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What is a tutor?

Definition: a person who instructs students and/or small groups in learning a specific subject.

Tutor's Purpose: to assist and guide students so they can become independent learners who no longer need tutorial assistance.

Characteristics of a good tutor

- knows the subject
- has a positive outlook
- has a strong desire to help others
- displays patience, understanding, and fairness when working with others
- has an open mind
- is a self-starter
- is self-motivated
- is enthusiastic about the subject and loves sharing that knowledge with others.
- Is a reliable worker (is always punctual and dependable)
- Has good communication skills

Benefits of tutorial services

To the Tutor	To the tutee
-heightens one's competency in the subject -encourages higher levels of thinking -increases subject-specific knowledge -increases understanding of the subject area	-offers an individualized learning experience -improves academic performance -motivates self-paced and self-directed learning

Why be a tutor? Testimonials:

Jared Carter '07 says that tutoring students in CHM 108 was a tremendous benefit because it helped review information he will need to know when taking the National Board Dental Exam. [Jared scored 90% or higher on each section of the dental exam.]

Meng Tsai '06 says tutoring economics is what allowed him to score in the top 5% in the nation on the senior exit exam [GRE] in microeconomics and in the top 20% in macroeconomics. [He is attending Clemson University as a graduate student in economics.]

Many tutors have told me that tutoring has improved their own understanding of the subject and improved their grades.

Undergraduate tutoring is viewed very favorably on graduate school applications.

Professors tell me that students who tutor do better in their classes.

Three Steps to Becoming an Effective Tutor

STEP ONE: Be prepared for your tutoring session.

STEP TWO: Know [learn] your client's academic needs and concerns.

STEP THREE: Employ the following features of a good tutoring session:

- Give your client your undivided attention.
- Be empathetic with your client's problems.
- Be honest with your client.
- Set the agenda for the session.
- Have a sense of humor.
- Interact with your client; don't forget to listen!
- Learn your client's strengths and weaknesses so you can improve on his/her weaknesses by using his/her strengths.
- Use positive reinforcement; compliment your client when he/she performs well.
- Know when it is time to end the session.
- Always try to end on a positive note and schedule the next session if necessary.
- Record your hours online and send me your "Record of Tutorial Sessions," so I can verify your hours so you can get paid!

How to Learn What your Client Needs

First, when you make an appointment with clients, ask them to bring the course syllabus, text, class notes, and any quizzes or tests they have taken with them to the session. Always take the first few minutes of your initial meeting to establish rapport with your client if you do not know each other. Make this first experience a positive one for clients. They (and you) will form an impression within the first few minutes. You want this to be a positive impression. Some hints for making a favorable first impression—use direct eye contact; smile; listen and acknowledge the client's response to your questions by nodding your head or saying, "I see," "I understand," or "Could you tell me more about that,"

Second, find out why your client has requested a tutor. Simply ask them what they need help with, and then listen to the responses. Some know exactly what they want you to help them with; many others will have difficulty identifying their problems with the course to you. Most will say something like "I just don't get it," "It's just so hard," or "It's so boring." They may have "math (substitute your discipline's title) phobia." They may not have any interest in the course because it is a general education requirement that they "have to take." They may express a loss of confidence in their ability or a sense of panic at the amount of work required. Listen carefully to what the student tells you so you can pick up on how to help them. **DON'T tell them how easy the discipline is because they wouldn't be asking for your help if it were easy for them.** Understanding their feelings and concerns about the course will help you plan for your future tutoring sessions.

Three, if you still do not know what the client needs help with, review the syllabus, the text, or assignment(s) with the student. Find out what they do understand by asking questions. Many students who request a tutor have no idea why they are not doing well. This is your opportunity to discuss what is required for studying your discipline. Offer suggestions on how to read a history (substitute your discipline) text. Be honest and tell them how much time they have to spend to succeed in the course. Offer suggestions for organizing notes, memorizing facts, and learning concepts that have worked for you. Point out that they have to make a time commitment to master the course and that you cannot do this for them.

Ask the Right Questions

Being able to ask good questions is critical to becoming a good tutor. Learning good questioning techniques requires practice, but you can learn this skill like you have learned many others.

Below are some suggestions for asking questions:

- Use the right words—**Ask "What do you understand?" rather than "What don't you understand?"** Often students are clueless about what they do not understand.

- **Wait for the answer, and listen to the response.** Don't be quick to give the answer to your questions. Give the client time to think and respond (count to thirty) before giving the answer. Clients pick up very quickly that you will answer the question if they don't respond immediately. This may be painful for you and the client at first. Try asking them to reread a passage that contains the answer and then respond if they cannot come up with the answer. This is where a tutor's patience comes in!
- **Ask leading questions, not questions that can be answered with "yes" or "no."** Leading questions ask the student to demonstrate his/her understanding. Read about the [Socratic Method](http://lonestar.texas.net/%7Emseifert/crit3.html) [<http://lonestar.texas.net/%7Emseifert/crit3.html>] of teaching to help you learn how to foster critical thinking. **Using "What if...." Questions and using analogies that compare the concept to something more familiar are good teaching methods.**

The three most important services you can provide your client are:

1. providing instruction (presenting information concisely)
2. requiring a response from the client (having the client respond and talk about the material).
3. giving constructive feedback (telling the client when the answer is correct or incorrect and explaining why).

The Importance of Teaching Study Skills

You are a successful student more than likely because you have good study skills. Because the vast majority of your clients do not have good study skills, they are asking for tutorial help in your discipline. Therefore, **part of your job is to teach the study skills needed for success in your discipline.** This requires that you assess their needs in this area. For example, a student who is always late for your tutoring session probably needs to learn some time management skills. Ask students to bring their class notes so you can see if they might benefit from some note-taking tips. Reviewing their tests with them can help you see if they need some instruction on test-taking skills.

Students often request tutorial assistance because they have poor grades, which may be a direct result of their poor study habits. You are a resource for these students. They are much more likely to come to you for help than to me in the Academic Support Center. You will provide a valuable service to these students by giving them direction and encouragement in developing good study skills.

The Web is full of great sites for study skills. Look for sites for your discipline. Below are some web resources that you can use in helping students with study skills in your discipline.

- Study Tips from Ohio State U. <http://studytips.admsrv.ohio.edu/studytips/>
- Study Skills Library at CalPoly <http://sas.calpoly.edu/asc/ssl.html>
- Effective study skills <http://www.adprima.com/studyout.htm>
- Taking multiple choice exams <http://www.uwec.edu/geography/Ivogeler/multiple.htm>
- A dozen reasons for reviewing a returned test <http://www.mtsu.edu/%7Estudskl/rtrned.html>
- **Chemistry** Coach--This is a GREAT site.
<http://www.chemistrycoach.com/linkstoa.htm#Study%20Skills>
- Learning strategies database Great site—has **discipline-specific study skills**
<http://www.muskingum.edu/~cal/database/content/>

The Importance of Understanding Learning Styles

Becoming familiar with learning style theory will help you be able to recognize your client's learning style and make helpful suggestions on how they can use their strengths to help them study more effectively. Your client's preferences may be very different from yours, so it is important to recognize that study habits that work for you may not work for your client because it does not fit his/her unique learning style.

Researchers have identified at least 32 elements of learning style and have found that most people respond strongly to between six and fourteen elements. However, it is the perceptual elements (auditory, visual, tactual, and kinesthetic) that are most important to identify, for they identify the learner's preferred learning modality. You might recognize your own preferences in the following descriptions.

Auditory Strength

- Prefer verbal instructions
- Learn best by listening
- Enjoy dialogues, discussions, and plays
- Often remember names but forget faces
- Like to find solutions by talking them out
- Easily distracted by noise
- Need quiet place to work

Visual Strength

- Prefer demonstrations
- Learn best through descriptions
- Like to use lists to keep themselves organized
- Often recognize words by sight
- Often remember faces but forget names
- Have well-developed imaginations
- Easily distracted by movement or action in the room
- Tend to be unaware of noise

Tactual Strength

- Often do best when they take notes either during lecture or when reading new or challenging material
- Often like to draw or doodle to remember
- Do well with hands-on projects, demonstrations, or labs

Kinesthetic Strength

- Often do best when involved or active
- Have high energy levels
- Think and learn best while moving
- Often don't get much from lectures
- Have difficulty concentrating when asked to sit and read
- Prefer to do rather than watch or listen

If you want to understand learning styles in more depth, look at this site: **Index of Learning Styles** <http://www4.ncsu.edu/unity/lockers/users/f/felder/public/ILSpa.html>

Information & Procedures

What are the qualifications for becoming a tutor?

1. Be a currently enrolled student in good academic standing at Berry College.
2. Have a 3.0 or higher GPA in the subject(s) tutored.
3. Meet with Martha Van Cise, director of tutorial services, in Memorial Library.
4. Submit a written recommendation from a professor in the discipline(s) you want to tutor.
5. Complete online Tutor Training at <http://www2.berry.edu/academics/services/support/page.aspx?id=6169>
6. After successful completion of online training, the student will be cleared to work as a tutor for the Academic Support Center Tutorial Services.

NOTE: Native speakers of Spanish, German, or French must have the approval of the respective language department.

How do I get clients?

1. Through the Academic Support Center
 - a. If a student requests a tutor through the ASC, I give them a list of all tutors for the requested subject. The student then calls from the list until he/she finds a tutor. The student may also email you, so check your Berry email regularly.
 - b. ALWAYS return calls promptly even if you do not have time to do the job so the client can contact another tutor in a timely manner.**
 - c. Failure to respond to requests may result in dismissal from Tutorial Services.**
2. Through the professor/instructor of the course
 - a. Some professors have a designated tutor to conduct group tutorials/test reviews
 - b. You can let professors know that you are an ASC tutor and ask them to make referrals to you from their classes.
3. Through one of your tutees
 - a. Often tutees give your name to other friends who are having difficulty in the same class. It is perfectly okay for you to accept this type of tutoring job or to reject the job if you do not have time for more clients, but if you reject the job, please ask the student to email a request for tutoring to tutoring@berry.edu.

May I refuse a job?

1. Yes, you may refuse a job if you do not have any time available for tutoring at that time. Be honest, tell them you have a test or already have all the clients you can accommodate. Tell them to call someone else on the list.
2. Yes, if you have a personality clash or are uncomfortable tutoring a client.
3. If you have all the clients you can accommodate, please email me so I can remove your name from the list I give new clients. When you want to have your name added to the list again, email me [tutoring@berry.edu] and I will add you.
4. If you find at any time that you do not have time to tutor or discover that tutoring is just not for you, please email me and ask to have your name removed from the tutor list.

Where and when can I tutor?

You may tutor any place and time [or day of the week] that is mutually agreeable to you and the client.

If you are called by someone you do not know and are a bit nervous about meeting with a stranger, you may want to hold your first session in a safe, public place where there are others around like the library, Valhalla, Barnes & Noble, or one of the dormitory study rooms.

Occasionally, I get requests for off-campus tutoring [usually a high school or elementary school student but sometimes adults]. I will email all the tutors on the list for the subject requested and send out an email to see if anyone is interested in working with this person. The first one to answer the email will be sent the contact information of the off-campus client whom you must then contact. I recommend that you start negotiations for fee at \$25.00 an hour [Sylvan Learning Center charges \$26.00 per hr.] and take no less than \$20.00 an hour.

How do I get paid?

1. Tutors are paid through the BC Student Work Program. Thus, you must be registered with the work program to work for the ASC.
 - a. **16-hour Rule:**
 - Freshmen are limited to working no more than 16 hours per week under any circumstances.
 - All others are generally limited to 16 hours per week, but can work more if they receive approval. You must go to the Student Work Office in Krannert 302, fill out the form to receive approval for more than 16 hours per week.
 - Students who are RA's cannot hold any other work positions on campus.
 - b. **Because of budget constraints, please limit your tutoring hours to no more than 16 per week if this is your only on-campus employment. Please remember the 16-hour rule if you have other campus employment so your financial aid package is not affected.**
 - c. **You will report your hours online. I will then have to verify the hours for you to get paid. The only way for me to verify your hours is for you to submit your hours to me.**
2. Report your hours bi-weekly to Ms. Van Cise by submitting a *Record of Tutorial Sessions* sheet. See the sample time sheet on the following page.
 - a. Keep track of the date and the time of your tutoring session and record that information for each session you conduct.
 - b. Keep track of any preparation time for your session as well. Record this date and time prior to listing your tutorial session with the client. See sample on next page.
3. If you are conducting a group tutorial [i.e. exam review, class study session, etc.], fill out the sheet as below OR attach a sign-in sheet to the back of the form.

To be completed by the tutor for each tutorial or preparation session					ASC USE ONLY	
DATE	BEGIN	SUBJECT	PRINT STUDENT'S NAME	CLIENT'S INITIALS	VERIFY HOURS	EVAL SENT
	END	INSTRUCTOR				
9/12	8:00	<i>MAT 201</i>	<i>Preparation--met with professor</i>			
	8:45	<i>Benzel</i>				
9/13	7:30	<i>MAT 201</i>	<i>Exam Review</i> <i>See attached list of attendees</i>			
	9:30	<i>Benzel</i>				

**SAMPLE
FORM**

**ACADEMIC SUPPORT CENTER
RECORD OF TUTORIAL SESSIONS**

**SAMPLE
FORM**

NAME OF TUTOR *Tutor Extraordinaire*

ID# 999999

To be completed by the tutor for each tutorial or preparation session					ASC USE ONLY	
DATE	BEGIN	SUBJECT	PRINT STUDENT'S NAME	CLIENT'S INITIALS	VERIFY HOURS	EVAL SENT
	END	INSTRUCTOR				
9/12	10:15	<i>Spa 101</i>	<i>Lotta Confusion</i>	<i>LC</i>		
	12:00	<i>Gardner</i>				
9/12	7:30	<i>Spa 102</i>	<i>Missa Classtoomuch Don T. Knowmuch</i>	<i>MC DK</i>		
	9:00	<i>Llorente</i>				
9/14	4:00	<i>Spa 101</i>	<i>Prep time</i>			
	4:35	<i>Gardner</i>				
9/14	6:20	<i>Spa 101</i>	<i>Noel Comprende</i>	<i>NC</i>		
	7:45	<i>Gardner</i>				
9/17	8:05	<i>Spa 101</i>	<i>Lotta Confusion</i>	<i>LC</i>		
	8:40	<i>Gardner</i>				
___/___	:					
	:					
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Submit this record to the Academic Support Center for verification of your hours at the end of each pay period. Bring to my office in Memorial Library. Slide it under the door if it's after hours.

How do I fill out the form?

1. Fill in your name [no nicknames, please] and ID number.
2. Fill in the date of the session. You may have more than one session of tutoring a day.
3. Record the time you begin the session. At the end of the session, record the time.
4. List the course title and the instructor's name. This is important because we will send the instructor a list of students tutored every two weeks.
5. Print the student's name and have the client initial at the close of the session.
 - a. If you tutor more than one person in a session, you are paid for one hour of work. On the sheet, list all who attended the session.
 - b. You will also be paid for any preparation time. See the sample timesheets.
6. Don't put anything in the "Verify Hours" and "Eval Sent" columns. This is for my record keeping.
7. Make sure everything is legible and the information is correctly entered.
8. Submit the timesheet bi-weekly. You do not need to submit a timesheet if you have not tutored during a pay period.
9. Remember, I cannot verify the hours you submit to Student Work unless I have your timesheet to confirm the hours worked.

Evaluation of Tutorial Services

A survey will be sent to your clients periodically throughout the semester to evaluate satisfaction and quality of services. You will also be sent a survey during the semester to evaluate your experiences as a tutor. Please encourage your clients to submit the survey, and of course, return yours as well. We will use this information to improve tutorial services and make necessary changes to procedures, policies, etc. If you are interested in how your clients assessed their experience with you, let me know, and I will compile the results and send them to you at the end of the semester or at the beginning of the next semester.

If you have a problem or question, please do not hesitate to come in and talk with me. I can't do anything if I don't know a problem exists. We want this to be not only an opportunity to earn income but also a learning experience.

From the Director

Thank you for applying to be a tutor for your fellow students. You provide a much-needed service for our students. Good tutorial support can mean the difference between passing and failing for your clients, or making a B+ rather than a C. You do important work, and your work is valued.

I hope that you find the experience rewarding. Many tutors tell me that tutoring has improved their performance in their classes. And I know, also from talking with tutors, professors, and employers, that tutorial experience is a valuable experience.

I am here to help you if you have a problem. Don't hesitate to talk with me about any questions or problems you may be having with a client. I'm always willing to help you find resources to help you with your tutoring.

As always, happy "tuting."

Matthew Van Lise

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