

Some Guidelines for Effective Tutoring

In order to provide effective tutoring in support of mathematics teaching at the college, we are offering the following guidelines to all mathematics tutors.

1. Tutoring should be viewed as a support to teaching in the classroom and not as an independent mode of instruction. As such, tutors should first familiarize themselves with the teacher's lecture and method of teaching by reviewing students' notes and other classroom documents. Thereupon, tutors should provide additional explanation and illustration of the topic, along the lines of the instructor's method of teaching and presentation. Engaging in alternative approaches, without regard to instructor's methods and his/her peculiarity of teaching, will be counterproductive and can contribute to confusion and frustration of students.
2. In the event of encountering an unfamiliar topic or a subject that you are not prepared for, let the students know that you will think about the topic and will discuss it at another session. Do not try to figure something out at the spur of the moment, without having the full knowledge of it. Not having the big picture in mind and trying to patch things up on the spot will not enhance the mathematical knowledge and ultimately will not be helpful to the students.
3. Do not try to help students with their tests, assigned projects, etc. These are the responsibility of individual students whose completion will earn them credit and grades and as such should be done and turned in as their own work and not that of some one else. Remember, as tutors you are considered professionals and are expected to behave as such.
4. When helping students with their homework questions or with difficulties they may have understanding a particular subject, try to work an example similar to the problem they are presenting, show them steps, and let them do the actual problems on their own; you should monitor the students' progress and correct their mistakes along the way, rather than doing the work for them.
5. Consult with the professor about any issues you may have about students' progress or conduct or any other academic or non-academic matter related to the courses being taught. Let the professors know what you think about their teaching and students' reaction. Frequent dialogues between the tutors and the teachers can only improve teaching and learning and contribute to student success.

(Prepared by Professor Siadat-Mathematics Department)