Module 3: Basic Tutor Guidelines

Adapted from The Master Tutor, MacDonald (2000), Cambridge Stratford

Tutoring is used to practice material covered in class and re-explain/teach concepts that are unclear to the tutee. It's a supplementary resource for students and should be used in addition to going to class, keeping up with assignments and meeting with professors. Moreover, the tutee should be as actively involved in the tutorial as the tutor.

Tutoring is not for completing homework and projects or for supplying false hope the night before a test. The main objective of tutoring is to make students independent learners who know where and how to access information to excel academically.

Tutors should keep the following in mind when working with tutees:

- **Promoting Independent Tutee Learning & Insight** - The tutor relationship is one that encourages tutees to learn how to be successful in a particular subject. Your goal as a tutor is to provide tutees with the necessary tools to accomplish their goals in class; therefore, tutorials should be structured to allow for tutee insight. Independent learning and insight are achieved through asking tutees questions that challenge them to think critically about subject matter, and gives tutees the opportunity to practice class material. It does not benefit the tutee for you to give away answers or do more work than your tutee; this creates a co-dependent relationship instead of an independent relationship.

- **Respecting Student Differences** - As a tutor, you will assist students who possess a wide range of needs and abilities. Some students will be easy to work with and will come prepared with specific questions. Others will wait for you to give them instruction at every turn. Whatever the situation, it is important to stay professional and not make snap judgments about a tutee's academic commitment and level of ability.

- **Promoting Study Skills** - Many students find that they are ill-prepared for the rigors of college and lack basic study skills. Often students who need help with study skills will state the following: "I never had to study in high school," "There never seems to be enough time," "I knew the information, but I went blank on the test," or "All the professor does is lecture." As a tutor you should be able to provide assistance in the following areas:
  - Time management
  - Learning from lectures/Note taking
  - Learning from textbooks

Additionally, encourage your tutee to make a recurring appointment for subjects that cause him or her difficulty. Students should be aware that only using tutoring services right before a test is not as useful as working with a tutor on a weekly basis.
Reference:

MacDonald, R.B (2000). The master tutor: A guidebook for more effective tutoring (2nd ed.).