adminfinance/fiscalplanning/financialservices/documents/contingent2010\\_schedule.pdf](http://www.towson.edu/adminfinance/fiscalplanning/financialservices/documents/contingent2010_schedule.pdf).
- Each tutor must adhere to the policy of completing Tutor Notes; 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 with tutees. The tutee can be referred to the Learning Specialist if further tutoring or study skills strategies are needed.
- Each tutor with appointment-based tutorial sessions should maintain tutorial contact with his or her tutee(s) either by e-mail or phone for follow-up purposes.
- It is our goal to provide dependable & adequate service. Please contact the AAC in advance if you, the tutor, are unable to report to work.
- Please notify the AAC of any student/tutee who routinely misses scheduled appointments.

## Tutor Scheduling:

- Each tutor should be available for a minimum of **3 hours per week**.
- 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 to make a schedule change.
- Each tutor must notify the tutee (appointment-based) and the center immediately when a cancellation of a tutoring session is expected.

## Tutor Salary, Hiring and Payroll Procedures:

- The starting salary for regular student-employee tutors is **\$7.50**.
- All tutors will receive rate-of-pay increases after completion of 1) CRLA Level I, Level II, or Level III certification (TT) hours and 2) required tutor-experience hours (TE).

\*\$8.00, Level I – 10 hours of TT and 25 hours of TE

\*\$8.50, Level II – 20 hours of TT and 50 hours of TE

\*\*\$9.50, Level III – 30 hours of TT and 75 hours of TE

\*These are based upon a compilation of hours.

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

- All potential tutors for the AAC area must be interviewed, oriented and approved for employment by an AAC staff member.
- All potential tutors hired by Satellite Center coordinators must schedule an appointment with an AAC Staff to be interviewed, oriented and complete payroll clearance prior to tutor training. A checklist from the coordinator is required before payroll paperwork can be completed.
- After being hired by the AAC, all new tutors must report to Human Resources (OHR) for handling of Form I-9 and bring the following required identification prior to working:

**\*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.
- All tutors are required to complete paperwork that includes a tutor profile, confidentiality statement, Environmental Health and Safety paperwork, and student employment application.

## Tutor Attendance:

- 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 his or her timesheet.
- Each tutor must log in/out using TutorTrac and complete Tutor Notes for every tutorial session as verification of tutorial attendance.
- Each tutor who is unable to log in/out due to TutorTrac or network problems must sign the paper log book and notify the AAC.
- Each tutor is required to provide Tutor Notes that include the **content tutored, strategies used (independent learning, problem-solving, critical thinking, study skills), and the success and difficulty of a tutoring session.**
- Each tutor must complete his or her timesheet before the pay period ending date.
- Each tutor is expected to keep cancellations of scheduled work hours at a minimal of three per semester.
- A no-show by tutors for appointment-based or drop-in tutoring is unacceptable and can result in termination of employment.
- Each tutor should provide a make-up session for cancelled tutorial appointments.
- Sometimes students do not appear for scheduled appointments. Tutors, however, must remain in the center for a **half-hour grace period** and log in/out using TutorTrac.

## Assessment and Scheduling

The Academic Achievement Center provides tutorial services for undergraduates in specific 100 to 300-level courses selected for tutoring. Students who need tutorial assistance should report to the designated tutoring center to check tutor availability. Students can also read the Fact Sheet on the AAC web site or in person at the Academic Achievement Center. 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. Scheduled tutorial sessions are one hour a week, per course.

### Additional Tutorial Assistance

The professor is the primary resource for student success. All students who request additional tutoring, beyond one hour per week per course, should be referred to the AAC.

## Completion of Required Forms by Tutors and Tutees

**Tutee Registration Process:** The following forms are needed to complete registration of all students requesting tutorial assistance:

- **AAC Web Site's Intake Form** – This form is used by students to request tutorial assistance for courses.
- **Fact Sheet** – This form explains AAC policies that students should acknowledge and adhere to. The form can be read on-line at the AAC web site or given to students at the AAC receptionist desk.
- **Tutee Handouts: 1) Learning Style Inventory** – This form is optional but very beneficial to students and tutors. The student will learn whether he/she is a visual, kinesthetic, or auditory learner, 2) **Suggested Learning Style Strategies**, and 3) **Examples of Study Strategies.**

**Employment Selection Process:** All potential students hired for tutorial or student mentor positions must complete, two or three, of the following forms:

- **Employment Application** – This form must be completed by students interested in becoming a tutor or student assistant. It gathers essential data of each potential student employee.
- **Letter of Recommendation** – New tutors must have this form completed by the professor(s) of the course(s) they are going to tutor. The recommendation is maintained in the tutor's file for employee reference material.
- **Tutor's Schedule** – This form must be completed by all tutors and verifies record of the tutors' available hours. The available hours are selected by the supervisor for the center's on-line Drop-In Schedule.
- **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

**Quality Control:** The following forms are needed to gather and maintain important tutor and tutorial data:

- **TutorTrac Log in/out:** This procedure must be completed by tutors and students. The location of the Tutor Log in/out computer is different for each center. All students attending tutorial sessions must log in at their arrival and log out after the end of the tutoring session. If you arrive early, do not sign in until your scheduled time.
- **TutorTrac Visit Info Notes:** This area is used for tutors to record the content tutored, strategies used, and the success and difficulties of every tutoring session.
- **Payroll Timesheet:** This form is electronically provided on-line for tutors. However, new tutors must complete a yellow (regular) or pink (federal work study) paper timesheet until their electronic timesheet is on-line.
- **Tutor Evaluation:** This survey form is 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 AAC 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.
- **Suggested Learning Strategies:** This form is used by tutors to help tutees improve their learning based on their preferred learning style. Tutors should suggest/apply the learning strategies in accordance to the tutees' learning style.

## TUTORIAL FACILITIES

The Academic Achievement 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 student tutorial sessions. Additional software installation is **prohibited** without prior permission because of spyware, malware, viruses and other problems that can result. Security from viruses and other computer problems also requires that each computer remain on to receive automatic campus updates. When a tutoring session is finished, please make certain to log off the computer, but keep the computer turned on. In addition to the log-in computer, many tutoring areas have additional computers as resources. Tutors are encouraged to use the additional computers to add tutorial notes. Do **not** add tutorial notes from the log-in station.

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 tiger web disk space. Go to <http://wwwnew.towson.edu/adminfinance/OTS/Training/documentation/WebDisk/webdisk.pdf> to get specific steps for saving your files.

If material needs to be photocopied for a tutoring session, please contact the administrative staff who can make the appropriate copies.

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