**A 50 Minute Plan**

The Basics of Tutoring at North Idaho College

1. Every student enrolled in a class at NIC can receive 2 hours of free tutoring for each enrolled NIC class.
2. Students can sign up for tutoring at the front desk in the College Skills Center starting on the first Thursday of the semester and continuing throughout the entire semester. Tutoring sessions start the second week.
3. Students must sign up with a tutor at least 24 hours prior to the appointment or meet with the tutor the next week.
4. Tutors need to check their schedules daily to keep up to date on new student sign ups or notes from the students or the front desk.
5. Tutoring sessions last 50 minutes.
6. Tutors are expected to wait for 10 minutes before recording a no-show for that session. Unfortunately, tutors are only paid for time spent tutoring.
7. When students sign up, they are committing to a weekly appointment.

*Students who signed up for tutoring are signaling that they need some help. Please be on time and faithful in your attendance of tutoring sessions. Those students are counting on you. Tutoring is a job but more importantly a commitment to your fellow student. Cancel tutoring sessions only if you are ill or have a family emergency. If a student misses 2 tutoring sessions, you have the option to drop them from your schedule. The front desk staff can help with that process.*

**Ingredients for a Successful Tutoring Session**

1. **Greeting and Climate Setting**
   - Always arrive on time and prepared for the student(s).
   - Greet each student with a warm greeting. A friendly voice, smile, eye contact and caring manner will open the door to trust and cooperation.
   - Show that you are comfortable and interested. It will put the student at ease.
   - Allow time to get to know each other.
   - Discover hobbies or interests of the students as you can potentially use this to provide a connection when explaining a difficult concept.
   - Give the student your full attention during the entire tutoring session.
   - Remember that humor helps create a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere.
The relationship which develops between you and the student can and should be a mutually growing experience. Your concern and interest in him/her as a person will be your greatest assets as a tutor. The rapport you cultivate could be the difference between success and failure for the student.

2. Identify the task or goals for the session
   - Encourage the student to identify the learning task that will be the focus of the tutoring session. Students will have more buy-in if the session is self directed.
   - If the student does not know where to start, ask open ended questions about assignments, class work, graded tests/assignments etc.
   - Restate the area of focus for the session to assure agreement.
   - A frustrated or upset student needs an empathetic tutor willing to listen and then offer some specific tasks which could improve their situation.
   - Follow the student’s lead in terms of needs and pace.
   - Do not concentrate solely on the student’s weaknesses. Reminding a student of their strengths will increase self confidence and create a willingness to master more difficult processes.

Have the student identify the main task for the tutoring session. If given the opportunity, students will offer what they want to work on. This gives the control to the student and increases the likelihood of their participation.

3. Accomplish the task
   - Break the task down into smaller steps if needed.
   - Ask the student to identify the processes needed to accomplish the task.
   - Identify information sources (other than the tutor) such as the textbook, solution manuals, internet etc. Encourage the student to find and use those resources so they can access them when the tutor is not available.
   - Check for comprehension at each step of the process.
   - Any negative evaluations should be directed at the student’s work not the student’s themselves.
Helping the student understand the concept or process is more important than a perfect paper or assignment. Some students will be hoping for an immediate answer and will be frustrated as you persevere in asking for a step by step understanding of the process. Patiently insist on a slower pace giving the student a chance to achieve understanding. They will thank you for your perseverance.

4. Reinforce the Learning
   ✓ Ask the student to summarize the processes used to complete the task.
   ✓ Allow the student to finish the summary without interrupting even if some steps are wrong. This gives them the opportunity to self-correct or indicate areas that they are unsure. At the end, you can redirect them back to the mis-statement to check for understanding.
   ✓ The process of verbalizing helps move information from short term memory to long term memory.
   ✓ The Light Bulb Effect – “Oh, I get it!!” This step will often occur spontaneously. If not, the tutor needs to make sure it eventually does.
   ✓ The Fake Light Bulb – “Oh, I get it, I think.” Find out what points are unclear and review the process and practice. “Let’s just review…..”

This is an important step in the tutoring process. Asking the student to put the concept or process in their own words will reveal whether the concept has been mastered or if more work needs to be done. Do not hurry the learning process in order to cover as many concepts as possible.

5. Ending a Session
   • Always end the session on a positive note.
   • Share an accomplishment achieved during the session with a “Way to go!”.
   • Remind the student of the next meeting.

The student should leave the session on a positive note knowing there is work to do but more ready to tackle the tasks independently.