

# CSC Peer Tutor Quick Reference

*This information supplements **The Learners' Studio Peer Tutor Manual** and is specific to CSC tutors.*

## **Mission Statement:**

Computer Science Peer Tutors, in a complementary role with other members of the Villanova community, and without judgment or imposition of their own personal beliefs, will provide knowledgeable and constructive information, advice, support, and feedback to their peers, in order to enhance the overall quality of the student's experiences here at Villanova University.

## **Confidentiality:**

Be sensitive to students' feelings, but be aware that you are not required to keep secrets. If you feel that a student is disrespectful to you or to someone else or you feel threatened in any way, you should feel free to discuss these issues with the coordinators.

## **Academic Integrity:**

As a tutor, you are held to the highest standards of ethics. Tutors are expected to uphold and reinforce Villanova's code for Academic Integrity. If a student asks about a project or homework for which you have a solution, be sure that you do NOT refer to the solution while tutoring.

## **What if I don't know or don't remember the answer?**

That's OK! Your job isn't to know all the answers and it is fine to say that you don't remember how to do something or that you need a few minutes to review some notes so that you are better able to help. (It is ok to review a past solution of your own at this point, as long as you excuse yourself briefly so that you are not looking at a solution in the presence of the person you are tutoring – see section on "Academic Integrity", above. Do NOT have your laptop or notes open while tutoring.) Try to help the student go through the process of arriving at a solution on his or her own. Demonstrate effective problem-solving strategies: reviewing notes, doing some drill problems to gain a better understanding, breaking down the problem into smaller, easier subproblems or tackling a simplified version of the problem.

## **One simple rule: \*\*\* DON'T TOUCH THEIR LAPTOP! \*\*\***

Sometimes it is difficult to explain something and you may be tempted to just "fix" a problem that appears to be distracting from the main purpose of the tutoring session. No matter what, it is important to make no exceptions to this rule.

## **Stay safe:**

CSC Peer Tutoring takes place in busy areas, but if you find yourself alone with a student and you feel uncomfortable for any reason, explain that you must terminate the tutoring session and be sure to talk with your supervisor. (See also "Common Tutoring Challenges in the Tutor manual.")

## **Questions?**

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## If a student comes in with...

PROBLEM	TRY TO...	ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
<b>Bug in program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help them nail it on their own</li> <li>• Suggest test runs, ways to trace</li> <li>• Resist the urge to touch student's laptop!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course TA or Professor office hours</li> </ul>
<b>Concept</b>	<p>Explain the material in your own way. Give examples. What made it "click" for you? Sometimes all a student needs is to hear something explained in a different way.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course TA or Professor office hours</li> </ul>
<b>Totally lost!</b>	<p>A student that has fallen behind the course needs to talk with their professor. The problem is that, often, the student is reluctant to face the professor and ends up falling further behind. You can be of great help in a case like this by getting the student unstuck and convincing them to see their professor. Avoid wasting your time (and theirs) on long discussions of grades and whether that means they are going to fail or not. Focus on the course material and on making some progress in understanding <i>something</i>, no matter how small. Start by asking the student about what, if anything, they have learned or understood, and try to build a small step forward from there. Although you may not be able to do much it is possible to build the basis for a turnaround. Try to offer some encouragement and be sure to dispel notions of being too embarrassed to talk with the professor or TA.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course TA or Professor office hours</li> <li>• Learning Support Services</li> <li>• Academic Advisor</li> </ul>
<b>Study issues</b>	<p>Some students lack good study habits, so may be coming to Peer tutoring for the resulting emergencies. Their pain is very real and although their lack of planning does not constitute an emergency for you, we are all human, so you can try to help them as best you can within the time-frame available. Things to keep in mind:</p> <p><b>DO's</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help student focus on doable parts of a project or homework</li> <li>• Discuss available resources in a non-judgmental way</li> </ul> <p><b>DON'Ts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecture the student about their poor planning</li> <li>• Become complicit in plagiarism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course TA or Professor office hours</li> <li>• Learning Support Services</li> <li>• Academic Advisor</li> <li>• Additional support for some students through the following programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Engineers CEER PEERS</li> <li>○ Multicultural Affairs</li> <li>○ Math Learning Resource Center (MLRC)</li> <li>○ VSB Tutors</li> <li>○ Athletics</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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