Boundaries from the First Day

Keeping the Balance

If the student arrives for tutoring unprepared:

- Find out why. Listen for hidden meanings.
- If organization is the issue, offer some suggestions.
- If the student is overwhelmed, try to find a task that can be accomplished during the session.
- Review study skills strategies if needed.
- Ask the student to come prepared for the next session with textbooks, assignments etc.

If the student asks for help outside of appointed times by interrupting a tutoring session with another student, extending their tutoring session beyond 50 minutes or asking for help outside of the normal time and place:

- Politely refuse, even if the student is pressuring you.
- You have the right to your own time and can be the best tutor possible only if you continue to excel in your own studies.
- The student(s) in your current tutoring session deserve your undivided attention without interruptions from another student.

If the student expects you to do the work:

- Politely refuse, even if the student is pressuring you.
- Remember the goal of tutoring is leading the student to independent learning.
- This can be accomplished only if the student is doing their own work regardless of the grade received.

If the student complains about an instructor:

- Refocus the attention back on the course work.
- The tutor’s focus must be on the student and helping the student to change/improve their performance to get the most of their education.
- Do not allow the tutoring session to become a complaint session.
- Tutors have joined the team of instructors as paraprofessionals and may not put down their team.
The tutor may not become too involved with a student’s problems:
  o The tutor-student relationship is a professional relationship requiring a balance between genuine caring which will promote trust but sufficient distance to prevent long term dependence.
  o Do not become the student’s counselor. If these types of services are needed, refer them to Student Services at 769-7818.

If a student displays disrespectful behavior during a tutoring session:
  ▪ A tutor has the right to end a tutoring session if the student becomes argumentative, rude or demanding.

The success of tutoring depends on building a professional relationship balanced with caring and empathy and individual responsibility. This requires that the student and tutor respect each other’s personal time, space and comfort levels. If the student crosses the line, you can say no, end the tutoring session, and report the issue to the Peer Tutor Coordinator. These boundaries must exist for the tutor as well. Respect the student’s individuality in cultural, values, and religious differences.