This resource is designed for tutor coordinators who play a central role in developing tutor training and tutoring programs; it complements 10 Ways Tutors Can Support Student Success, which outlines how tutors can promote the six success factors identified by the Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges’ (RP Group) Student Support (Re)defined study when working with students (see sidebars, What Is Student Support (Re)defined?, p. 2, and Six Success Factors Defined, p. 3).

10 Ways Tutors Can Support Student Success resulted from a discussion with Dr. Darla Cooper, RP Group Executive Director and Student Support (Re)defined Project Director. Through our conversation and collaboration, we recognized that the success factors can help illuminate the importance and role of both tutoring and tutor coordinators.

In discussing how Santa Barbara City College (SBCC) has used the factors in its tutoring programs with Dr. Cooper, we determined that articulating these efforts and making them available to other tutor coordinators can highlight

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1 Find 10 Ways Tutors Support Student Success at [www.rpgroup.org/student-support](http://www.rpgroup.org/student-support), on “Resources” page, under “Tools and Guides.”
the valuable work of student support. Thus, we developed 10 Ways Tutors Can Support Student Success to feature how individual tutors can realize the success factors in their day-to-day tutoring practices. This resource uses the term “tutor” to refer to all peer educators serving our students, including supplemental instruction (SI) leaders and other learning assistance professionals.

Topics for tutor training and certification guidelines from organizations such as Association of Colleges for Tutoring and Learning Assistance (ACTLA), College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) and Supplemental Instruction (SI) demonstrate that tutoring has undergone a paradigm shift, from a focus on remediation for some students who would not otherwise “make it” in college to a recognition that all students need support at some point in their educational career. Tutoring and learning centers are the places where student learning is a shared enterprise between the faculty who evaluate and teach students, the tutor coordinators who hire and train tutors, the tutors who have experience with learning in the classes, and the students who are supported in their learning.

While everyone in this relationship is dedicated to student success, tutors are often students’ primary champions, mentors, coaches, and translators of academic reading, writing, comprehension, and application. All of these tasks are based on active learning and the training guidelines of best tutoring practices. While focused on how tutors can effectively engage with students, 10 Ways Tutors Can Support Student Success also highlights the important role that tutor coordinators play in supporting student success by directly mentoring tutors and the students who seek tutoring. In their daily work, tutor coordinators build relationships with tutors and students and actively model how to collaborate and connect in ways that positively impact learning.
Six Success Factors Defined

As part of Student Support (Re)defined, the RP Group reviewed leading studies on effective support practice and interviewed both practitioners and researchers to identify “six success factors” that contribute to students’ achievement. We list them below in order of importance according to those participating in our research.

- Directed: students have a goal and know how to achieve it
- Focused: students stay on track—keeping their eyes on the prize
- Nurtured: students feel somebody wants and helps them to succeed
- Engaged: students actively participate in class and extracurricular activities
- Connected: students feel like they are part of the college community
- Valued: students’ skills, talents, abilities, and experiences are recognized; they have opportunities to contribute on campus and feel their contributions are appreciated

Find below a brief summary of effective practices in tutor training that actively align with the success factors and that served as the basis for the 10 Ways Tutors Can Support Student Success.

- Educational Theory that Supports Tutoring and Learning: The learning paradigms of Bloom’s Taxonomy (1956); Supplemental Instruction (University of Missouri – Kansas City, 1973); Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and Scaffolding (Vygotsky, 1978); Growth Mindset (Dweck, 2006); Reading Apprenticeship (Greenleaf & Schoenbach, 2006); Habits of Mind (Costa & Kallick, 2008) and Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain (Hammond, 2015) are the foundation for affective and metacognitive learning techniques and culturally-responsive practices for tutors.

- Hiring Practices for Tutors: Considering the benefits of tutor applicants who bring a diversity of cultural, disciplinary, and life experiences related to student demographics can contribute to the student-centered culture of tutoring and learning centers.

- The Distinct Role of Tutors: Tutors are simultaneously students and educators, a position from which they are able to provide specific insights into how students experience and navigate our colleges and their complex systems. Tutors bring skills in situated learning that are unique to the learning contexts in which students find themselves. Tutors practice successful models of tutoring that are based on collaborative learning activities in the affective, cognitive, and psychomotor domains. They serve as peers, mentors, coaches, and advocates for students’ success and are in the unique space between faculty and students.

- The Practice of Tutoring: Each tutoring session has three discrete stages where tutors first engage students in their own experiences, beliefs, and strategies with learning, then introduce specific collaborative learning strategies, and finally involve students in metacognitive strategies focused on next steps in the learning process. Tutors reflect on sessions in records shared with tutor coordinators who then design workshops and other collaborative activities that support tutoring practice.

- Student Success Data: Tutor coordinators demonstrate that tutoring is effective for all students in the disciplines where they are being tutored, which includes academic success across all groups of
students (increased usage in terms of numbers of distinct students and number of visits leading to better grades), reduction of equity gaps, and continuous improvement in success data based on these factors.

- **Making the Case for Student-Centered Learning**: Tutor coordinators are practitioners of successful techniques and strategies for active, peer-to-peer learning that align to the needs of a particular campus, discipline, and/or student demographic. These daily practices demonstrate the six factors for student success in action and make the case for why peer-to-peer active learning should be the norm for student learning on campus.

- **Dos and Don’ts of Tutoring**: Many of the everyday practices highlighted in *10 Ways Tutors Can Support Student Success* relate to the activities and training that tutor coordinators do in the context of what tutoring is and is not. Supporting student independence in learning, developing metacognitive learning activities, making the connections between neuroscience and learning, developing an equity mindset, and creating a sense of belongingness are all related to effective practices in tutoring.

- **Transferable Skills Developed in Discipline-Specific Tutoring**: Tutor coordinators emphasize that every tutoring session is an opportunity to help students acquire effective learning techniques and strategies that are strengthened by being applied in different disciplinary contexts. Helping tutors to name these techniques and strategies with students makes the strategies and learning techniques more effective, and provides a road map to success for students.

- **Compliance and Regulations Regarding Tutoring**: Being a tutor bridges the domains of being a student and an instructor, and is distinct from being a faculty or a teaching assistant. There are many more role models for being a faculty than there are for tutors. In this peer role, tutors learn to identify the boundaries of what is teaching and what is tutoring; what is “too much help” that can lead to dependency and learned helplessness, and what is “unauthorized” help such as editing papers or doing, instead of practice for doing, homework. Tutors also learn the fine line between mentoring, peer-to-peer collaborations, and friendships. In addition, there are liability
and safety issues related to tutoring that coordinators need to address with various scenarios unique to the tutoring relationships.

- **Tutors Being Responsive to Qualitative and Quantitative Data:** As tutors develop as mentors for other tutors and for the programs in which they work, they can help support the development of qualitative and quantitative data about tutoring programs. Their voices in reports and research, and as the face of tutoring programs are impactful and can underscore the pedagogy and philosophy of student-centered learning in tutoring.

**References**


**For more information:**

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