Three Steps in Tutoring a New Student

Adapted From University of Vermont's
Learning Cooperative Content Tutoring Handbook

I. Build Rapport
   a. Introduce yourself. Ask some school-related questions.
      What courses are you taking this semester? How are you doing in these
classes?

   b. Ask some questions about the student’s outside commitments.
      What made you decide to come to UF? What extra-curricular activities are you
involved in? What are your career goals?

   c. Explore the student’s reason for coming to the Teaching Center as well as other possible
      resources available to them.
      Is this your first visit to the Teaching Center? Why did you decide to see a
tutor? Have you asked your professor for help? How comfortable do you feel
talking with the professor? Remember, the professor is the expert, so they are
the best resource. Even if you are seeing the professor you still get to have a
 tutor.

   d. Discuss the student’s approach to the course.
      What do you do in class? How do you prepare for this class? Are you behind in
any of your course work? Where do you study? When do you study?

   e. Decide on a focus for the tutoring session.
      What would you like to work on today?

II. Focus on Specific Goals: Active Learning

   a. Avoid teaching.
      Show me what you have done. Show me how you get started. Let’s look at your notes.
      Is there a sample problem of example like this in your text?

   b. Have student work actively.
      Please think aloud and explain what you’re doing. Show your work.

   c. Help student develop learning strategies.
      What do you do when you get stuck? Read the directions out loud. Explain the
assignment to me.
III. Evaluate the Tutoring Session

   a. Summarize what the student has accomplished and encourage them to try some study strategies on their assignments independently.

      What did we accomplish today? Can you see how this connects with what you did yesterday, last week? What will you do when you get stuck? When will you study? Where will you study?

   b. Ask the student for feedback on the session.

      Did you benefit from the session today? How was the pace? How would you like to approach future sessions?

   c. End on a positive note.

      I think you made a good start. You worked hard today. Now you just need to spend some quality time on this.