Training for Tutors:
Strengthening and Implementing an Effective Tutor Training and Development Program at Lees-McRae College

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Abstract

The topic of tutoring in developmental education is not a new concept. Known as one of the oldest forms of developmental education intervention, tutoring has been provided for underprepared college students since the beginnings of higher education in the United States. Today, tutoring is a key component of most successful developmental programs (Casazza and Silverman, 1996). Of course, the most important aspect of successful tutoring is tutor training. According to Boylan, Bliss and Bonham (1997), Maxwell (1997) and Casazza and Silverman (1996), all are in agreement that the provision of tutoring by well trained tutors, as opposed to untrained or marginally trained tutors, is what separates successful tutoring programs from mediocre tutoring programs.

With this in mind, the tutor training program at Lees-McRae College is rather insufficient, as it lacks the intensity and resources necessary to produce effective tutors. Basically, we incorporate a beginning of the semester workshop for all new and returning tutors, in conjunction with the North Carolina State Video Series “A Look at Productive Tutoring Techniques.” And while this is certainly in step with best practices in the field of developmental education, I believe our current tutor training program does very little to adequately prepare our students for the diverse situations, populations and learning styles they will encounter.

To better prepare and educate our peer tutors, increase the quality of tutoring services and make tutoring and the Student Success Center more visible on campus, I would like to revamp our current tutor training model and implement a comprehensive tutor training and development program at Lees-McRae College. I believe that if we
have a tutor training program that is more intentional, purposeful and directed, it will produce tutors who are more effective and can better serve the campus community. Through comprehensive training, it is my intention that tutoring will become another successful academic support service that Lees-McRae offers its students.

**Introduction of Study**

**Background**

Lees-McRae College is a private, four year, liberal arts college nestled in the mountains of Southern Appalachia in Banner Elk, North Carolina. It has about 600 full time, residential students, as well as many students in the community that take classes at several of Lees-McRae’s off campus locations. In its one hundred year history, much has happened that has shaped, impacted and influenced not only the school, but its administration, its faculty and many of its programs. Although Lees-McRae College has been known through the years for embodying the attributes of a small college campus, it has not been immune to the trials and challenges that postsecondary institutions face at one time or another. One such challenge has been to bridge the gaps that exist between developmental education, core curriculum, major programs and concentrations. Even during a tumultuous administration change in the late 1990s, Lees-McRae has offered a variety of academic support services to its students. Throughout its history, the college has maintained some sort of academic support network to provide services including tutoring, developmental courses, academic skills workshops and academic advising. According to the National Center for Developmental Education, the term
Developmental Education is, “a field of practice and research within higher education with a theoretical foundation in developmental psychology and learning theory. Developmental education includes, but is not limited to: all forms of learning assistance, such as tutoring, mentoring, and supplemental instruction, personal, academic, and career counseling academic, advisement, and coursework” (NCDE 2003).

In Lees- McRae’s transition from a two year college to a four year institute of higher education, many aspects of the school changed, while many key attributes remained the same. One major change that occurred as a result of this transition was in the Developmental Education Department. Prior to its change, Lees-McRae maintained an emphasis on Basic Skills clinics and development, to aid the developmental student. This was certainly in line with the mentality of the two year school, which was to aid the two year student, bridge the gap, and develop a skill set that could easily be used in transfer courses. Unfortunately in the 1990’s, during Lees-McRae’s conversion to a four year college, many of the developmental programs and services (including tutoring) were downsized considerably. It was not until the spring of 2000 that developmental programs were reinstated and tutoring services were “resurrected,” so to speak, and put back into place where they belonged, in the newly minted Student Success and Internship Center, founded by Sam Burton.

Obviously, a few things have changed since 2000. Currently, the Division of Student Success, as it is now more aptly named, houses not only our Developmental Education programs (writing, reading and math), but a variety of academic support services. Our disabilities services coordinator is employed within the division, as well as the director of academic advising, and the coordinator of the First Year Experience (FYE)
program. Included in the department is the coordinator of the Academic Success Course, (yet another resource to aid in persistence and retention) as well as any corresponding learning labs for students on academic suspension and probation. Also included in this laundry list of academic support is our Tutoring Services. In our physical space, The Burton Center for Student Success, we offer the Lees-McRae Writing Center as well as the Math Lab.

In the past three years that I have been in my position as the Coordinator of the Developmental Writing Program, I have also been the Director of the Lees-McRae College Writing Center. This position has afforded me numerous opportunities within Developmental Education for teaching and researching. On the other hand, I have had the great opportunity to acquaint myself with best practices regarding Learning Assistance and tutoring, specifically, tutor training.

Currently, we have a tutoring staff of about thirteen students, not only in math and writing, but in various other subjects such as Business, Biology, Chemistry and Spanish. Each year, before the start of each semester, the head of the Writing Center (myself) and the head of the Math Lab (Ms. Lizette Thompson) would hold a two hour long tutor training session for all new and returning tutors. Basically, our tutor training session consisted of going over rules and regulations, as well as policies and procedures regarding not only the tutoring session, but also conditions of employment as a student who receives federal workstudy or assistantship money. Since 2004, the year I began my position, this once-a -semester training seemed to work well. However, over the years, the need for our services increased, as our entering freshman classes began to increase in size. Along with this increase in the size of the freshman class came more students who
placed into developmental courses, and again, the need for more academic support
services to supplement these students. In order to provide the type of comprehensive
academic support to promote the Division of Student Success and its programs, one
component that needed to be re-evaluated was in the area of tutoring, more specifically,
tutor training.

The Problem

Any time that a program or an area of a program begins to grow, it is always wise
to reassess and reevaluate in order to improve services, particularly for students. The
same can be said for the tutoring services at Lees-McRae. Between the years 2005-2007
alone, use of the Writing Center and other tutorial services saw an 83% increase in use.
And we continue to grow. Aside from our tutoring services growing, we are also
attracting more students, faculty and athletic teams to utilize our services, forcing our
physical space to slowly become more cramped – which is a great problem to have.

Aside from the problem of too little space for too many people, the core problem
with the tutor training model that Lees-McRae offers its tutors is that it does not
adequately prepare its tutors for the diverse situations, populations and different learning
styles that they will eventually encounter. It basically lacked intensity and a sufficient
amount of resources and research to adequately prepare our tutors not only for the
different tutoring situations, but also how to make the best use of their time while
tutoring. In fact, our tutors typically did not even know, exactly, what the true definition
of “tutoring” was, and did not thoroughly understand what it meant to be a tutor.
In order to better prepare and educate our peer tutors, increase the quality of tutoring services and ultimately make tutoring services one of the most visible pieces of the academic support puzzle at Lees-McRae, I proposed to revamp our current tutor training model and implement a more comprehensive tutor training and development program at Lees-McRae College. I honestly believe that with better training, we will be better able to provide a better tutoring service for not only developmental students, but for the entire campus community as well.

An important element of any tutor training program is that it needs to be intentional, directed and have a definitive purpose behind training tutors in a particular way. One such way to implement more effective training and to correct our “problem” was to train our tutors for an entire semester, rather than just twice an academic year. Before, we used to meet with our tutors for merely an hour or two each semester, speak with them about rules and regulations, and then proceed to show them an excerpt from North Carolina State’s video training, “A Look at Productive Tutoring Techniques.” While this was fine and certainly aligned with best practices, I felt as though our peer tutors were missing out on a myriad of subjects connected to tutoring, including discussions on the various learning styles, memory and cognition, learning disabilities, and practices in higher education, just to name a few. All of these topics, combined with the tutoring role, the tutoring cycle, and diversity, among other things, would make for a more comprehensive, purposeful and directed tutor training program.

In addition, if our tutor training program became a mandatory class that each peer tutor had to take upon their initial hiring, it would certainly put all of our tutors on the same page, as we could expose all of these students to new resources, research and
information that would certainly increase their knowledge tutoring. Another important element, in keeping with Lees-McRae’s emphasis on the core curriculum and the Liberal Arts, is that the peer tutors could use the Tutor Training Class to make connections to some of the other classes in the core curriculum they are currently taking, as well as the subject they tutor in. Best of all, they would finish the course and would be prepared to tutor more effectively and properly had they not enrolled in the class.

Of course, my intention is that more effective training will produce more effective tutors, and that, ultimately, our tutoring program will be one of the most sought after, comprehensive services on the Lees-McRae College Campus. Research reveals that the availability of tutoring services is an essential component of a successful developmental education program (Boylan, Bliss and Bonham, 1997). In essence, the problem of tutor training at Lees-McRae will be turned into yet another way we can build upon our foundation, improve our services, become more visible on campus, and strengthen our ties to the Developmental Education continuum of courses and services. Eventually, this problem will give way to a solution that can only bolster the already comprehensive academic support offered at Lees-McRae College.

**Literature Review**

Any successful program, regardless of whether it is in education or in corporate America, has to have some type of training program to shape and influence the minds of its employees. In Education, training is essential to have not only educators, but administrators as well, knowledgeable and up to date on current practices, theories and
new research in the field. Why, then, would we not want the same for our peer tutors? Specific to tutoring, no tutoring program can be effective without proper training of its tutors. Known as one of the oldest forms of developmental education intervention, tutoring has been provided for underprepared college students since the beginnings of higher education in the United States. The concept of tutoring has been implemented, in some fashion, since the mid-1600’s when Harvard first employed tutors to prepare students for their academics. Today, tutoring is a key component of most successful developmental programs (Casazza and Silverman, 1996). Of course, the most important aspect of successful tutoring is tutor training. According to Boylan, Bliss and Bonham (1997), Maxwell (1997) and Casazza and Silverman (1996), all are in agreement that the provision of tutoring by well trained tutors, as opposed to untrained or marginally trained tutors, is what separates successful tutoring programs from mediocre tutoring programs. Research shows that when tutoring is delivered by trained tutors, it is the strongest correlate of student success; however, when tutors are not trained, there is no correlation with academic performance (Boylan, Bonham and Bliss, 1992). Obviously, my goal is to produce and provide well trained tutors to our campus community so that students have the opportunity to meet their academic goals with success.

It is important, as an educator who was revamping a program, to start by looking at some of the most reliable research in the field before beginning to undertake a project such as this. I began with one of the most noted and trustworthy books in the field of tutor training by Ross B. MacDonald, Ph.D, *The Master Tutor: A Guidebook for More Effective Tutoring*. Separating this book from all others is Dr. MacDonald’s extensive experience as Director of The California Tutor Project, a two year pilot project consisting
of fifteen colleges and hundreds of tutors and tutees. Based on a solid, systematic research compiled over several years, it came about as a result of observations and analysis of hundreds of tutoring sessions and self-evaluations. Including such topics as “The Tutor Role,” “The Tutor Cycle,” and “Tutoring Options,” Dr. MacDonald’s work synthesizes many difficult concepts and ideas into easy and understandable language. The step-by-cumulative format will be most beneficial in the more formalized training program I will be implementing.

Dr. MacDonald simply and eloquently begins his text by stating that, “tutors, when well informed about tutoring, tutor more effectively, and are consistently able to usefully apply strategies appropriate to each situation.” Tutoring, as defined by Dr. MacDonald, is “a person who, in a structured and supervised educational context, enters in a peer teaching and learning relationship with one or more others.” He goes on to further explain that, “Those who are well informed are energized by their tutees’ improvement are satisfied with their tutoring. They know the most effective routes to helping tutees be able to succeed beyond tutoring.” This is an essential companion textbook for the class I will be teaching, as it will guide and ultimately prepare my tutors for the immense satisfaction of helping others help themselves, and to eventually create their own obsolescence.

The Master Tutor goes on further to give helpful strategies, techniques and proven methods for master tutoring which will produce more personal benefits with less stress. Very accessible to both students and instructors, this book has been an indispensable resource and will continue to be for the duration of my Kellogg Practicum.
In *What Works: Research-Based Best Practices in Developmental Education*, author Hunter R. Boylan covers a number of different topics in this book aimed specifically at the particular aspects of developmental education. Designed as a guidebook which expounds upon best practices, it also includes a summary of research and information supporting the efficacy of the practice. Most importantly, each practice is followed by a list of tips and methods for implementation, based upon observation of successful developmental education activities.

This book is extremely accessible for the developmental education practitioner. Personally, I find this book to be at the center of my research, precisely because it supports and promotes the core elements of developmental education, as it relates specifically to tutoring. In the beginning of the book, there is a section titled “Definitions,” and it was from there that I began to better understand how tutoring fits into the realm of developmental education. In defining developmental education, Dr. Boylan states that it is, “courses or services provided for the purpose of helping underprepared college students attain their academic goals.” He goes on to further explain that the term *developmental program* is defined as “any organized collection of courses and/or services designed to help under-prepared students succeed.” This certainly allowed me understand how tutoring fits into the scope of services often used in the umbrella term of developmental education.

The second most important element I was able to draw from this book concerns the centralization of program activities. Chapter One deals directly with *Centralization of Program Activities*, and begins the chapter by stating that “centralized developmental programs have consistently been found to be more successful than decentralized
developmental programs (Donovan, 1974; Boylan, Bliss and Bonham, 1997; Roueche and Baker, 1987; Roueche and Snow, 1977). It goes on to further explain that centralization is an organizational arrangement where developmental courses and services are highly coordinated, headed by a chair or director and housed in a single department or program. This information helped me to understand that our division, the Division of Student Success at Lees-McRae College, is on the right track in terms of our centralized program, as all of our programs, tutoring services, and faculty are housed in one single department.

The third and most important aspect of this book for my specific research dealt with Section 2.5: Provision of Tutoring. From the beginning, it talks about how tutoring is a key component of most successful developmental programs (Casazza and Silverman, 1996). It goes on to further explain that successful tutoring programs provide tutoring in English, Study Strategies, Reading and Math. At Lees-McRae we have tutors in these subjects, with the addition of tutors in other areas of our core curriculum, allowing us to reach our entire student population. The most important part mentioned about tutoring in this chapter concerns training, as, “the most important aspect of successful tutoring is tutor training.” Having well trained tutors versus untrained or “marginally” trained tutors, is what separates successful tutoring programs from mediocre tutoring programs (Boylan, Bliss and Bonham, 1997; Casazza and Silverman, 1996; Maxwell, 1997).

This section of Boylan’s book has proved that our training prior to this year was not as extensive as it should have been. For example, Cassazza and Silverman (1996) suggests that successful tutor training programs usually provide a combination of training, the best of which include topics such as: learning theory, metacognition,
motivation, counseling, group dynamics and adult learning models. Unfortunately, our previous once a semester training did not include any of these subjects, and it was refreshing and eye-opening to hear that Lees-McRae College was not currently in synch with best practices for tutor training. For this reason alone, this book has been indispensable. Combined with numerous other important pieces of information this book provides, I know that it will help to guide not only this practicum project, but also the implementation of a more effective tutor training program at Lees-McRae.

Another important and relevant resource for this study was the College Reading and Learning Association’s (CRLA) Tutor Training Handbook, Edited by Susan Deese-Roberts. This handbook contains all sorts of important information addressing every area of tutor training, from the practical to the abstract. CRLA is designed to provide a forum for the interchange of methods, ideas and information to improve student learning and facilitate the professional growth of its members. The information included in this revised edition of the handbook is useful and accessible to the tutor trainer who is seeking new topics to cover and new approaches to teaching. While much of the information is directly related to the CRLA guidelines for certification of tutor training, there are still numerous topics for any administrator to consider. The specific essays concentrate on issues related to the planning of training programs, ways of formatting training programs, and topics that are essential to all training programs. The entries provide a basis for incorporating new and exciting concepts, while at the same time relating strategies to help instructors achieve their training goals.

I have used several of these specific essays as handouts in the Topics in Peer Tutoring class and was pleased that these essays typically turned out to be the students’
favorite essays to discuss in their online discussion. In particular, two class favorites had
to be the essays, "Training Tutors Through Tutor Role Analyses," by Mark S. May and
"Establishing a Helping Relationship: Facilitating Non-Verbal and Verbal
Communication," by Thelma Duffey and Russ Hodges. The students typically had lively
conversations upon reading these essays, and wished to discuss them further in class.
Other essays dealt with the underprepared student, addressing diverse audiences, tutoring
international students, and general tutoring tips. On the whole, I would say that The
CRLA Handbook has been another important resource in our quest to revamp tutor
training at Lees-McRae, and I plan to incorporate many of these essays within the class
over the next few years.

The article "What We Know about Tutoring: Findings from the National Study of
Developmental Education," by Hunter R. Boylan, Barbara S. Bonham, Leonard B. Bliss
and D. Patrick Saxon (1995) shows that only 75% of four year institutions offer tutoring
programs, while only 80% provide training. It goes on further to say that tutoring
programs that incorporate a tutor training component are markedly more successful than
those that do not. Tutor training, in many of its forms, has proven to be a "major factor in
the success of developmental education." Truly, it seems as these two components
dovetail each other, suggesting that one cannot happen without the other; that you have to
have a good training program in place to have effective tutoring, and vice versa. Also, in
order to have a strong developmental program, you have to have good tutoring in place,
and again, vice versa. This article has been particularly helpful in disseminating
information as to how developmental education, tutoring services and tutor training are
inter-related.
Jane Neuburger, in her presentation during the Kellogg Institute, discussed certain factors associated with successful developmental programs. In 1999 she wrote that there were several important elements to consider when building a developmental program. Key among these is “Learning Assistance or tutoring with tutor training.” Along with this is another element that pertains specifically to Lees-McRae, “Centralized organizational structure for the program with mission and goals.” These two factors will combine to help Lees-McRae re-structure its current tutor training model, as we keep these factors in the forefront of our new design.

In Martha Casazza and Sharon Silverman’s seminal work, *Learning Assistance and Developmental Education* there is a particular chapter which points to the importance of tutoring and the well trained tutor. In a chapter entitled “Training the Tutors,” we learn that tutor training falls under three headings: connecting theory to construct a specific tutor training program, connecting theory to specific tutor training activities and choosing essential tutor training content – topics on which tutors are to be trained. Casazza and Silverman place emphasis not solely on the structure of training, but on the *content* of tutoring training programs, so that administrators and trainers have a basis for designing formats relevant to their own settings and educational environments. Both authors agree that the most important aspect of a solid tutor training program is, “a well articulated philosophy containing a combination of perspectives, including college student development, sociolinguistics, metacognition, motivation, counseling, group dynamics and adult learning” (Casazza and Silverman, 1996).

The chapter further discusses the reality of tutor training, explaining that “tutor training is essential to tutor effectiveness.” Also included is the importance of connecting
tutor training activities and topics to theory, to better inform and train our tutors. And while every institution’s setting is uniquely different, it is vital to the strength of any program to relate certain “core topics” to its tutors in training.

Lastly, the two authors contend that along with proper training, any effective tutoring program will have assessment and evaluation measures in place to guide future design and implementation efforts, as well as to help improve services for students. Overall, this book is essential to any developmental education administrator. This text, this chapter in particular, has given me a good foundation and plenty of guidance to look at our tutor training from a different perspective and to re-evaluate the strength and needs of our current tutor training program.

Looking at Improving Student Learning Skills by Martha Maxwell, Chapter Three “Creating Tutoring Services” is an important and effective resource regarding tutoring. It goes into great detail to uncover the background and history of tutoring, explaining that tutoring is “individualized instruction.” And while group instruction is considered acceptable, learning must also be supplemented with individualized instruction. This specific chapter looks at tutoring from all angles, and declares how important tutoring is at an institution. In particular, peer tutoring is important, stating that, “Peer tutoring is considered by both students and experts alike to be one of the most important ingredients of a successful learning assistance program – students expect it and most colleges offer it” (Maxwell, 1997). This piece of information directly relates to the set up we have at Lees-McRae, as we employ strictly peer tutors - knowing them to be an important piece of the tutoring puzzle.
Even before Maxwell gives tips and techniques for structuring a model tutor training program, she talks about what untrained tutors can do, seeing that, “well meaning but untrained tutors can do more harm than good. They can intimidate students, overprotect them, and do the work for the student, causing them to be dependent on the tutor” (Maxwell, 1997). Again, further proof of the importance of a well planned tutor training program.

Further in the chapter, Maxwell relates specific guidelines for an effective tutor training program based on her work and experiences. The ten topics include:

1) Knowledge of the goals and objectives of the program, appropriate behavior and an opportunity to demonstrate these in practice.

2) Training in using appropriate materials and structured activities.

3) Training in conducting sessions: opening and closing sessions, establishing rapport, etc.

4) Training in listening.

5) Training in how to develop a working relationship with faculty members.

6) Ways of explaining, presenting and clarifying the basic concepts in the subject.

7) Strategies for helping students master concepts and basic skills.

8) An awareness of some of the typical tutoring problems they will encounter and ways of working with them.

9) An understanding of the record keeping and other procedures of the program and its organizational structure.
10) An opportunity to develop sensitivity to students from other ethnic backgrounds and cultures and an understanding of the learning style differences between people.

Indeed, all of the aforementioned guidelines are just a few of many different topics that can be included in various tutor training programs. Goals often include assisting tutors in developing their own flexible, comfortable tutoring style that will result in academic success for the diverse students who utilize the tutoring center.

The amount of training, the type of training, and where the training is delivered varies from campus to campus. Using different techniques and formats, training, in all its many forms, is shown to be the most integral part of a successful tutoring program. There are many topics to be considered in a training program, certainly, but one of the most important elements to having a successful peer tutoring program is that, “tutors are given a tutor training program where they learn techniques of working with underprepared students before they start tutoring and are offered continuous, on-going training, supervision and support as they continue to tutor students” (Maxwell, 1997). This speaks directly to the tutoring training program at Lees-McRae, as, I had feared, our training was not quite as on-going, as comprehensive, as it needed to be. This will certainly be taken into consideration as we re-evaluate our current training program.

Maxwell’s work is just another excellent resource that will be used to guide and influence our new training program at Lees-McRae. Her simple, yet articulate thoughts concerning tutor training, and easy to implement ideas will assist us in making a more effective and well designed tutor training program.
Overall, the above literature further emphasizes the need for an effective tutor training component to accompany tutoring services at Lees-McRae. Disseminating this information while implementing new structures and strategies for tutor training at Lees-McRae will aid in the transition to a more effective training program for successful tutors. The solid training of our tutors will translate into more academically successful students at Lees-McRae. This will show that the centralized services we offer in the Division of Student Success will continue to make an impact and will continue to directly contribute to student success.

**Purpose**

There is a clear and simple purpose for wanting to update our current training model. The research and evidence clearly shows that an on-going, continuous training program that covers a broad range of topics will ultimately lead to better and more effective tutors. Obviously, after a careful review of literature, what we’ve learned is that there is harm in not completely training tutors, and Lees-McRae was doing its tutors and the students who utilize the tutoring services an injustice by not fully preparing tutors in the most effective way possible. New training techniques will make peer tutors more knowledgeable, will acquaint them with research, theory and practice in the field, and will better prepare them for the challenges of tutoring. The purpose for instituting a more comprehensive training model was to better serve our students, and ultimately, our student population. A tutor training and development class is to be offered and required
of all tutors, regardless of whether they were first year or veteran tutors. This way we would have the entire semester to concentrate and focus on topics that were too broad to be glossed over in a one hour, once a semester training session.

Another purpose for implementing the course was to bring together tutors from different disciplines to learn from one another. Rarely do our tutors work together, as we have very flexible scheduling systems, and this would be a unique opportunity for tutors of different subjects to hear from and learn from their peers. Another important purpose for strengthening and implementing a more effective tutor training program is to attract students to the services and programs that the Division of Student Success offers. In synch with the intention of making tutoring more “visible” on campus is the idea that instituting a more comprehensive tutor training plan will also further Lees-McRae’s mission to, “support the academic success of each of its students.” This way, we can foster the sense of institutional commitment to developmental education and further enhance the credibility of services we can offer. This, in turn, will allow faculty, staff and administration to become more aware of the type of top notch services we offer our students. Last, and certainly not least, is to be better aligned with best practices not only for tutoring, but for tutor training. Very often the difference between successful and mediocre tutoring programs comes down to the amount and type of training tutors receive.
Statement of Goals and Objectives

In designing and implementing a more comprehensive tutor training program at Lees-McRae, there were quite a number of factors to consider. By outlining a set of goals, objectives and standards with which to work from, I was able to have a framework to measure progress, and I was finally able to design a tutor training program that would more effectively equip tutors. The following six goals were key in guiding me through this process:

1. To create a comprehensive tutor training program and to strengthen all aspects of tutor training and development.

2. To implement a “Topics in Peer Tutoring” class for course credit, which will allow tutors to become CRLA certified.

3. Create a syllabus for the course, compatible with CRLA requirements, incorporating information on tutor training, learning theories and best practices.

4. Create a handbook for tutors, making it a comprehensive resource for all tutors.

5. Expand current methods of assessment, evaluation and use of technology.

6. Eventually (Phase II) - Update website interface and marketing of materials.

Similarly, my proposed objectives were designed to aid in the planning, development and initial implementation of this new tutor training program. The following detailed objectives outline my desires for the training program, as well as ways in which I plan to not only implement this project, but to share my findings with colleagues across the campus, as well as the tutors we staff.
1. Determine the Scope of services.

   A. Come to an agreed upon definition of tutoring and tutor training and development that is in line with Lees-McRae’s philosophy and mission statement.

2. Create materials for tutor training and development program, beginning specifically with tutee/tutor contracts, handbook for tutors and material that will introduce the concept of tutoring to new tutors, while reinvigorating, refreshing and challenging veteran tutors.

3. Create syllabus, tutor training topics and classroom activities using CRLA guidelines.

4. Create better communication between tutors and the Coordinator of Tutoring services by using discussion boards and chat as a means of sharing information, experiences, etc.

5. Create and maintain handbook materials, through extended research in the field.

6. Evaluate and revise current quality of tutor training and development practices and the quality of tutor effectiveness.

   A. Share current research in the field with tutors, colleagues, faculty members and administrators.

   B. Look at satisfaction of faculty members and improve communication system with them, namely through establishing a feedback and recommendation process for potential tutors, preferably online.

   C. Evaluate the “workflow” of current tutoring program, i.e., scheduling, drop-in vs. appointments, structuring of sessions, space issues, etc.
D. Look closely at the “reality” of LMC, particularly in regards to money. What can I do, within my personal, professional and financial realm, to make what we are doing better?

E. Modernize marketing of materials.

**Limits**

Especially in education, any new study or research has several limitations. There really were not too many limits with this particular practicum project, but there were a few which directly impacted the implementation of the tutoring training program.

After sharing my ideas with my colleagues upon returning from the Kellogg Institute this past summer, I was able to set a few things into motion. Upon receiving permission from my supervisor to complete this study, the next step proposed quite a few challenges. We were confident we could get this course on the schedule in time for spring, but scheduling proved to be a nightmare. All thirteen of our tutors (mostly upperclassmen, all honors students) are the most involved, well rounded students on our campus! With an overall combined GPA of 3.7, our tutors are some of the busiest people on Lees-McRae’s campus. Half of our peer tutors are involved with athletics, performing arts, or are in someway involved with student government organizations, therefore holding several leadership roles on campus. Several of our tutors are Resident Assistants in the dorms, and a few others held jobs outside of school. Truly, this was the most immediate limit I had to work with. We finally did find a time to meet that worked for
all, which turned out to be at 8:00 in the morning. Lees-McRae does not even offer classes at 8:00, as all of its earliest courses begin at 8:30. To further complicate things, this two credit hour class had the possibility of putting several students into an overloaded class schedule, meaning it could potentially disrupt financial aid for several of our students. By working with the dean of student financial aid, we were finally able to come to a compromise, and the peer tutors would not be charged extra for a “class” that was essentially deemed training.

Another potential limit was what to do with future planning of tutor training as well as: who would teach the course? Also, who would take the course-just new tutors or returning ones, too? A conversation concerning these issues, as well as others, took place during one of our spring division meetings, as we worked on options for the next few years.

Population

The thirteen peer tutors taking SSC 388, “Topics in Peer Tutoring,” are certainly a diverse bunch. There are approximately eight women and five men. Only one student was a freshman, two were sophomores, eight were juniors and two were seniors (one was a fifth year senior). These students ranged in age from 17-23, and represented an interesting cross-section of diversity. Adding to our population, we have three international students on our staff: one male from South Korea, one male from Armenia, and one male from Colombia. Only two of our tutors were newly hired- the rest had been
staff for at least one year, with our longest tutor being on staff for four years. The average overall combined GPA for our tutors is 3.7 and they hold even higher GPA’s in their area of tutoring expertise.

**Importance of Study**

There are a number of reasons that justify the importance of this study. To begin, it is very important to me, because as the Director of the Writing Center, we needed a much more comprehensive training system in place to more effectively train our tutors. Certainly, better trained tutors equals tutoring that is in line with best practices. As an overseer of a large part of our tutoring services, this will certainly raise the level of the tutoring we can provide for our campus community. This project is not only important to the Director and the tutors, but also the institution, its mission, and its students. Improving communication among tutors and coordinators will ultimately result in a comprehensive tutor training and development program that will certainly prove beneficial. It will also:

1. Attract and retain motivated peer tutors, making them more knowledgeable, familiar with current research in the field and most importantly, better prepared for the challenges of tutoring. This will make our tutors, as well as our training program, more effective.
2. Become a higher standard. By raising the training bar higher, we will have top notch training in place, and ultimately, top notch tutors. It is important for our tutors to know and understand all facets of tutoring.

3. Enhance academic success of students who are working with trained and developed peer tutors. Also, it will attract students to the myriad services and academic support that the Student Success Center provides.

4. Foster greater sense of institutional commitment to tutor training and academic support, particularly for developmental students.

5. Further LMC’s mission statement to support the academic success of each of its students.

6. By using the CRLA certification as a selling point, it will make the Student Success Center more visible on campus and hopefully more attractive to students who are not already using its services.

7. Enhance the credibility of tutoring program, thereby enhancing and reinforcing another premise of developmental education.

8. Make faculty more aware of services offered and the quality of our tutor training and development

Lees-McRae is a growing institution, and within this growing school is a growing division. As Lees-McRae grows and expands, the need for The Division of Student Success increases. And with this growth comes expansion of programs and services, tutoring being one of those important services. It is essential that we, collectively, re-
assess our tutor training, as it is a necessary step for us to move forward – right along with the college.

Procedure of the Study

The Tutor Training Class, “Topics in Peer Tutoring,” was held for the first time during the second week of the spring semester, January 2007. It began the second week, as I was returning from India with another group of Lees-McRae students from a service learning trip. During our first meeting, students received the syllabus and some information regarding policies and procedures of the class. This was to be a two credit hour class that met two days a week, 8:00 am Mondays and Wednesdays. The class would be a combination of discussion, presentations, papers and online discussions using the Sakai course management system. I also tried to meet individually with students throughout the semester, scheduling individual conferences to “round out” the training, and to better understand what each student genuinely wanted to learn. I gave each student a syllabus for the semester. The schedule for topics is as follows:

Week One: Definitions of Tutoring/Learning Assistance Centers
Week Two: Policies and Procedures; Rules and Regulations
Week Three: Goals of Tutoring
Week Four: Tutoring Roles
Week Five: Tutoring Cycle
Week Six: Communication (verbal and non-verbal); Listening; Diversity

Week Seven: Diversity Cont'd: International Students, Under-prepared students;

ESL

Week Eight: Learning Disabilities

Week Nine: Memory and Cognition

Week Ten: Issues in Higher Education

Week Eleven: Learning Styles; FAQ’s

Week Twelve: Tips and Techniques

Week Thirteen: Evaluation and Assessment

Week Fourteen: Building a “Personal Tutoring Philosophy”

Week Fifteen: Wrap up semester/Field trip to Appalachian State University

Along with this broad list of topics, students were invited to take part in a field trip to Appalachian State University, to hear more about the tutoring services offered through Appalachian’s Learning Assistance Program. From what students have mentioned to me, it was very beneficial for them to see and hear about another institution’s tutoring services.

The semester culminated with the students’ final essay exam on their “Personal Tutoring Philosophy.” These are excellent essays, and certainly exhibit what the tutors have learned throughout the semester. Please see the appendix and supporting documentation for all of these collected essays.
Evaluation: Overall, this course went extremely well for a first implementation. Please see the Appendix for copies of all original course evaluations. These evaluations will be tabulated and used in improving the next Tutor Training Course.

Results of the Study

Objective #1

Determine the Scope of Services.

A. Come to an agreed upon definition of tutoring and tutor training and development that is in line with Lees-McRae’s philosophy and mission statement.

I believe that this objective was met, as my colleagues and I in the Division of Student Success were able to sit down together upon my return from the Kellogg Institute this past summer. We talked about the “Scope of Services and what, as a Developmental Education Department, we can offer our students in the way of tutoring. We talked about my desire to revamp our current tutor training model to be more in line with best practices, at the same time further Lees-McRae’s mission to help aid in the academic success of each of its students. The result was that all of the colleagues in the Division of Student Success agreed that we needed a better tutor training model to better equip our
tutors. It was wise to start with the division first, as we are a team that makes decisions together.

**Objective #2**

Create materials for tutor training and development program, beginning specifically with tutee/tutor contracts, handbook for tutors and material that will introduce the concept of tutoring to new tutors, while reinvigorating, refreshing and challenging veteran tutors.

Materials for the tutor training and development course were developed with best practices in mind. Beginning specifically with tutee/tutor contracts, I moved into creating the syllabus for the SSC 388, “Topics in Peer Tutoring,” and designed it the way I wanted the course to be presented to students – starting off covering some of the basics of tutoring and moving into more complex ideas, issues and theories. I wanted to introduce new material to tutors without overwhelming them, at the same time sharing information with veteran tutors that would inspire them to use their previous experience as a tutor to shape and mold their personal tutoring philosophy. As a result, the course was a combination of more basic information and new finds in the field of developmental education and tutoring. I believe this new, updated material has allowed the tutors a chance to, again, better understand what tutoring is and to become excited about the prospect of tutoring.
Objective #3

Create syllabus, tutor training topics and classroom activities using CRLA guidelines.

Using the CRLA guidelines, as well as the CRLA handbook, I was able to construct a more current course based on new research and information available in the field of tutor training. I was able to incorporate many of the essays and articles presented in the CRLA handbook, which were not only well written, but also relevant to the course. My desire was to cover a broader range of material that we were unable to explore during our previous one hour tutor training sessions. Topics included everything from setting up the tutoring session, to verbal and non-verbal communication, working with International Students, using occupational roles to decide what kind of tutor you are, and various tips and techniques to aid the tutor in the tutor/tutee relationship. By using CRLA as a guide and framework, it has made our tutor training much more effective, up to date and relevant to the different tutoring situations our tutors will eventually face.

Objective #4

Create better communication between tutors and the Coordinator of Tutoring Services by using discussion boards and chat as a means of sharing information, experiences, etc.
We implemented better communication between tutors and the Coordinator of Tutoring Services in a number of different ways. To begin, we appointed a few of our nightly peer tutors to be “Lab Coordinators,” as they were basically in charge of all tutoring services when a full time faculty member was not available. This certainly improved communication, as it gave us a chance to hear about how the night time tutoring sessions were going, as well as problems that our tutors were facing when study hall interfered with tutoring. Not only did we use technology to bolster communication, there were plenty of impromptu conferences about the goings-on of the night time tutoring. In terms of technology, we used Sakai as an excellent outlet and communication system – not only between lab coordinators and tutors – but through tutors using these services to share information with other tutors. As a result, there was improved communication between tutors who may not have even known each other, let alone talk with one another. Truly, it was exciting to watch tutors use the discussion boards, as well as set up times to speak with one another in person. Overall, I believe that we have now implemented a better system of communication, proving to tutors that not only can they learn from the training course, but they can also learn from one another.
Objective #5

Create and maintain handbook materials, through extended research in the field.

This particular objective is still a work in progress, as my objectives for the tutor training course changed slightly as I decided to focus more on the course, and less on the handbook. In essence, the tutor training handbook has become less of a manual I am putting together and more of a file that I am adding to until I have all the resources necessary to compile a brand new tutor handbook. Also, I have been unable to create a brand new manual, as I have yet to sit down with the head of the Math Lab (Ms. Lizette Thompson) to decide, together, on the direction and approach we wish to take with our tutors. As for the writing tutors, I have already compiled a folder of important information for them, but it will vary greatly from what we decide to give to all tutors, new and returning. As a result, I would like to have another year of the tutor training course, taught by Ms. Thompson (as we decided to switch off every other year), and after she has finished teaching that, decide together on resources, materials and information to be placed into a brand new Tutor Training Manual. I believe this is the best course of action in order to implement a new handbook. Nevertheless, I am glad that we are taking small steps towards revamping our tutor training program, rather than implementing brand new “everything” right away. I think that offering the course again next year, and more evaluation, will help us to better create a lasting, effective training program that will prove to be beneficial not only for the tutors, but for Lees-McRae as well.
Objective #6

Evaluate and revise current quality of tutor training and development practices and the quality of tutor effectiveness.

A. Share current research in the field with tutors, colleagues, faculty members and administrators.

B. Look at satisfaction of faculty members and improve communication system with them, namely through establishing a feedback and recommendation process for potential tutors, preferably online.

C. Evaluate the “workflow” of current tutoring program, i.e., scheduling, drop-in vs. appointments, structuring of sessions, space issues, etc.

D. Look closely at the “reality” of LMC, particularly in regards to money. What can I do, within my personal, professional and financial realm, to make what we’re doing “better?”

E. Modernize marketing of materials.

Upon finishing my literature review and disseminating the information through division meetings and within the tutor training course, I believe that I was able to thoroughly evaluate the type of training that had been done in the past at Lees-McRae College. Best of all, I was able to share those findings with students, staff and colleagues. With this information, I was able to see what direction we could take the tutor training program. Of course, it was important for me to speak directly with colleagues across campus about the tutoring services, recruiting tutors and the process for
recommending a tutor. That information is all online as a result of collaboration with the Chair of the Division of Student Success, as well as the Math Lab Coordinator. Secondly, this spring, in conjunction with the new tutor training course, I had the opportunity and ability to do some “outreach” type workshops. By going and speaking with several different classes, ranging from Psychology, to Business to Athletic Training, I was able to “plug” our tutoring services, as I consistently handed out schedules and talked about the strength of our peer tutoring program. It was by visiting these classes and putting on workshop-type classes that I was able to promote and endorse the tutoring services, further emphasizing tutorings’ importance and connection to all disciplines.

This semester I also had the opportunity to evaluate the “workflow” of our current tutoring situation. This was aided by our visit to Appalachian’s Learning Assistance Program, under the direction of Wes Waugh. Essentially, this trip has made me re-evaluate the way our services are currently run. This was even suggested in a recent division meeting, as we discussed the idea of possibly implementing TutorTrac software as an organizational and management tool. We will continue to offer drop in tutoring appointments, and all the tutors are in agreement with this, as it was a topic covered in class. However, the space issue will be a tricky problem in the next couple of years as we continue to grow, and students and faculty continue to utilize our services. By looking closely at the “reality” of tutoring at Lees-McRae, I see that we’ve taken the first step in making our tutoring services even more effective: strengthening our training of tutors.
The next step to completely meet our objectives will be to create a tutoring manual for all tutors. Next, we will modernize the marketing of materials for Lees-McRae’s tutoring services, and then completely revamp our webpage, perhaps adding an online element (brief questions, reference or spelling questions, etc) to our tutoring services. Again, this is all in the future of tutoring at Lees-McRae, but it is certainly worth looking forward to.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Findings

The first thing I have found as a result of this study was that our tutors were ready and willing to be trained. They knew that they lacked the knowledge needed to be more proficient, effective tutors, and were very open and receptive to being trained in a different format. They genuinely appreciated the different topics we covered in this new, comprehensive training program. Overall, satisfaction among tutors was excellent, and they expressed wanting to learn even more about the tutoring process and theories surrounding tutoring.

Second, I found that it is much easier to coordinate everyone’s academic schedule when the course is already listed on the Academic Semester schedule. Again, it is very important to have the tutor training course, “already on the books,” so to speak, rather than to accommodate tutors’ busy schedules.

Another thing I found is that it is sometimes difficult to translate tutor training into a two credit hour course. What is a sufficient amount of work to assign? What is too
much? I suppose it was because it was the first time we have taught the course, but I am sure as the years go on, the tutoring coordinators will be able to strike a good balance between training our peer tutors and burdening them with too much work.

In order to effectively train our tutors, and to assess the work that has been done over the past year, there needs to be some more research done, and perhaps a separate study on evaluating and further exploring how tutor training fits into the spectrum of developmental education. Also, it would be interesting to track the academic success of students who used the various tutors this semester, spring 2007, as the tutors were taking the course. Or, we could track the success of students who utilize the tutoring services in the fall 2007 semester, after the tutors have completed their tutor training course. Nevertheless, it would be an interesting study, and, I believe, one that would further solidify the need for this new and improved training program.

Along with further research along the avenues of assessment, I was able to work with the Coordinator of College-wide assessment, Dr. Fiona Chrystall. She helped me to disseminate the data compiled from a number of statistical resources that contain information regarding several different elements concerning Lees-McRae College. The first among these is the Noel-Levitz, which was administered to students in 2006, and reveals that, compared with other four year schools, student satisfaction is high regarding tutoring, as it deems “…Tutoring Services are readily available.” This is very interesting information, and will certainly be taken into consideration as we shape and mold our tutoring and tutor training services.

Another statistical tool, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) shows that students at Lees-McRae, compared to other four year, liberal arts schools, did
not spend a significant amount of time on their academic work outside of class. Now, the perception of freshman students who believe this is 70%, whereas 78% of seniors believe that they do not spend a significant amount of time on their academic work outside of class. In conjunction with the NSSE, Lees-McRae also administers the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) and this data has also helped us to hear the faculty’s input on this particular topic. Of faculty taking the test, 78% of Faculty believe that Freshman spend an insignificant amount of time on academics outside of class, while 96% of Faculty believe that Seniors spend a small amount of time on school work outside of class. Truly, this data makes a case that with improved tutor training, we will be able to attract more Lees-McRae students to spend their time outside of class working on their academic work. It also shows that there is a culture on our campus that little emphasis is placed on school work outside of class, and that learning outside of the classroom is not stressed nearly enough. Hopefully, this raw data can help us to change this perception on Lees-McRae’s campus.

Focus groups were held on campus this past spring to address all aspects of Lees-McRae and naturally, tutoring was on the list. The freshman utilized the tutoring center, believing that the "tutoring hours are good, and the tutors are good, too." Sophomores thought that the tutoring offered on campus was good, but, "needs to be more proactive." Finally, the Juniors and Seniors believed that tutoring services were good, but that they are often viewed as "remedial." Again, tutor training could certainly improve the perception of academic support on campus, and I hope that all of the collected information will assist us in making a transition from good support, to better and more effective academic support for our students.
I thoroughly enjoyed teaching this course, just as I felt my students enjoyed taking this class with me. One interesting thing I discovered was when I brought in several guest speakers to talk with the class about their area of “expertise.” I brought in our Disabilities Services Coordinator to address learning disabilities, our College Reading instructor to address memory and cognition, and another colleague to discuss best practices in Higher Education. The students genuinely enjoyed the variety of having another instructor, and it made me think about the idea of having the tutor training class be a team taught venture. Could it be possible? And what would be the implications of having a team taught tutor training class? At any rate, it prompted me to begin thinking about creative ways to excite our tutoring “students.” Another possible option could be to have veteran tutors teach new and incoming tutors as a part of training. If anything, it has allowed me to see that while implementing the tutor training course is a great first step in revamping our training model, there are all sorts of innovative possibilities to enhance and make the course even better.

**Problem Restated**

The core problem with the tutor training model that Lees-McRae offers its tutors is that it does not adequately prepare its tutors for the diverse situations, populations and different learning styles that they will eventually encounter. It basically lacked intensity and a sufficient amount of resources and research to adequately prepare our tutors not only for the different tutoring situations, but also how to make the best use of their time while tutoring. In fact, our tutors typically did not even know, exactly, what the true
definition of “tutoring” was, and did not thoroughly understand what it means to be a tutor.

The problem is that Lees-McRae’s tutor training program needs to be more intentional and directed, with a stronger sense of purpose, for tutors and instructors. By leaving behind the more traditional once a semester training, we can better train our tutors to be more effective at their job and to have a better understanding of their own purpose. Ultimately, stronger tutors should correlate into a stronger overall tutoring program.

In order to better prepare and educate our peer tutors, increase the quality of tutoring services and ultimately make tutoring services one of the most visible pieces of the academic support puzzle at Lees-McRae, I proposed to revamp our current tutor training model and implement a more comprehensive tutor training and development program at Lees-McRae College. I honestly believe that with better training, we will be better able to provide a better tutoring service for not only developmental students, but for the entire campus community as well.

Recommendations

Upon reviewing this past semester and the course that was offered, I would have to say that, overall, I feel as though the implementation of this new tutor training program was a success. The tutors were eager to learn, just as we were eager to impart new information. In the future, and to hopefully continue its success, I would recommend the following for the tutor training program.
Obviously, it is imperative to keep the momentum we have now. As we continue to improve and grow, one of the most needed elements I would like to see added would be a full time Lab Coordinator. As stated before, the Division of Student Success and tutoring services saw an 83% increase in use. Currently, our Division Chair coordinates the budget for all tutors and workstudy students, and the Writing Center Director and Math Lab Coordinator work on schedules, training and various other issues. As we continue to grow and expand, a full time Lab Coordinator would be extremely beneficial to the Burton Center, as there is currently a real need for this to be a full time position, and not just another added responsibility for two already overwhelmed faculty members. Or, Lees-McRae could make the Writing Center Director strictly in charge of the Writing Center and tutoring services. This way, the needs of our ever expanding academic support services are met. My recommendation is that, hopefully, we can create a position that will coordinate the needs of our tutors and the improved training program.

One thing I would like to see become part of the tutor training program, in addition to the class, would be money in the Student Success budget allocated to further training tutors. A great example would be to send some of our peer tutors to the CRLA or ATP conference to participate in workshops, or, to present papers based on their own findings. It would be great to encourage our tutors to further themselves professionally, as this would be just as much for their benefit as for ours. Certainly, this would further support Lees- McRae’s ideas about fostering “mentoring relationships” between faculty and students.
Another recommendation would be to apply for CLRA certification. By compiling all of the necessary paperwork and documentation, it would be great to get our tutors and Lees-McRae’s tutoring center certified through the CRLA organization. This would make our services more high profile, and would certainly be a selling point for the college.

Overall, strides are being taken to further Lees-McRae’s tutor training program, which is exciting. By addressing the problem, finding creative solutions and working with faculty, staff and students, the tutors will be more effective because there is, and will continue to be, a stronger training program in place. By strengthening, developing and implementing an improved tutor training program, Lees-McRae and its community will benefit from well trained tutors and will certainly benefit from a tutoring center that can attract and retain students – both current and potential students. I believe that a solid tutoring center with well trained tutors will be another factor in students choosing to start and continue their college career at Lees-McRae, where they know they will be fully supported in all their academic endeavors.
Appendix
Impact
Letters
May 22, 2007
Kellogg Institute

To Whom It May Concern:

Natalie Serianni has provided an opportunity for growth and development for the tutor training program at Lees-McRae College through her Kellogg Practicum at Lees-McRae College. She successfully planned, implemented and assessed a tutor training program for 2006-2007 academic year. The structure and rigor that she was able to bring to the existing program positively impacted faculty, tutors and students seeking our services.

Our intent is to take the model that Natalie has implemented and to continue to strengthen and grow our program. The foundation she has provided will allow us to continue to offer high quality academic support to students at Lees-McRae College, while providing valuable leadership training to our tutors.

The Division of Student Success at Lees-McRae College has had the fortune to have a strong relationship with the Kellogg Institute for Developmental Education for a number of years; I look forward to continuing to work together in the future.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Nan McDaden
Department Chair of the Division of Student Success
Director of Advising Services and First Year Programs
May 16, 2007

Re: Kellogg Practicum, National Center for Developmental Education

“Strengthening and Implementing an Effective Tutor Training and Development Program” / Ms. Natalie Serianni, Kellogg Institute, Summer 2006.

Ms. Natalie Serianni developed a well-thought out and research based program of actions to improve the tutoring program at Lees-McRae College. Her primary focus was to structure and intensify the training process for tutors, including approval for certifying tutors via the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) training model. Specific goals also included incorporating a credited training class into the curriculum at Lees-McRae and exploring expansion possibilities in the areas of assessment, evaluation, and technology based initiatives such as an updated website. Natalie has stayed in contact with me throughout this year and has kept me informed of her progress which has been substantial. Recently, she and a group of her tutors visited the Appalachian Tutorial Services center for a tour and discussion opportunities. It was exciting to see and hear about the many positive changes that have occurred at Lees-McRae as a result of the Kellogg experience. Academic support for students at LMC will be greatly enhanced as a result of these efforts. Ms. Serianni has worked hard to accomplish an ambitious set of goals and objectives over the past year. I offer full support for her practicum accomplishments and look forward to using her project in the future as a model for others seeking similar goals.

Sincerely,

M. Wesley Waugh
Director, University Tutorial Services
Appalachian State University
Spring Semester Course Listing
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Course Syllabus
Topics in Peer Tutoring  
Tutor Training and Development SSC 388  
Lees-McRae College  Spring 2007  
Instructor: Ms. Natalie Serianni  
Phone#: x3341  
Office: 219E  SSIC  Bowman Science Building  
Hours:  MWF: 10:30-12:30; MW: 1-3; anytime by appointment  
E-mail: Seriannin@lmc.edu  
Home #: 963-5792 (before 9pm, please)

The topic of tutoring in developmental education is not a new concept. Known as one of the oldest forms of developmental education intervention, tutoring has been provided for underprepared college students since the beginnings of higher education in the United States. Today, tutoring is a key component of most successful developmental programs (Casazza and Silverman, 1996). Of course, the most important aspect of successful tutoring is tutor training. According to Boylan, Bliss and Bonham (1997), Maxwell (1997) and Casazza and Silverman (1996), all are in agreement that the provision of tutoring by well trained tutors, as opposed to untrained or marginally trained tutors, is what separates successful tutoring programs from mediocre tutoring programs.

To better prepare and educate our peer tutors, increase the quality of tutoring services and make tutoring and the Student Success Center more visible on campus, we will be revamping our current tutor training model to strengthen and implement an effective comprehensive tutor training and development program at Lees-McRae College. I believe that if we have a tutor training program that is more intentional, purposeful and directed, it will produce tutors who are more effective and can better serve the campus community. Through comprehensive training, it is my intention that tutoring will become another successful academic support service that Lees-McRae offers its students.

Required Texts:  
Any texts for outside reading and discussion will be provided by instructor. Selections will be taken from classic texts in the field.

Course Objectives:  
This is a two credit hour course designed to more thoroughly train tutors at Lees-McRae College. This course is designed to acquaint tutors with current theory and practices in Learning Assistance and Tutoring. In addition to training you as a tutor, this course will lead to CRLA certification (College Reading and Learning Association). As part of the new tutor training and development program, this training will enable you to provide quality tutoring through the use of tutoring techniques that foster active learning and foster student independence.
As a result of this course, students will be able to:
- Gain an understanding of and practice peer tutoring, tutor training pedagogical concepts, and related vocabulary
- Learn new ways of problem solving when tutoring
- Think critically regarding practices related to the actual “art” of tutoring
- Reflect upon readings and discussions in terms of your own learning background and be able to connect them to the actual practice of tutoring (direct application).
- Develop an awareness of diversity and inclusion issues (to be further discussed), as well as various other realities as they relate to particular tutoring situations.
- Meet the diverse needs of the college student, individually and on a small group basis.

While each class will vary, the priorities for this class are as follows. Chief among the topics we will be discussing:
1) Learning Styles
2) Ethics, Standards and Best practices
3) Communication Skills
4) Effective Methods of Tutoring
5) Students with Disabilities
6) Tutoring ESL students
7) Issues in Diversity
8) Professionalism
9) Tutoring vs. Teaching
10) Campus Resources

Class Objectives:
This class will cover numerous topics related to tutoring in higher education. First and foremost we will develop your confidence as a tutor and to allow you to become more comfortable, so you are better able to enjoy your role. It is a privilege! We will work to increase tutor’s effectiveness in tutorial techniques, as well as foster growth in interpersonal skills. By adding to your knowledge regarding tutoring, learning assistance services and learning strategies, tutors will be better equipped to handle all types of tutoring situations. Best of all, you have the chance to directly impact and make a genuine difference in students’ learning.

This will be a community of writers, readers, scholars, thinkers, speakers and listeners. Never be afraid to say what you think.

Assignments and Response Essays
There will be weekly response essays/assignments given throughout the semester, but mostly these will be essays, which can be turned into Sakai. More than likely, there will be weekly essays, as well as discussions which will also be posted on Sakai. Lastly, a final paper/presentation will also be assigned… more info to come.
Homework
Readings and homework will be given on a consistent basis. Please manage to keep up to date with all assignments.

Course Policies

Methods of Assessment and Evaluation
You should receive an “A” in this class, unless you fail to complete assignments, miss essays, skimp out on projects, etc. This shouldn’t happen, of course, as you are tutors precisely because you are excellent students! If I do notice that you are slacking, I will set up an individual conference with you. Please, don’t let this happen.

A combination of in-class exercises, discussion, formal and informal writing, group and collaborative work, presentations will be the modes of instruction used in class. On-line and in-class instruction, videos and observations will also be included. I am a firm believer that we all learn from each other, so you will teach me, just as I will teach you.

In addition, we will be creating a comprehensive handbook that will cover a variety of issues we will research in class. A more detailed list of assignments will follow.

Attendance: Showing up is 90% of life. You are required to be in this class and students are expected to attend every meeting of this class. Because class participation is important to your growth as a tutor, attendance is crucial. And tutoring is an on-going process, it is critical to students’ development that they are in class. Be fair to yourself and take responsibility for your learning. With that, I will allow for two absences.

This is not a correspondence course—you need to be here. Any day that you do miss, it is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to catch up, find out missed assignments, work, etc. I suggest swapping numbers with another student in class. Also, please be on time. Our time is limited and it is in our best interest to begin as soon as we can.

Participation in class is critical. We will be discussing very relevant, interesting topics regarding tutoring and discussions should be engaging and lively. Please contribute! Be prepared for class having read all assignments and be prepared to discuss. Through collaboration and sharing of ideas, we should generate plenty of discussion. This allows you the opportunity not only to be heard, but also to learn from one another.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. I don’t believe I need to add anything else…

In-class Behavior Please give everyone in class the respect and attention they deserve—even if you do not agree with his/her opinion. In order to keep the atmosphere of our classroom casual, please respect each other. Immaturity and disrespect will not be tolerated.

Lastly, I don’t ask too much—DO NOT turn in anything less than your best. It’s that simple—you will get out of this class exactly what you put into it.
Above all, I am looking forward to working with you this semester. I am receptive and open to any ideas you might have, comments, suggestions, etc. This is your class, too. Please keep in mind that this course is designed to be flexible, and assignments and dates are subject to change.

* Any student with a documented disability must self-disclose to their instructors and the Coordinator of Disability Services at LMC prior to receiving any assistance or accommodations. Students should make an appointment to meet with Tami Tressler-Blewitt as soon as possible to complete the necessary paperwork and to develop an Individual Accommodation Plan. Mrs. Tressler-Blewitt’s office is in the Student Success and Internship Center and she can be contacted on ext. 2561 or via e-mail at tressler-blewitt@lmc.edu

The Burton Center for Student Success is committed to the LMC student. We offer a variety of academic services to assist you in becoming a successful college student. The SSIC strives to support LMC students not only in academics, but through help with study skills and time management. The SSIC is an excellent resource for learners of all abilities.
Evaluations
Please mark the answer that indicates the degree to which you agree with each statement.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
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<td>1. The Professor is well prepared for class</td>
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*Use the space below for additional comments about the professor or the course.*

I love this class because it gives me a lot of information about teacher and tutoring. I got a lot of informations. It helps me a lot. So I think every freshmen who is good to each tutor. They really need to take this class.
Please mark the answer that indicates the degree to which you agree with each statement.

1. The Professor is well prepared for class ........................................... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. The Professor is knowledgeable about the subject ............................. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
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22. I have achieved Course Learning Outcome #4 (provided by Professor) ... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
23. I have achieved Course Learning Outcome #5 (provided by Professor) ... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

*Use the space below for additional comments about the professor or the course.*
Please mark the answer that indicates the degree to which you agree with each statement. 

1. The Professor is well prepared for class ............................................. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. The Professor is knowledgeable about the subject .................................. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. The Professor is enthusiastic about the subject ....................................... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. The Professor communicates well ......................................................... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. The Professor encourages questions/participation in class when appropriate 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. If available, the Professor utilizes technology effectively ........................... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. The Professor utilizes other teaching tools and resources effectively ............ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. The Professor makes full use of class time ........................................... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. The Professor treats students fairly ...................................................... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. The Professor has a genuine interest in students’ academic success ............. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
11. The Professor keeps regular office hours ............................................. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12. Graded assignments are returned in a timely fashion .............................. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
13. Given the choice, I would take another course from this professor ............ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
14. The course expectations are appropriate for the level of the course .......... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
15. The textbook(s) used in the course helped me to meet the course objectives 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
16. The course syllabus was useful ........................................................... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
17. The physical environment was conducive to learning ............................ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
18. The course enhanced my learning ...................................................... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
19. I have achieved Course Learning Outcome #1 (provided by Professor) ....... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
20. I have achieved Course Learning Outcome #2 (provided by Professor) ....... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
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| Professor |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1 The Professor is well prepared for class | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
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| 3 The Professor is enthusiastic about the subject | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 4 The Professor communicates well | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
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| 16 The course syllabus was useful | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
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| Course |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 19 I have achieved Course Learning Outcome #1 (provided by Professor) | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 20 I have achieved Course Learning Outcome #2 (provided by Professor) | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 21 I have achieved Course Learning Outcome #3 (provided by Professor) | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 22 I have achieved Course Learning Outcome #4 (provided by Professor) | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 23 I have achieved Course Learning Outcome #5 (provided by Professor) | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |

Use the space below for additional comments about the professor or the course.
Please mark the answer that indicates the degree to which you agree with each statement.

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<th>Number</th>
<th>Statement</th>
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<th>The Professor is well prepared for class</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5 6 Agree</th>
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<td>23</td>
<td>Use the space below for additional comments about the professor or the course.</td>
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<td>Learning Outcomes</td>
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<td>18. The course strengthened my learning.</td>
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<td>17. The course syllabus was well-organized.</td>
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<td>16. The course emphasized my learning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. The professor is knowledgeable about the subject.</td>
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Please mark the answer that indicates the degree to which you agree with each statement:

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
Please mark the answer that indicates the degree to which you agree with each statement.

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Use the space below for additional comments about the professor or the course.

I enjoyed this class and think all 1st time tutors should be required to take it.
Please mark the answer that indicates the degree to which you agree with each statement.

1. The Professor is well prepared for class
2. The Professor is knowledgeable about the subject
3. The Professor is enthusiastic about the subject
4. The Professor communicates well
5. The Professor encourages questions/participation in class when appropriate
6. If available, the Professor utilizes technology effectively
7. The Professor utilizes other teaching tools and resources effectively
8. The Professor makes full use of class time
9. The Professor treats students fairly
10. The Professor has a genuine interest in students' academic success
11. The Professor keeps regular office hours
12. Graded assignments are returned in a timely fashion
13. Given the choice, I would take another course from this professor
14. The course expectations are appropriate for the level of the course
15. The textbook(s) used in the course helped me to meet the course objectives
16. The course syllabus was useful
17. The physical environment was conducive to learning
18. The course enhanced my learning
19. I have achieved Course Learning Outcome #1 (provided by Professor)
20. I have achieved Course Learning Outcome #2 (provided by Professor)
21. I have achieved Course Learning Outcome #3 (provided by Professor)
22. I have achieved Course Learning Outcome #4 (provided by Professor)
23. I have achieved Course Learning Outcome #5 (provided by Professor)

Use the space below for additional comments about the professor or the course.

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Final Exam Essays
Desire

Tutoring is about desire. Desire to aid someone in their learning process and the desire of a student to learn the material. My philosophy of tutoring is about the hunger and desire I have for knowledge and the passion I have to spreading that hunger. An old proverb says “Give a man a fish, feed him today. Teach a man to fish and feed him for a lifetime.” I know that I can give someone an answer to a question, however, for me to provoke the answer from the student is much more beneficial in the long term. I want them to go fishing for education and for discipline that may carry on throughout their life. I have a true desire to create independent learners, to motivate students to be disciplined, and adapt my style to fit each individual student. This is my philosophy.

Creating an independent learner is not an easy task. Most students come in and want a quick fix to their problems. It is difficult for many students to understand that if you don’t work hard and know the basics, math is going to pile up on top of you until you can’t breath under the weight. Biology classes are the same way. From the handout the “Six Goals Of Tutoring,” it discusses an example in pottery. This student finally had the beginnings of a good pot that was going to be created on his/her own. However, the teacher swooped in and finished it for the student, leaving the student feeling defeated. This example can be applied to math at all times. I can usually tell by picking up on body language if a student is thinking through a problem and going to attempt what they previously thought impossible, or if they are about to stare at the wall if I don’t intervene.
It is a fine line. Sometimes it is hard to tell when the student needs you help or when the student needs some time to work out the problem. I usually merely ask a question to clarify the situation like, “Is this problem making sense right now? Would you like me to do a similar example problem with you first? You can then model this question off the example if you need to.” This is an important step to creating an independent learner. Some students are not ready to take this leap by trying something on their own and then having me check their answer. This is why it is part of my philosophy. I have the desire to work very hard with students and to push them to be independent in the long run. My favorite tutee has flourished with this technique. Sometimes, now rarely, he will have a very simple clarification question before he attempts a problem on his own without wanting, or needing, my help. This is promoting independent learning at its finest. The first day this student walked in the door he was shy, quiet, unsure, and nervous. Now he usually catches my mistakes and teases me for them! He has not only evolved into an independent learner but an independent student. He mentioned to me that since his schedule is so structured around his tutoring time that he is actually doing better in other classes because of the time management involved. This was a wonderful example of another point in my philosophy: to motivate students to be disciplined.

Being a disciplined student is key to success. All students are constantly battling the clock to balance work and play. What many students forget is what they are here for. We are all here for education. Students can easily lose sight of how important it is to take a part of every day to study. This is something that baffles students when they first come to me for tutoring. I do my best to tell them what I have done in the past for the class that they are taking and what is the best way to succeed. Many students are
surprised at how much a person has to read, yes open the book, in biology. I try to
explain to students that they need to create review guides for themselves in whichever
learning style that suits them. Some students like to use note cards, some like to type up
their notes, and others like to list important information out on paper. Motivating
students to be more disciplined with their schoolwork will carry into other aspects of life.
For example, I had a very interesting character move into my house this semester and I
have bugged him to do his homework all semester in between tutoring him for Pre-Health
and for College Algebra. Since he has lived with me, and my roommates, his grades
have improved, he is more polite and considerate, and he is far cleanlier. This particular
student had told me several times that before he lived in our house that he had never
studied before and he didn’t really know how to study. After helping him learn how to
make study aids, and helping him pick out important information in the book all
semester, he now will go through his notes and study without any prompting. Another
aspect of my philosophy is adaptation.

The third part of my philosophy is to be a tutoring chameleon. I want to be able
to morph into what students need from me. I have accommodated many students with
disabilities throughout my tutoring life. When I was at Drake University I had the
opportunity to take an introductory course to special education. This class was
designated entirely to hands on one on one contact hours with students of all ages, races,
and disabilities. During this process I was assigned to be a tutor for first graders who had
various disabilities. I was assigned the math table and we worked on anything from
identifying numbers to counting by fives or tens, to basic addition and subtraction.
Although these little students are not the same as the collegiate ones that I have now, I
learned vastly from them. Each of these students had their own challenges that had to be overcome with a different style of teaching. For example, I had one child that had severe ADHD and the only way he could focus on math is when he was physically moving. We would have to walk laps around the school. As we walked we would talk about math, count on our hands and do flash cards. For this 5-year-old child, this was the solution. While we were walking be could answer any question under the sun. It was in the constraints of sitting still in the classroom where he would be very frustrated and difficult to work with. Although this was just a small child doing very basic math the underlying message is there. Everyone is different and if you don’t accommodate your tutoring style you are robbing the student of time and energy. I have created a situation where I feel very confident that I can help students with disabilities. When Tammy came in to talk to us she touched on how it can be important to leave space on a page for students with learning disabilities. Since then I have used this technique and it was wonderful. It was night and day. Just taking that problem and giving its own space changed everything. Taking in what we have learned in class and what I have learned through experience is part of my philosophy where every student is worth accommodation.

I have expanded my tutoring tool belt immensely this semester through this classroom. I have greatly benefited from learning not only from materials provided but also from my peers. Lees McRae has some wonderful wheels in motion to making the Burton Student Center the best place to learn on campus. Luckily for the student body there are various students ready and willing to tutor, all with different philosophies but with the same goal in mind. My philosophy is desire. The desire the facilitate student independence, the desire the motivate students to be disciplined and the desire to be a
wonderful accommodator. These are basic principles that I am sure other tutors in our center share with me. These are principles that if applied by all students in their own lives, would greatly benefit the standards at our College.

References

Tammy's Lecture

Six Goals Of Tutoring Handout
Tutoring philosophy

When tutoring it is important to have a philosophy, some people’s might be more complex than others. My own philosophy is not as complex because my tutoring sessions are almost the same and if changes are to be made, they are slight ones. The characteristics or aspects that I always pay attention are the following: Diverse student population, International students, under-prepared students and learning styles. My tutoring philosophy can be simple and/or complex depending on what kind of student needs the help.

Two aspects that can be merged together are diverse student population and international students because these groups of students require more attention than the rest of the students. When talking about a diverse student population we are talking about three kinds of people, the ones that come in for help because they want, the ones that do not care to learn and want the answers and the ones that do not do enough effort to learn. When dealing with any of these groups I mentioned above one needs to have a different tutoring role ready for every tutoring session if needed. We as tutors want to give hands on experience to the student, instead of doing the work for them.

International students are different from these groups mentioned above because they have a second challenge, learning another language while taking regular classes; I have experienced that and is not as easy as it looks, it is not the same to learn be learning a language just because you want and not because you need it. I have found that tutoring Spanish to international students is easier because they know that the more effort they put, the faster they will learn. This year we had international students from Europe and I
notice that they can pronounce the Spanish words easier than the American students, due to the exposure they have had to so many languages in another continent.

Under prepared students are a big issue in the tutoring center because they as the name explains it, are not prepared enough, and this could happened in many ways. The most common and easiest to fix is when they do not bring a pan or pencil to correct their papers, I said it was the easiest to fix because I have found that they only do it once and they will never forget. Another way that a student can be unprepared is by not reading a chapter or not knowing the material at all, this is a complex situation because as a tutor you do not want to give them the answers, but you do not want to teach the whole chapter or material to them. You want the student to feel that he still has a responsibility, and that a tutor is just a helper for what he for one reason or another does not understand.

One thing I want to include in this topic is the visit to Appalachian State University “tutoring center”, Lees-McRae students does not know that the tutoring services in this college are lenient in some ways, unlike the appointment system, attendance policy and procedures before starting a tutoring session. We have a walk in service, and that is why people do not care as much as the students from Appalachian State University.

I want extend a little bit more on the visit to the tutoring center at Appalachian State because it was interesting to find out how thing work on a big size university. Tutoring in lees-McRae is not as complex as Appalachian state but we do need to change thing a bit. Making students feel more responsible and making a stricter policy like the two day waiting time to see a tutor would make the students do their work earlier than usual. The biggest problem that we have right now is people coming in the same day before a class to correct a paper, this can be solved by doing a one day policy or
something similar, this will eliminate a lot of pressure to the tutor and this way the tutee will learn more.

Last aspect for my philosophy is learning style; this plays an important role in college itself because this could mean an A or F average in a class for the simple reason of “I do not like the teacher”. The same way occurs with tutoring because in order to have a successful tutoring session, the tutor needs to identify the learning style of the tutee. It is the job of the tutor to do a quick examination to see what is the best way a student learns; for me is really easy because if I pronounce a Spanish word two things could happened: the student will ask me how to spell it and write it down, to see if it makes sense. And other students will understand by listening.

All the things I have learned this semester are really helpful, but the ones I explained above are the ones that got my attention and make my philosophy stronger. Having in mind that under-prepared and international students need more attention than the rest of the students. Learning styles also play an important role in my philosophy because not every tutoring session is the same. Diversity among students also is important to have in mind when tutoring because it would make a difference between a successful session and the biggest failure.
Adrienne Bergeron
Topics in Peer Tutoring
Natalie Serianni

Part I: It's An Art

Tutoring, as I see it, is like a piece of artwork. Tutoring, like art for most artists, is all about the creative process—whether this process begins when the artist is just sitting down with an entirely new slate, or when the artist is fixing, molding, and perfecting a piece that has already been completed. Writing is also a creative a process—something that I must explain to many students when they come in worried about their unfinished paper. Together, we work on molding their masterpiece, otherwise known as their assigned paper. In this way, like any piece of art, when their work is looked at as a whole or from a far away, one can clearly see meaning, depth, dedication, and a true piece of art.

Through my work here at Lees-McRae College as a student, tutor, and member of the Topics for Peer Tutoring class, I have learned an abundant amount of invaluable information that I have applied to my tutoring methods and philosophy. Whether it has been learning to deal with international students or incorporating and adjusting to use different learning teaching styles, I have constantly (thanks to our class) analyzed my technique and how I can improve it, and therefore, help others with their writing processes and papers.

When I first began to tutor in the Burton Center, I was petrified—the thought of giving a student the wrong answer or worse, not having the answer to their question, absolutely terrified me. However, after my first session, I quickly adapted one rule into
my philosophy of tutoring: to make every effort to make the tutee feel comfortable. I did this because I quickly found out that the first student I was supposed to tutor was even more nervous than I was. I realized right then that if I was not calm, my tutee would not be calm which could result in, most likely, negative consequences such as the tutee never returning to the writing center, or worse, not learning anything during our session. Now, after several tutoring sessions, I know how to greet students when they walk in the door and how to assure them that I am not another "big bad teacher" who would judge their writing. My job is to assist other students in writing, and I do just that.

However, even after learning the importance of being calm and reassuring my tutees, I had never worked with an international student. My first one this year was from Russia, and again, I found myself feeling like I did for my first tutoring session. However, this time I was especially worried that the student would get offended when I could not understand him and would have to ask him to repeat what he said (sometimes more than once). On the contrary, the student was nicer than even some of my previous American tutees and was happy to answer my questions. Suddenly, I was not nervous anymore and could focus on the writing process with him. This time, the process was a different kind of give and take--as I read his paper in somewhat broken English, he explained to me what he was trying to say, and then the two of us worked together to write clearer complete sentences.

My first experience was better than I could have imagined, and again, I realized that I needed to apply my principle of making my tutees feel comfortable with me, the text, and the process of tutoring. Since that first session, I have worked with a great deal of international students who come to me for tutoring, and even though it can be hard to
understand the student sometimes, I can always make the tutee feel more relaxed by saying reassuring things and smiling--the universal language of goodwill.

Another component to my philosophy is to always adjust and formulate my tutoring session to fit each individual student. Each student is unique and important, therefore, each student does not learn in the same way. Because of this, tutors must know different ways to present material in a manner conducive to that student's learning process. Because the writing process is so important, I have always wanted to make sure that I can help each tutee understand each step. Therefore, the information we learned about different learning styles in class, especially for those with learning disabilities, has been extremely helpful.

Before our class, I never had truly realized what reading disabilities did to words. When we were handed a page of words that were jumbled with missing letters strewn about the page, I had no idea what I was looking at until I was told. One thing I discovered that has been helpful for students with learning disabilities, as well as students whose eyes obviously get tired from reading page after page or cannot listen for long amounts of time, is to take a break. I applied this to one of my most recent sessions, and it was a success. I found that even allowing a student to look away for a few moments is enough to rejuvenate the brain. Another great learning style is to use visual images. Diagrams, charts, or even a page with bubbles encircling the main points for a paper can be a lifesaver for some students. With these new teaching styles I have been able to experiment and accommodate for students with and without learning disabilities. I feel that this knowledge is indispensable, and every tutor should know these different styles so that they can be flexible in the way that they teach and assist each student.
Finally, I feel that the most important component of my philosophy is to help all students understand that writing is a process, not an event. It may take time to learn the process, but hopefully through time, work, and patience, it can become simple—almost automatic. I make sure to explain to all of my tutees, especially when they get frustrated, that it is okay that their work is not final yet—that my job is to help them with their process and to get them headed in the right direction. This reassurance and newfound understanding of writing (which sometimes takes a while for students to accept) can help a them tremendously.

Although I am sure that my first tutoring session was far from perfect, I have come to realize that no tutoring session, tutee, or tutor is ever completely perfect. But I do feel that I have learned just as much as I have taught—whether that is tutoring, the differences between people, or just about different subjects because I have been lucky enough to read such different and interesting papers. Whatever it may be, every time I tutor, I learn and apply something from that session to my future tutoring sessions. I have found that this process has been more than fulfilling and just as bountiful as creating a work of art.
Adrienne Bergeron
Topics in Peer Tutoring
Natalie Serianni

Part II: My New Philosophy

I think that one rule that would be incredibly beneficial would be to prohibit any classes from being allowed in the Burton Center. Often, whether or not the teacher is lecturing, the students can be very rowdy and make it difficult for a tutee and tutor have an effective session. Even when I have asked students to quiet down (sometimes more than once) the students will either not listen to another fellow student’s request or they quiet down for a few moments only to forget and begin talking again. The interruption of the class making noise and having to tell students to be quiet so often breaks the fluidity of a tutoring session. I also have had experience with tutees becoming self-conscious as a large class files in because they fear they are listening. I think that Presbyterian Room, the library, or even the computer lab would be more appropriate for classes and therefore would allow students to focus on their work and tutors to have fewer interruptions.

Lastly, another rule that I think could help the Burton Center would be to have a podium or even a specific desk designated for signing in. Although I know that the Burton Center is small and having a person as well as a sign-in desk would be next to impossible until the center is made larger, but I do think that having a podium (or something of the sort) would be helpful. Often students are searching for the notebooks, as they get tossed about and moved—and because of this the notebooks and people's timesheets inside get ripped or mistreated. I think having one central place could be helpful in preventing this.
Andrey Melkonyan  
Ms. Natalie Serianni  
SSC-388 Tutoring Lessons  
04/27/2007

Tutoring Philosophy

Throughout centuries ancient civilizations have been perfecting the human mind and imagination. Being the most sophisticated creature on the planet enables us to perfect ourselves in many ways. Such perfection thrives from lessons that we learn through experiments in life, as well education. Many underestimate the power of education and undermine its benefits. Education allows our younger generation to prosper, discipline themselves, and as well as achieve better results. Through education everyone is able to better themselves, which then helps the society as a whole. Millennia ago great philosophers of Greece and Rome gave birth to the use of human intellect. In our time it is the responsibility of the future educators to continue the legacy. Being a teacher or someone who plays a great role in delivering knowledge to others is not a simple task, rather very difficult and demanding. It takes a great amount of dedication, pride, patience, and joy in order to come to positive results. At times educators can not complete the task of delivering knowledge, and that is when the tutors make their way to the batting plate in order to assist. Tutors play a great role as well, in delivering information and facilitating the process of learning. In order to understand the true role of a tutor and uncover the definition, I will provide my own philosophy of a tutor. Doing so will enable me to understand my role better, and perhaps perfect it. Also, such analysis will enable the reader discover more with regards to the role of a tutor.

As I have discussed in the previous paper, tutor plays the role of the middle person, the mediator between the professors and students. The tutor does not only encourage a positive
relationship between the professor and the student, but he or she plays a major role in
facilitating the material that presents an obstacle to the student. At smaller colleges and
universities such as Lees-McRae College, there is a greater interaction between the professors
and the students. At any time that a student is encountering a problem with the material, he or
she can visit the professor’s office for some additional aid. At bigger universities with student
populations of twenty and thirty thousand, a student is simply a number. The direct interaction
between the student and the professor is rare. Such obstacles present the need for a tutor, who is
looked upon as a major force in assisting students. Not many know what it means to be a tutor,
as well as the difficulties presented by such a role. At times many think of a tutor as a person
who is there to answer questions that can help the ones in need. Sure such a definition fulfills the
simple understanding of a tutor. In the next section I would like to describe the deep meaning of
a tutor.

To become an effective tutor takes a lot of hard work and effort to fulfill the
requirements. The requirements are not simply the knowledge of the subject, but also having the
right attitude and a personality type that encourages learning and creates a welcoming
atmosphere. Not a single tutor can say that they have achieved perfection in a single week. I can
say with confidence that it took me some time to become a tutor who can help students with their
difficulties. I had to adapt a new personality that has patience, dedication to work, as well as a
personality that enjoys doing the task. These are only few of the elements that can help a tutor
succeed and become effective. The second half of the semester presented some great points
regarding the obstacles faced with tutoring. We can all agree that there are different types of
students. Some prefer to learn with the use of visual aids, others use auditory aid to achieve
good results. Besides that, there are students facing learning disabilities such as ADD and
ADHD. There are also students of international origin that may experience language barriers. As you can see tutoring is not as simple as it may sound, it never is.

In three years that I have been a tutor I have encountered various obstacles that many students face. I have tutored students that are affected by various disabilities, as well as students struggling with understanding of the language. At the beginning of my tutoring career I was lacking patience and understanding that some students do have great obstacles to overcome while learning. Also, I understood that teachers have a limited amount of time to deliver the material to students. When the time runs out, it is my role to perform to my very best to assure success for each student that requires help. It took a lot of hours to come to such an understanding, and now that I have accomplished this, I feel much better in a sense that I know I am on the right path, while doing my job. One of ideas that I have come to realize over the years, is that many students are unprepared for tests and other assignments. Many of them are also disorganized. Stating this fact, I am referring to the idea that many students are lacking the desire to perform to their very best. Although they are showing a desire to pass a class, the desire is simply minimal. In their minds, a low grade that will pass them through the class is top requirement. To me this is a negative factor in tutoring. In my opinion I am spending so much time to organize students, to help them prepare well for tests, and also motivate them to achieve great results. In return, all I receive is a minimum effort. Just as teachers receive pleasure from seeing their students succeed, so do tutors, who help others, overcome obstacles.

One common thing that can be observed from this analysis is the similarity between the professors and tutors. Professors have more authority and power over the students, with a mission to educate. Tutors on the other hand, provide a more relaxed atmosphere, but still serve the role of educators. This summarizes my philosophy of tutoring. It is not a simple task; rather
it presents various obstacles where the tutor must realize the problems that many students face. As I have mentioned before, students face learning disabilities, language barriers, as well as simpler things such as organization skills that could well benefit, when preparing for an exam. It is also extremely important to appreciate and respect individual differences that some students have. Another important element of tutoring is applying great conversation skills to the job. Doing so, increases the interaction between the tutor and the student, thus facilitating the process of tutoring. In order to assure an effective tutoring atmosphere, colleges and universities should have programs that arrange such an opportunity.

At Lees-McRae College, I believe we have a great program, as well as staff, that provide us tutors with a great opportunity for effective tutoring. Also, the rules and regulations at our student center facilitate the process of tutoring. Many at times, there are athletic teams that conduct their study hall hours in the tutoring center. Although it is great to see that coaches inspire their players to succeed in classrooms, this creates a barrier for the regular population of students. I have heard numerous rumors that sports teams behave in a manner that interrupts the studying of the others at the student center. Most of the time members of athletic teams simply attend the study hall in order to fulfill their required hours. They are there for a reason that is not beneficial; such a negative aspect interrupts with the learning of other students that are truly attempting to better their study skills. My suggestion concentrates on using other facilities or rooms in order to assist the athletic teams with their needs. Anytime you have a great number of students closely associated, loud and chaotic behavior should be expected. That is one of the major obstacles that I have noticed over the years that I have tutored.

In conclusion, in this essay I have discussed and described the key ideas behind my tutoring philosophy. It should now be clear that tutoring is not a simple job of sitting in a room
answering questions. In order to assure and provide effective tutoring, every tutor needs to develop the required characteristics. Such process takes time and can only be obtained from extensive and dedicated performance over weeks. It is also inevitable to understand that every student has different learning capabilities. For a tutor to achieve the best outcome, he or she needs to adapt to every student’s learning styles. Although this may not be an easy task, this is a necessary step. Next, I have discussed one step that I think the tutoring center must adapt. Basically, there should be a rule implemented towards athletic teams to assure that the study hall hours do not interfere with the necessities of the regular students. Such a change should guarantee collaboration between the sports teams, as well as the regular population. Also, this will guarantee positive results in both fields of concentration.
My Tutoring Philosophy
Gonzalo Escobar

My tutoring philosophy can be summed up in one phrase “I help people help
themselves.” I find that this philosophy extends far beyond the Burton Center. A college
education takes more then four years, and I am not talking about those students that take
seven years to finish all of their undergraduate course requirements. I mean that a college
education is an extension of all the knowledge you have developed in your lifetime. In
high school, my older friends told me that college was just like high school. After taking
my first course I realized what they meant. What ever happens in the class room in high
school is pretty much what happens in a college classroom. This is obvious that the
teaching design should not change very much from one level to another. This paper sheds
light on the aspects of a college education that take place outside the classroom. The
focus will be on how I developed an understanding to work with diverse student
populations and how I use my acquired skills in my everyday life. Lees-McRae has a
diverse student population. I can not mention and comment on all the different types,
however, the next section will focus on what I have learned by working with some of
them.

My sophomore year as an RA I wrote up a student that is in my lab class. When I
first saw him in class I had no idea how the rest of the year was going to go. I felt scared
that there would be so much resentment from the student that I would not be able to
perform my job adequately. We had a stare downs but eventually realized that we were
there for a common purpose. We both wanted to get through the class. I helped him with
some problems and he treated me with respect. I got to know him better and we
reminisced about the old times and I asked him how he was doing. Whether or not he was
still getting into trouble, I found that treating him open and fair was a successful way of developing a working relationship. I found this to be a very important lesson because it thought me that you can work with another person no matter what you background or history. This could have been a case study in one of my business classes in high school but the way involved in the process it gave me a stronger understanding of how to deal with adverse student populations. I have found out that it is easy to keep a professional relationship when you can find common ground to work from. The next type of student population that I have learned to work with is international students.

Jun is a combination of international and unprepared. I am always amazed at the amount of work we put in to helping him develop skills and how little he progresses. The lesson I learned was, you have to shoot lower. It is totally unfair to expect one, class one semester to turn unprepared to fully proficient. It is something that is very difficult to accomplish. It is the sort of thing that takes many years to achieve. I try to think about it like a war. It is a fight to get the lazy out and put the intelligence in but it is a war and you can only stay motivated if you are able to win the small battles. With Jun it is a success if he is able to better understand notation and instruction. The actual algorithms for problem solving will come, but first the basics must be established. This paper has focused on how I have interacted with the students now the shift will focus toward how I have made observations about my self in the process of tutoring.

I am an unprepared, disruptive, international student. I was not prepared to try my hand a academia when I was in high school. For this reason, I never imagined I would tutor a course in math. Although I enjoyed math class more then I did any other I still cheated on just about any test or quiz I could possible cheat on. That was, in retrospect,
very detrimental. It caused me to have a very weak background in academics. And there was no way that one year of college could change that. Now that I am completing my third year here at Lees-McRae I can look back and see the progress that I have made. My freshman year I could not type without looking at the keyboard, and I thought back to my keyboarding class and high school and said “Man, I shouldn’t have spent all that time playing tetras!” I have matured and spent many hours at the Learn How to Type for Free websites but I have still found that I am still just a few steps behind the competition. Lees-McRae has created a place that allowed me to change and mold myself into a better student. I have been able to grasp skill and hone my learning techniques to the point that I am able to help others with their own. This was a perfect match for me. As I gain and gain from the school and my confidence as a student increases I find that I can be easily leveled when I get a clear look at the competition around me. For example when we visited Appalachian State I quickly realized that I came from a school that had a small student population, with limited resources.

I have matured as a person and as a student but I have found that it has been difficult for me to develop and strong competitive undergraduate education in mathematics. I have gotten to the point where I feel that for me to better understand my subject I need to immerse myself in it. That is one of the reasons why I am not working with the lab class next semester. I feel that I need to do the same type of thing with upper level math courses. I am hoping to serve the same position to the calculus class and further develop my math skills that Dr. Meng says are so poor. She really likes to tell it the way it is. I could lie to myself and say, “Yeah I am pretty good,” but when I compare myself with the international competition I am not even close to good. I need more
resources, I need more motivation. I sometimes wish I had a group that I could meet with where everyone would be willing to and capable of working problems and learning proofs with me but I have found that the population at this school just does not have that sort of motivation. This in turn makes it hard for me to work as diligently as I would have to if I wanted to advance in mathematics. Now we need a conclusion and this is how it follows:

My philosophy is about growing, developing making friends, making connections and learning how to maintain them for yourself and your future. And if at some point along the way you end up with a bachelor’s degree or learn some math—that is a good thing as well. I think the hard part is when you start doing things because you feel like you have to or you feel that if you don’t do them that you will not get a well paying job. That is part of the reason why I think some students are not ready for college and our purpose should not be to kick them out but instead help them realize that college is not right for them.

Section Two

Some good additions to the tutoring center would be computer sing in, snake bar, and headphones for the computers would be nice. Cubicles would also help with noise levels. As far as regulations I think we it is important not to mix study hall with tutoring but besides that I think that everything else is fine.
A Philosophy for Tutors

There is much to be learned in a tutoring session. Not only does the tutee walk away with a better understanding of a specific topic, but the tutor also leaves with a better understanding of learning. The discipline of tutoring serves as an aid for students as well as tutors. A tutee may be struggling in the classroom or with confidence but tutees also teach tutors new ideas and philosophies.

The first principle in tutoring is that tutors realize they are not teachers. Tutees may come to the center seeking guidance or further explanation of a topic but the tutor is not the instructor. The tutor is able to work with the student one-on-one. Teachers usually lecture to their classes. If a particular student does not learn well from the teacher’s style, he is forced to learn the information in a different way. This is where tutors come in the picture. A tutor should work with the student to find a solution to the problem. It is important that tutees lead students to arrive at their own answers. This is particularly important to writing tutors. When tutoring writing, one should remember to not simply offer an editing service. Most mistakes made by students are made more than once. If the tutee is able to grasp the writing faux pas, he will be less likely to perform it again. The tutor is responsible for helping students learn to work without their help. The goal of a tutor is for the student to eventually not need help. Tutor’s can do this in a variety of ways.
Peer tutoring is a great service to offer. While professional tutors may provide more expertise in particular areas of study, peer tutors provide much more. Tutors who are also students are much more practical. Peer tutors provide an understanding heart. Especially at small schools, it is very likely that tutors have had many of the same teachers and classes that tutees seek help with. These tutors can give tips and pointers on teacher expectations. If the tutor was successful in the particular class, he can give insight on study techniques and assignment structure. The peer tutor and tutee relationship can become a mutual one. For students who are struggling, this relationship can be crucial in boosting confidence and relaxation. These relationships are not the only important interactions, however.

Among relationships with tutors, students also need to feel confident approaching teachers. It is easy for teachers to announce office hours, but much more difficult for students to approach them. Students, particularly those who need help in the class, are often intimidated or embarrassed when seeking help from teachers or asking questions in class. It is usually difficult to seek help from a peer, and for many this difficulty is elevated when addressing the teacher. Many questions cannot be answered by tutors alone. Teachers know their expectations better than any student or tutor can. Therefore, if there is any question as to what a teacher is looking for, the teacher should be approached. Tutors can help with this by boosting the tutee’s confidence. Tutors can encourage this relationship by ensuring that the teacher is willing to help and genuinely cares about the student’s academic success. Tutors must genuinely care as well; No matter the type of student.
It is important that any tutor be tolerant. Tutors may be asked to work with a variety of students. Beyond the obvious ethnical or physical differences, tutors will ultimately happen upon students with very different opinions of school and work ethic. Sometimes, such students can be the most difficult to work with. A tutor is usually given his position due to his impeccable performance in the classroom. Such students are dedicated to education, willing to put in time and effort, and charged with a will to succeed. Some students the tutor will face, however, may be very different. Tutors must understand that not all students share their values or priorities. For some, school is forced or expected, even if it is not the route desired by the student. It is vital that tutors know these students and be willing to work with them to improve performance. Tutors must be tolerable to foreign students, under or over-prepared students, and students with different beliefs or backgrounds. Every student deserves to be confident.

Students coming in for tutoring help deserve to feel confident in the tutors as well as themselves. Tutors must exude confidence and relaxation. If a tutor is not relaxed or confident it spreads to the student. It is difficult for many people to admit they need help. I can be very discouraging to walk into a tutoring session to work with a tutor who is not confident and relaxed with his own work. By showing students confidence about school, tutors are reaching their goal of not being needed further by the student. Tutors should strive to not be needed. They should show students how to relax and approach challenging work. This will not only boost a tutee’s self-esteem, but also help him to values his education.

The tutoring discipline is rewarding for tutees as well as tutors. While tutees learn the subject and confidence, tutors learn patience, tolerance, and respect. Tutors are
not teachers. Tutors do more than lecture. They work with students to get the most out of education. Tutors serve as allies to education. They should always encourage and push students to do their very best. Education is important, but so is an open mind. Tutors must also be willing to learn themselves. Successful tutoring depends on belief. If a tutor believes in his product and its importance as well as the ability of the student, anything is possible.
There are many things I would like to see change in the tutoring center. Most of these are structural things and are completely out of my control or the center’s budget I am sure. However, I believe there are some controllable factors we are dealing with.

- I would like to see the study hall hours for student-athletes better regulated. There are still students who sign in and leave. The hours need to be regulated. It might work best if the student had to sign in with a person, a monitor, instead of just on a sheet.

- Tutors need to be more easily recognizable. We have the board with our pictures but many times I forget to use it. I feel like most students do not even know it is there. Name tags could help.

- I would like to see more workshops. I really enjoyed our Omega workshop. I think it went well. We need more promotion about the center. I feel like people know we are here but perhaps workshops could better inform students of all that we can do. We could promote these workshops in many different ways as well.

- Like I said, promotion is helpful. I feel like we could use more support from teachers. Maybe they could include us in the syllabus.

I have really enjoyed the class. I feel more confident as a tutor now. I am glad I was able to get to know the other tutors well and to become familiar with their tutoring styles. I have taken many tips and tricks from them that I know will make me better. I would love to see the certification go through. I am excited about working with the Learning Community next year!

Have a great summer!

Keri
Kirsten Davis
Natalie Serianni
Topics in Peer Tutoring
26 April 2007

Part I
My Philosophy: Tutoring as a Service

Tutoring, to me, is a service. It’s like being in the Peace Corps or working for Habitat for Humanity. Though these activities are not exactly similar, they all relate back to helping people live happier and easier lives, working for others. I have a certain chip inside of my brain that tells me that education is one of the best forms of service a person can offer. Like the old Chinese proverb says, “Give a man a fish, and you’ll feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, and you’ll feed him for a lifetime.” I can help a tutee more by teaching them, then by just giving them the information. If we do not learn, we will not grow. Without growth, there is no way we are living at our full potential. So I’m a tutor. It is my little way of letting the world know that I care.

During our class this semester, we discussed the importance of respecting and guiding International students in their journey of learning a new language. We discussed ways that their culture may inhibit them from understanding how we interact, and how we could make them feel comfortable in a one-on-one peer tutoring session. These students have taken risks. They have sacrificed their comfort by leaving home for a foreign country where few speak their language. They have challenged themselves to learn an entirely new language. As a tutor, I honor their efforts and seek to do whatever I can to help them succeed in their endeavor. As a child, I would translate for my grandmother, who to this day has a very thick accent and poor English writing skills. I
think that it became innate to me to help those that struggled with their second language. Over the years, as I have helped several English as a Second Language students discover their English voice, I have found tutoring International students the most rewarding. That idea has become a part of my personal philosophy on tutoring: it is a great service to help someone learn English as their second language.

In the same way, I have gotten the opportunity to help many with learning disabilities, as well. While tutoring them, I always kept in mind my older brother who struggles severely with his verbal skills, written and spoken. He may have struggled in that area, but he was extremely gifted in math—a talent I do not hold. When I was younger, he would help me with math, and I would help him with English. We traded. Now that I am a tutor and have the chance to work with many that have similar troubles with communication skills as my brother, I often try to keep in mind that they are most likely much better than me at many other things. This has kept me from ever thinking that I was above another student. I know that I am simply providing them a service. I am sharing what I know in hopes that they will, in turn, share what they know, maybe not with me but with someone else. This too has become part of my tutoring philosophy: a person’s struggle in one area of academics has no bearing on their ability to master another quite well and with ease.

On the same token are those that have attention problems. This is considered a learning disability, but I have found that I can more easily assist and change the habits of students with attention problems compared to students with other learning disabilities. Both my mother and my oldest brother have Attention Deficit Disorder. They zone out. They are disorganized. They cannot focus on one thing for very long without taking
breaks. I, on the other hand, could focus for hours, unwavering, while my brother and mom had to take breaks, eat, and listen to music in order to get things done. I learned many things about focus from them. I learned that if you simply take time for breaks, you will get it done just the same and just as well. Being able to accomplish something the fastest and in one sitting has little bearing on how intelligent or capable a person is. My family taught me that my learning style did not have to be everyone else’s. These thoughts were reinforced in the class when we discussed learning disabilities and cognition. It was good for me to solidify those thoughts on attention problems. I was reminded that taking breaks is a positive thing, not an end to the session. We learned that if we allow the tutee to take a break, they will unknowingly process the information just learned and remember it longer. If I try to cram too much information into a long tutoring session, the tutee is more apt to forget. I have added this to my tutoring philosophy: students with attention problems can easily be helped by using effective tactics, such as taking short breaks.

Conversely, to these joys are those students that I dread to tutor: students that do not care about school, that do not come prepared, and that only come to tutoring because they are made. I have a hard time tutoring these students because I have honestly never known how to deal with them. In the past, I have allowed these students to frustrate me. I have given up on them because they did not want anything from me anyway. Over this last year and through the class, I have learned that despite their indifference, I have to keep myself as peppy, excited, and positive as I can. I now understand that I must try to do as much as possible to help them, and if they choose not to receive or learn the information, that is their decision. Through the class, I came to understand that
regardless of the motivation of the tutee, I am still there to tutor them. Over this last semester, I have worked to become more understanding of those who are not motivated to do their work. This has been a hard task for me. However, I feel that I have succeeded in many ways. I have learned to give what I can in that particular moment, in that situation, on that day and be pleased with that.

Overall, as a tutor, I feel that I have matured greatly over this last year. My training has added much to my personal definition and philosophy on tutoring. I believe that tutoring is a one-on-one or small group peer session where students of all levels, abilities, knowledge, and motivation are allowed to receive help and guidance on their work. I feel honored to be a tutor. Not everyone can do it well. Through my experiences and training, I have learned so much that has helped me become a more well-rounded and dynamic tutor so that I may more effectively give back to others what I have learned.

Part II:

New Rules

When I came to Lees-McRae, I had already worked in another tutoring center. I had grown accustomed to their system. As I began working at the Burton Center, I quickly realized that nothing was the same except that I was there to tutor. Some of the things that I noticed have stuck with me over the last couple of years. Two of the areas that need improvement are the following: making tutors on duty known and recognizable and not allowing classes to be held in the Burton Center.

As the tutoring center is situated now, no one knows who the tutors are or if they are on duty or just there to do their own work. If the tutors had a desk, specifically for
them complete with a computer, reference books, stapler, three-hole punch (the most common things we get asked for as writing tutors) behind or on the desk, they could be easily recognized the minute someone walked through the door. It would help to have the desk positioned near the door so that everyone immediately knew where the tutors should be. If people know right off where to expect at least one of the tutors, they will feel less intimidated by the entire room filled with people they do not know. This would also take the pressure off of the tutors to bombard the students as they walk in the door to ask if they need assistance. This setup would also give the tutors a clearer sense of their position in the center so that they can help mediate the atmosphere of the room.

Considering the fact that we do not have name tags or t-shirts, we often receive strange looks from the other students if we tell them to be quiet or ask them if they need help with something. The other students do not always know who we are. If we were given a more clear position in the center, these awkward moments could be avoided, and I feel that everyone would benefit.

The only other major suggestion I have for helping run the Burton Center more smoothly and successfully is to eliminate having classes study, work, or hold class-time in the center. I know that it is often easier for the instructors that work in the Burton Center to just bring their classes to their office area; however, it is extremely disruptive to those of us tutoring or studying in the center. Often the students are loud, take up computers for activities that are not school related, and generally overcrowd the room. I have walked into the center and not had anyplace to sit to tutor another student. I do not feel that this should ever be the case if we are trying to make the Burton Center accessible to tutees and a positive, quiet place for learning. I think that instructors should
take these things into consideration before deciding to have a study hall in the Burton Center.

Overall, I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at the Burton Center. I adore tutoring and the experience of working in this particular place has been extremely rewarding.
**Tutoring Philosophy**

Throughout this semester in the tutoring class, many topics have been discussed, such as under prepared students, diverse students, learning disabilities, tutoring roles, memory cognition, and several others. Through these diverse topics, I have derived my own tutoring philosophy that I believe encompasses the majority of these topics. I feel that I have become a well-rounded tutor, with valuable knowledge that I can use during my future tutoring sessions.

One of the most important things that I have incorporated into my philosophy of tutoring relates back to the different roles of the tutor. I found out through this exercise that I was most like the driver’s education instructor in that I try to prevent mistakes from occurring. I try to prepare my tutee for future assignments by explaining to them the basic concepts of what a good paper entails. My personal philosophy incorporates several roles, not just the role of the driver’s education instructor. I find myself being the cheerleader, encouraging the tutee, along with being the investigator; asking questions about the subject of the paper, along with the course and professor that the paper is for. I believe that a well rounded tutor needs to encompass as many roles as possible in order to be an effective tutor that can help a variety of students.

Another important philosophy that I have developed relates back to the variety of students, especially those students who are considered to be diverse. This incorporates international students as well as under prepared students. I feel as if patience has become my number one priority as a tutor. When we did the lesson on international students I had no idea that Asian students did not look people directly in the eye as a sign of respect, for example. Cultural differences, such as this, along with language barriers can make a
tutoring session difficult if patience, compassion, and genuine care for the student are not exhibited. Patience is also needed with those students who are under prepared. I have dealt with tutees that have waited until the last minute to do their paper, and then expect you as the tutor, to be able to "write" their paper for them. Patience is needed to help them understand the topic of the paper, as well as what the professor is looking for, content-wise within the paper.

The traits of compassion, patience, and genuine care are also needed for those students who have learning disabilities. After listening to Tami Tressler-Blewitt’s presentation on learning disabilities I felt that I as a tutor had a responsibility to give these special tutees all of my time, energy, and patience to better help them understand the fundamentals of paper-writing. The most unique thing that I have put into my tutoring philosophy is the simple idea of taking breaks. When memory cognition was presented to us during guest speaker week, I learned that the average person only remember things at the very beginning and the end of a session. People also remember things when association is applied to that particular topic. Taking breaks during tutoring sessions, especially those sessions dealing with Omega papers, can help improve memory retention in the tutees. It is also a welcome break for me, as the tutor. I find myself taking short breaks with my tutees to make sure they remember things from the tutoring session.

Higher Education within the education and tutoring world has also been incorporated into my tutoring philosophy. Principle Two, "Good Practice Encourages Cooperation Among Students" has been a defining method that I use day to day in my tutoring sessions. I encourage students to talk with their classmates to better understand the assignment, especially if they are too afraid to approach their professor. I also
encourage students to work in groups, which promotes self esteem and group learning. I also find myself using Principle Six, which expresses the need to set high expectations. I believe setting high expectations far exceeds the classroom. High expectations are needed in every aspect of life, from education to the working class. Setting high expectations for my tutees shows them that I believe they are capable of better work, and greater things. By setting these high expectations for my tutees, I show them that they have undiscovered potential that they are not living up to. Society as a whole is capable of better things. I myself am capable of better things, therefore I do not hold my tutees at a lower level than what I would hold for myself. My philosophy surrounds the belief that students in general can produce great things if the right amount of time and preparation are put into them. Writing papers is no different. With the right amount of preparation and guidance from a tutor, the student can excel at writing papers. Setting the bar high also encourages self-esteem in my tutees. I want them to feel confident and proud of the work that they are doing.

Within my tutoring philosophy, I have come across certain things that I would like to see implemented into the Burton Center. The center has many uses including team study halls, learning labs, tutoring sessions, and a place for those who want to study and/or complete their homework. With so many people in their for different things, it becomes difficult to tell who is in there specifically for tutoring. Most people are too shy to ask, so I wind up asking everyone who looks lost if they need tutoring in a specific subject. Most of the time they are just waiting on one of the teachers whose offices are located in the Burton Center. As you can imagine it gets extremely loud in the tutoring center, and while tutoring a student it becomes hard to communicate with the tutee who is
sitting right beside you. Due to these issues, I would love to see one specific room set
aside for tutoring only. This would cut down on the distractions and noise encountered in
the Burton Center. From personal experience, sports teams have been the worst in
regard to noise. One night while working in the Burton Center, the entire men’s soccer
team were in the center. They were supposed to be doing homework, but instead they
were on myspace, facebook, playing music, and being disruptive. This type of
environment is not inclusive of tutoring. Therefore I propose a separate room for those
people who need tutoring in a specific subject.

By incorporating this new space, I believe that as a tutor, the sessions could be
more meaningful, and that the tutee would not be as distracted. By practicing my tutoring
philosophy, I feel that I have reached a new level of tutoring. I encorporate so much more
into my sessions than I used to. The tutoring class has transformed me into a well
rounded tutor, capable of handling diverse students, as well as those students with
disabilites and special needs. Over the past semester I have become the tutor that I knew I
could be.