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### Tutoring Philosophy

“Professor’s can be intimidating but tutors are awaiting”- Maya Farber with some help from

Maddie Williams

Have you ever walked into a Professor’s office feeling confident about the paper you submitted but then they stomp, spit, and scatter your heart on the ground? Yeah me too. Coming into the writing center should feel more refreshing, making your confidence grow. A lot of times going into a Professor’s office can feel awkward because you don’t want to say the wrong thing or feel like you’re wasting their time. This is where the writing center comes in handy. You can feel free to say all of your ideas, motivations, be open and honest with having that mutual respect, because after all we are peers. Throughout my experience in the writing center I have learned a lot of what my tutoring energy is to help others with their success.

#### **My Tutoring Philosophy:**

Learning my tutoring philosophy was difficult. However from the beginning to the end of my semester I have learned more of what kind of tutor I wanted to become through reading, analyzing, and practicing these methods with my classmates. However that does not mean as time goes on I will not keep educating myself and learn efficient ways to help others with their process. Therefore my 3 big concepts that I go by is having mutual respect and understanding for each other, making sure that both the client and the tutor are in a safe environment, and making sure that the client knows writing is a process.

### **Having Mutual Respect:**

A lot of the time students will come into the writing center believing that there is going to be a hierarchy of skills going on. Therefore eliminating any kind of power dynamic is a necessity for success. Making sure everyone in the meeting knows that we are all equals and to feel free by expressing all ideas that come to mind, “tutor does not hold any institutional power over the tutee” (*Stepwise Footnote advice negotiation in writing center peer tutoring*). When both the tutor and client propose new things to add to a piece of work, more effective progress can be made, this “explores the similarities and differences in consulting strategies when working with engineering and English students” (*Finding Harmony in Disharmony*). In those times where the client disagrees with what a tutor presents is completely valid however expressing this disagreement with the tutor and explaining why can help move the writing process along. This form of collaboration can influence different ideas to shape a better understanding of what points need to get across in the piece. Now knowing that we are all human and do not know every single study “initiate effective interaction with all students, even those with subjects outside their comfort” meaning that if I (the tutor) do not know a lot about the subject a client is working on I will ask a lot of questions by trying to understand that main points of a certain piece of writing.

### **Creating a Safe Space:**

This is an essential need to make progress in a client's writing sample. By having a safe space the client can feel more comfortable expressing how they want to go about their piece of work. Tutoring should feel like having a conversation with an open atmosphere with a task oriented goal in mind. To keep this safe space alive we (a client and tutor) can meet over a zoom call, or play music in the background, go to the library if you don't feel comfortable where we are, or even to meditate before starting the tutoring session. Negotiating is a huge part of the

writing center to bring in new ideas, happy feelings, and even “foster and sustain a sense of belonging in students” (*The role of writing centres in negotiating inclusive learning spaces*) making sure that tutees know that this is a conversation in where we both discuss points wanting to be made throughout the writing piece.

**Writing is a process:**

Writing can be tricky especially when you are staring at a blank piece of paper wondering what you are going to put on it; which happens to me every time I have to write a paper. Some people sit down and the writing just flows perfectly without a blockage coming into their head. I am certainly not that person. For me I have to write all of my thoughts out on a piece of paper including; how I feel at that moment in time, what I should write about, the source I use, and what I am going to eat while I write. For those of you who get frustrated while trying to write; different methods work for different people. Coming into the writing center with an outline or even a blank piece of paper having no clue where you want to go on this topic is great. The writing process is definitely not something that can be perfected because everyone is going to have something different to say. However, getting with a peer tutor and saying all of your ideas out loud can help you remove that writer's block and create something with thoughts flowing.

Peer tutoring can be extremely beneficial to those who are having a hard time. Collaborating on a writing piece we can write down thoughts, ideas, key phrases, goals, and strategies to keep going after the session.

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