**Integrating Tutors in the English Classroom:**

**Best Practices for Instructors**

**Program Goals**

The goals of the English Department Embedded Tutoring Program are to assist students, particularly underrepresented minority students, basic skills students, and students who are struggling, to stay in their courses, increase their independence and confidence, meet the SLOs of the courses in which they are enrolled, pass the courses, and persist through the sequence to the completion of their goals. We are collecting data on how well we assist students, particularly URMs and students who are struggling, complete and pass their classes and persist through the English sequence.

**Rationale**

Research shows that tutoring support improves student success. Professional tutors additionally enhance these programs by collaborating with teachers so that they understand more about the specific goals of assignments as well as students’ individual progress, and tutors mentor students over the duration of the semester to reach students’ self-identified (in collaboration with teacher and tutor feedback) long- and short-term goals.

Thank you for participating in this work. It’s both a privilege and a responsibility to integrate tutoring support in the classroom. Please read this policy manual to clarify both your and your assigned tutor’s responsibilities.

**What you can expect from Assigned Tutors**

* Tutors will communicate with you regularly with an updated report on students’ use of tutoring (weekly) and will check in with you overall (weekly or bi-weekly), ideally in a face-to-face meeting (but at least over email). Tutors will inform you (and students) of their own absences.
* Tutors will share a printed copy of the class visit and drop-in schedule with students and the procedures for making an online appointment through Setmore.com.
* During class visits, tutors will interact with as many students as possible to build rapport and will try to come early to begin those connections before class. Tutors will reach out to students to make actual appointments (with an appointment book or a laptop with wifi access to Setmore.com).
* Tutors can help students at any stage of the reading / writing process (20-30 min sessions, 2X per week, by appointment and drop-in).
* Tutors will read assigned texts as often as possible and will attend class once per week (perhaps more often in the first couple of weeks).
* Tutors will keep notes on student progress in tutoring sessions as much as possible and will communicate this information with you.
* Tutors may reach out to students for you if students are missing class or assignments.
* Tutors \*cannot\* sub for you (see more on what to do when an instructor is absent), and while they may lead an activity in class, they should not take on an authoritative teaching role.
* Tutors might be able to send txt reminders to students about their appointments—ask your tutor.

**Calendar of Embedded Tutoring Program’s Expectations of Instructors**

Before the semester starts

* Read this best practices document (every semester).
* Attend the best practices workshops provided.
* Meet with your assigned tutor to establish goals, communication commitments, and other team procedures. Establish your expectations clearly and specifically.
* Hold regular meetings with the tutor.
* Order desktop copies of books for the tutor and ask the bookstore to make a copy of the course pack—you should not pay for materials (but tutors should not pay either). The program will purchase copies of remaining materials for the tutors to share.
* Provide your tutor with a syllabus, calendar of assignments, and handouts you will pass out to students.
* Add tutor contact info, tutoring drop-in hours, and relevant tutoring and English Lab protocols in the syllabus, Canvas or class website (consider adding a picture of the assigned tutor).
* Design lesson plans with a plan for how to integrate your tutor on class visit days (see lesson ideas).
* Build 1-3 mandatory tutoring sessions into your syllabus; for example,
  + Give credit for sessions
  + Require the first tutoring session (a reading session is recommended) to take place in the first month
  + Assign students to work on a paper with the tutor

1st Class Visit(s)

* Introduce your assigned tutor as an ally and an integral part of the class.
* Set up a class activity(ies) for students to get to know the tutor in a meaningful way (see lesson ideas). For example, a class “interview” of the tutor.
* Set up a class activity(ies) for students to understand the role and protocols of tutoring (see lesson ideas). For example, a role play on tutoring and walking over to the tutoring center for an orientation.
* Provide student email addresses and phone numbers to tutors.

Before Midterm / Midterm

* Continue to reinforce the purpose and protocols of tutoring.
* Continue to meet regularly with your tutor.
* Continue to provide class handouts, assignments, and other materials to the tutor as you create them.
* Provide opportunities for the assigned tutor to make announcements during every class visit and to participate in class activities when possible (see lesson plan ideas).
* Meet with your assigned tutor for a “midterm” check in to assess student progress (looking at course SLOs and possibly tutoring SLOs) and your collaboration with the tutor for supporting students. Support may include referring students to other resources and checking in with them.
* Provide early feedback to program coordinator if there are any conflicts emerging with a tutor that can not be solved through direct communication with the tutor.
* By week 4-6, identify your struggling students (a form and reminders will be provided) and collaborate with the tutor to assertively refer struggling students to tutoring; for example
* Require students who have received failing grades on essays to meet with a tutor twice during the next essay writing process or for revisions
* Establish a plan and agreement with struggling students for frequent tutor visits throughout the reading and writing process
* Discuss your collaboration with your tutor using the google form “Collaborative Tutor-Instructor Evaluation” and offer and accept constructive feedback

Post-Midterm

* Continue to discuss ways students can improve and catch up with the support of their tutor, particularly the struggling students.
* Discuss ways to prepare students for the end-of-the-semester and the following semester (including how to register for classes and seek additional resources).
* By the end of the semester, fill out with the tutor and submit, the google form “Collaborative Tutor-Instructor Evaluation.”

**General Principles of Integrating Tutors in the Classroom**

* **Integrate your assigned tutor in the classroom** (as much as possible). Supplemental instruction (in-class assistance) has proven very successful in improving students’ performance: “Tutors or peer mentors who are in the classroom with the instructor and the students can bridge the process of a student getting acquainted with such aides. These aides extend assistance in the classroom thus preventing the student from feeling frustrated and falling behind. This approach lets the instructor clarify questions so that all parties—instructor, aides, and students—have the same direction.”[[1]](#footnote-2)

The more tutors are connected to the classroom, the better. As much as the tutor can get to know students personally and interact with them, the more likely students are to visit and to feel a connection with their tutor. (Sometimes the affective support may be even more important than the academic support.)

* **Communicate with students about the purpose of tutoring**: Tutors should be seen as a “get to” opportunity rather than a burdensome “have to do” task or the deficiency model of “You need help.” And tutors can help with any stage of the reading or writing process—make sure students know they can discuss reading assignments with tutors.

Discuss how entering into a dialogue with an experienced reader/writer is an important part of the academic experience. It \*does not\* mean that a student is a “bad writer”—students bring important skills to their writing tasks, and everyone participating in the academic process (at every level—as a professor, professional tutor, graduate student, undergrad) should want to improve their skills.

When tutors interact with students during class group work, it is important that they are not seen as “spying” on the groups. It is more effective if tutors participate authentically in the group as a **Master Student** who models how to ask questions and keep the conversation going, and tutors can also model how to ask clarifying questions during class. Tutors can share authentic responses without “giving away” ideas that the group then feels tempted to use in an essay.

* **Communicate with your assigned tutors.** Set up regular times to meet (weekly / bi-weekly) with the tutor assigned to your class. If you have more than one tutor, consider meeting with all of them at one time for the same course or reducing meeting times to 30 min. Meeting time is built in to tutors’ schedules, so make every effort to establish a regular meeting time that both you and your tutor commit to. If you establish the times early in the semester, tutors can make tutoring appointments around those times. In your meetings, collaborate on a strategic plan for helping students succeed in the class: Who is struggling? How well are the students understanding the lessons? Who is showing up for appointments, and who isn’t? What information presented in the class are students consistently struggling with? What successes have tutors had in helping students grasp the material? What information or support does the tutor need? Be willing to ask tutors for feedback on whether they think your directions in class and assignments seem clear to them.
* **Provide materials for your assigned tutors.** It is important that (at no financial cost to the instructor or to the tutor) instructors provide class assignments, desktop copies of the books and other materials to the tutors. The program will purchase additional materials for the tutors to share.
* **Require and encourage student visits to your assigned tutor / other tutors.** Build tutor visits into the syllabus / course calendar. Give them credit (and lab hours) for it, or think of other accountable ways to incentivize tutor visits. For example, make it a required stage of the reading/writing process of an essay assignment, “Review your topic sentences for your first draft with your tutor. Make sure to incorporate tutor feedback. Get your tutor’s signature on the Tutor Reflection sheet after reviewing your work.” The tutor’s signature could count for points. Some accountability will cause students to integrate tutors into their learning process.
* **Refer struggling students to tutoring early.** Some research indicates that “when colleges make students aware of their academic difficulties and point students toward available support services students are more likely to successfully complete the course in question and to persist over the long term.”[[2]](#footnote-3)

Since providing clear feedback early is proven to work and because we want to retain and support students at the highest risk of dropping out or failing, we encourage instructors to identify students early who could benefit academically (or affectively!) from meeting with a tutor. In the first four to six weeks, we ask that instructors make every effort to connect struggling students with tutors, foster these relationships, and ask students to prioritize their time with tutors (while still encouraging all students to meet with tutors). This can be especially effective if you conference with your students early in the semester (before midterms) to discuss how the assigned tutor might give students the tools they need to improve and succeed in the class. Tutors may also reach out to students who have been missing class by calling or testing to encourage students not to give up (and to make an appointment to get back on track).

* **Require students to write reflections about their experiences with tutoring and to set goals**. You may use the **Tutor Reflection** sheet used by tutors or another handout of your own that asks students to make connections between their tutoring sessions and their ongoing goals for the semester. Helping students be more metacognitive about their ongoing progress will help them internalize their learning and help them stay motivated and on track.
* **Encourage tutors to create study groups and encourage students to attend.** Students (and instructors) often see tutors as most valuable during the writing process. However, tutors could also run small groups to work on reading strategies, student success skills, grammar workshops, or other supplemental instruction. Discuss with your tutor what might work best for your class (and what your tutor feels most comfortable doing).
* **Support students who failed the previous semester.**

If you know students failed the previous semester (from a conversation or from a first week survey that you ask students to fill out), you might ask about the goals they want to set up with the tutor to succeed this semester (in a tutoring session, tutors may also find out a student did not pass a previous class or is experiencing other things like financial struggles—when students share personal information like this, they may not want the tutor/instructor to know—so be sensitive to this). Once you have permission, the tutor can email or speak to the student in person: "I'm so glad we'll get to work together this semester!  Let's set up a time when we can sit down and set your goals.”

Integration Ideas—More Specifics

On Your First Day Handouts, Canvas or website

* List the tutor’s name and contact information, as well as the tutor’s schedule.
* Let students know if you will count tutoring for lab hours.
* Make sure that the tutor gets at least two extra copies of these important handouts.
* Share student phone numbers and email addresses with tutors. Simply ask students on the first day if they are willing to share the information. It is vital that tutors can follow up with students as needed.

Modeling

* Discuss with tutors how and how much you would like tutors to contribute to class discussion and group work.
* Ask the tutor to model a certain skill or type of verbal response in class.
* In tough discussions or hesitant classes, having the tutor make a short, initial response to a question can be a good ice breaker. Tutors can also summarize relevant comments made in groups, though we don’t want tutors to become the dominant speaker in the class. When summarizing group discussions, the tutor should ask permission first then possibly use actual names of students to give them credit for their good ideas (or if deemed more appropriate, share ideas from the group anonymously). That kind of implicit praise could make students speak for themselves next time.

Group work and Workshops

* Tutors can facilitate pair and small group work.
* Tutors can help with taking attendance, which will help them learn students’ names more quickly.
* Tutors can circulate and help with various tasks.
* Tutors should use this portion of class time as a way to build relationships with students and recruit students to make appointments.
* Allow tutors to hand back homework, as this will also facilitate learning student names.
* If comfortable, tutors could lead a workshop in class, on the reading/writing process—a topic that would lend itself to promoting tutor visits.

Promote tutoring

* Schedule time for tutors to announce groups, events / opportunities, tips / reminders for difficult assignments. Remind students of tutoring options during class.
* Suggest a few possible topics that might be discussed in study group, as appropriate.
* Refer to tutoring when you’re handing back papers. Students who didn’t get the grade they had hoped for may be encouraged to see the tutor.
* You can also make comments on papers, encouraging students to use tutoring resources.

**Lesson Ideas**

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| Class Activity | Ways that Tutors Can Be Involved… |
| Peer Review | Working with students without drafts, participating in groups to model how to interact with other peer reviewers and how to assess drafts, circulating among groups and asking students to share about the parts of peer review that are challenging |
| Small group, pair, or individual work | Catching up students who come in late or have missed a prior class, circulating in the room, working with particular students that the teacher identifies in advance |
| Whole class discussion | Asking clarifying questions, relaying an idea discussed in workshops or offering ideas for students to consider |
| Turning in assignments | Helping particular students put their work in order, collecting work, noting who did not turn in work. |
| Computer lab /classroom | Fielding questions about formatting or content, reminding students to consult the reading or prompt, relaying common or useful questions to the instructor |
| Getting back assignments | During whole class reviews of a graded essays, tutors can point out encouraging or useful teacher comments to particular students and help students interpret comments or handwriting. Tutors can help students create a revision plan / plan for the next essay. |
| Getting to know student writing | Some instructors let tutors look briefly over students’ graded essays outside of class before students get them back (best not to review essays in front of students). |

**Week 1**

* **The class interviews the tutor:** The tutor sits at the front of the class while students ask questions about how the tutor succeeded in college. A good preparatory lesson in the previous class session might be how to write good interview questions (that elicit different levels of critical inquiry), which is also a brainstorming strategy for any essay assignment. The tutor will pass out brochures and will point out the tutoring drop-in hours / the tutor’s appointment schedule.  Tutors should plant the seed that all good readers/writers engage in a dialogue with other writers/readers/thinkers. Participating in tutoring is not a sign of weakness—studies show good students work with tutors. (In the next class visit, the tutor will explain specifically what to expect from a tutoring session.)

**And/or**

* **Tutors tell their “story”**: Tutors can discuss their journey toward and during college and share experiences with the reading-writing process.  Afterwards, students may ask tutors questions. See above for a good preparatory lesson on writing good questions.
* **Student Survey**: The tutor will ask students to fill out a student survey with information such as what their previous English class was like, what their personal struggles are, and what their goals are for the class—for some students it is easier to do this on paper than to go for tutoring and discuss it; by filling out the survey, students are giving tutors permission to address the information with the student one-on-one. Students should be told that both the instructor and the tutor will have access to what they write. If instructors have a survey they prefer to use, ask students if tutors can have permission to view them. Be sure to ask for students’ preferred email address and phone number.
* **Class Orientation in the Tutoring Center:** The tutor can lead students on a tour of the tutoring space (in lieu of or as part of a Scavenger Hunt). The tutor can show students how to log in at the Accutrack computer, how to sign up for tutoring, and how to use other resources.
* **PowerPoint/Prezi Presentation about Tutoring Services**: Tutors will include the details about the who, what, when, where, and why's of tutoring. Tutors will show themselves to be a credible source with training, and, at the same time, someone who is not afraid to say, "If I don't know the answer, I'll look it up." **Students need to hear that tutors are not in the classroom to evaluate or judge students in any way**. They are not there to spy on them and tell their instructors “what’s really going on.” Tutors are available for a dialogue about reading and writing, and they can support students to improve their skills and succeed in the classroom. This is also a great time for the tutor to give a demonstration showing students how to sign up for tutoring online!
* **Community Bingo**: Provide the class with a chart listing various things that might apply to people in the classroom (like “someone who has won the lottery” or “someone who likes sushi”). While mingling with each other in the classroom, students try to find five people in a row (up, down, or diagonally) who can truthfully say the statement applies to them. Include the tutor in the activity, so students can get to know him/her.

**Or**

* **Tutor Jeopardy:** Provide a chart listing various topics that students can ask the tutors about. For example, a topic could be “grades in college” and the student question could be, “Did you ever get a failing grade on an essay? If so, what did you do? If not, what did you do to get good grades?”

**Or**

* **Two Truths and a Lie:** Everyone writes down two truths and a lie about themselves and then reads it in groups. People try to guess which statement is the lie (and which are the truths that let them know more about the person). The instructor and the tutor read theirs at the front of the class for everyone to guess.

**Week 2**

* **Role Play—What to Expect from Tutoring** (requires two tutors or the instructor and tutor): 1) The first skit demonstrates a conflict when a student comes unprepared, without the Writing Prompt but with a messy binder/notebook (textbook used as folder!!), and wants the tutor to do all the work and get the session over with quickly. 2) The second skit demonstrates collaboration when a student has a specific topic to focus on for the session from the **Tutor Reflection** handout, provides a question to explore in the session, and brings all necessary work (Writing Prompt, brainstorm, outline, freewriting). The tutor provides a quick strategy to get the session going, and both tutor and tutee participate in the process. 3) Then the tutor(s) leads a debrief—what was different in these scenarios? What are the motives of each student (some motives will be the same for both students in the different skits, and some motives will be different)? What could have made the first session more successful? What made the second session successful? **Which behavior/method leads to the best short-term/long-term goals?** 4) The tutor will then let students know what to expect from a tutoring session. (Note a YouTube video of a mock/real tutoring session may already be available in lieu of a “live” role play—though role plays are fun and tend to be shorter.)
* **Tutor-led class brainstorm about Skills (+) vs. Challenges (-) and Likes (+) vs. Dislikes (-)**: On the board, the tutor will brainstorm a chart with the class to see what writing/reading skills students struggle with / succeed at and what they feel they are good at / not good at. The tutor will help them think of things like the joy of texting (being creative, connecting with one’s audience) and the love/hate relationship people often have with grammar (it’s nice to have actual right/wrong answers, but there are so many rules to know about; also some people would prefer to write about their ideas and not think about grammar). Then tutors will introduce the concept of HOCs/LOCS (pointing out the phrases on the board that are HOCs or LOCs). Tutors will say, “Even though reading and writing at the college level is difficult, the good news is that English tutors can help you at every stage of the writing process.” Tutors will use the **Tutoring Reflection** sheet to go over the list of possible topics students can work on with a tutor and ask students to fill out the sheet for their first tutoring session.

**Week 2 or 3**

* **Student Testimonials**: Students who attend tutoring in the early weeks can give a testimonial to the entire class (provided it was a good experience) so that students are encouraged to come to tutoring and will know what it will be like when they do. The tutor could reiterate what a good strategy it is to come to tutoring (and thereby praising the student for doing so) and share what a joy it was to work with the student.
* **Walking poll** (tutor leads): The instructor provides a handout with a few statements about the upcoming / current essay topic. The tutor explains the activity and leads the class through it. Students stand on one side of the room if they agree, or the other side if they disagree. Then the tutor helps debrief depending on the goals of the lesson. This requires some advanced planning and communication with the instructor.

**Week 3, 4, 5**

* **Paragraph puzzle**: The tutor leads the class in an activity in groups. Each group must put cut-up paragraph sentences in order. The tutor floats while groups work on the activity. The tutor will debrief by asking groups to read their paragraphs out loud (two or three groups could have the same paragraph to allow for some comparison). The tutor will help everyone notice clues for sentence order, PIE, etc.
* **Sentence stems**: The tutor leads the class in an activity in groups. The groups combine sentence stems written on big pieces of paper. The tutor floats while groups work on the activity. The tutor will debrief by asking groups to share how they joined the sentence stems and makes sure the class understands how their choices may affect meaning and how to punctuate and use grammar correctly in those sentences.

**Week 4, 5, 6**

* **A quote and 3 paraphrases:** The tutor leads the class in an activity in groups. The groups are given a quote and 3 paraphrases. They decide which paraphrases are best and why. The tutor floats while groups work on the activity. The tutor will debrief by leading the class in a discussion about what makes strong paraphrases, especially for use in an academic essay.
* **Disembodied quotes:** The tutor leads the class in an activity in groups. The groups practice introducing quotes and paraphrasing them. The tutor floats while groups work on the activity. The tutor will debrief by leading the class in a discussion about what makes strong paraphrases, especially for use in an academic essay, as well as how to cite quotations properly.

**What to do when an instructor is absent**

When an instructor is absent, please remember the following protocols:

1. A 3598 tutor **may not sub** for the instructor (this includes tutors who possess Master's degrees--3598 tutors are Classified Employees and as such may not teach at CCSF).
2. The instructor \*may not\* ask or require the tutor to go to the classroom when the class is cancelled.  If the tutor learns of the cancellation before going to class, the tutor should stay in the Lab.
3. If the tutor is scheduled for a class visit and arrives to the class only to learn that the class has been cancelled and if students would like to work with a tutor at that time, the tutor should walk over to the tutoring center with those students and tutor them there (individually in the tutoring area or as a group in a group room).  In this case, students should not log in on Accutrack (because the tutoring is taking place during class time, which would be double-dipping).
4. **Instructors should never require students to work with a tutor in lieu of class time.**  If a class is cancelled, then students are not obligated to meet during that time for their class.  The instructor may suggest that meeting with a tutor in lieu of class time is a good idea as long as it is not required.  For example, you could say: “Since class is cancelled, it's a good idea to work with a tutor in the tutoring center.  If you work with a tutor during class time, you won't log in for lab hours.”
5. Tutors may not take attendance for the instructor when the instructor is absent.

**Embedded Tutoring Program Information Sheet**

**Located**:

* Rosenberg 228 in the Learning Assistance Center; the tutoring area is located behind the counter next to the Academic Computer Lab
* (We tell students to enter through the West Entrance of the LAC, near the bathrooms)
* Phone: 415.452.5612
* To book appointments online: https://etpccsf.setmore.com

**Classes:**

* Currently, all English L, 86, 88, 91 and 95 courses receive are assigned an embedded tutor
* Note: MRSD is a separate program though MRSD tutors and participating English instructors are invited to attend English tutor/instructor trainings

**3598 Classified “Embedded” Tutors:**

* attendclasswith students once or twice per week
* complete reading assignments and writing assignments when possible
* provide tutoring by appointment **and** drop-in
* meet with instructors weekly/bi-weekly (according to instructors’ availability)
* communicate with instructors regularly via email and provide a weekly record of tutoring attendance and other feedback on student progress

**Tutoring**:

* 20-30 min sessions (by appointment and drop-in)
* Sessions focus on one main topic
* Sessions may cover **\*any\* stage of the reading / writing process—including grammar!!!**
* Tutors **do not proofread** or write on student papers
* Students should bring their Writing Prompt / Assignment and related materials and should identify a tutoring topic before beginning the session
* Students are strongly recommended to visit a tutor 3 times before midterm with a reading assignment, the first essay assignment, the first graded essay

**Drop-in schedule\*generally\***: M-Th 9:00 am-5:00 pm, F 9:00 am-2:00 pm, Sat 10:30-1:30 in the R205

**Tutoring for classes at the Centers and evening classes**: an hour or two before class; some online tutoring via Google Hangouts available by appointment; Saturday mornings in the English Lab

**Fall 2017 Tutors and Co.**

**Embedded Tutoring Program Coordinator** (faculty)

Lizzie Brock: ebrock@ccsf.edu

**Lead Tutor**

Paula Mak: [pmak@ccsf.edu](mailto:pmak@ccsf.edu)

**Basic Skills Initiative funded Tutors** (tutor basic skills classes)

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**Equity funded accelerated Tutors** (tutor accelerated classes)

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Cory Robertson: [crobertson@ccsf.edu](mailto:crobertson@ccsf.edu)

Vicky Wang: [vwang@ccsf.edu](mailto:vwang@ccsf.edu)

**Equity funded Centers Tutors** (tutors at the Centers)

Kate Lim: [kslim@ccsf.edu](mailto:kslim@ccsf.edu)

**MRSD Tutors** (tutorclasses linked to Multicultural Retention Services Department)

(Equity funded and moving to the English Department)

Lee Weinstein Chen: lweinstein@ccsf.edu

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1. Wild, Linda, & Ebbers, Barry. (2002) “Rethinking Student Retention in Community Colleges.” *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 26: 503- 519. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Bourdon, C., & Carducci, R. (2002). *What works in the community colleges: A synthesis of literature on best practices.* Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Graduate School of Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED471397). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)