How to Get the Most Out of a Tutoring Session

In order to maximize your learning time, it will be necessary for you to do the following:

• **Bring important materials**
  Textbooks, class notes, pen or pencil, calculator, syllabus, written assignment and flashcards or any other important study tools and/or materials are integral to a successful tutoring session.

• **Be prepared**
  Attend all class sessions, read assigned materials and complete or attempt homework. A tutor cannot make up for classes you did not attend or material you did not read. Tutors will not provide assistance with specific homework problems. They will offer to work with a similar problem to reinforce the necessary problem-solving concepts but you are responsible for completing your own homework assignments.

• **Actively participate**
  You should be doing most of the talking. Ask questions—remember the goal of the session is so that you can solve the problem when the tutor is not there. Don’t feel embarrassed if you need to have things repeated or need your tutor to slow down. Be prepared to work—to take notes, to construct an outline, to revise a paragraph or work through a problem during the session. You will learn more from doing than from just listening.

• **Set realistic goals for yourself**
  You are not going to learn the whole course in an hour! Discuss your goals with your tutor at the start of your session. Review what you covered in your tutoring session soon after the session has ended. This will reinforce what you learned and is a step toward improving study habits as well.

• **Realize it’s a drop-in Center**
  Sometimes you may have one-on-one time with a tutor, but the nature of a drop-in Center is for tutors to work with multiple students at a time. Have your questions in mind or, even better, written down. Know exactly what to ask for—concepts, vocabulary, prioritizing information, learning skills—and the tutor will be able to help you more effectively. Don’t wait until the last minute. Meet with the tutor well in advance of exams (particularly midterms and finals) or large projects.

• **Know the tutor’s role**
  Tutors are professional, knowledgeable, patient, and recommended by IU South Bend faculty members. However, there are some limitations to what tutors can do: Tutors will not do your thinking or your learning for you. Tutors are also directed not to do homework for students. Neither will the tutor assist you with a take-home exam. The tutors will ask questions to determine what part of the learning process is presenting a problem. Your tutor will then provide guidance and direction to help you successfully and independently think through the difficulty. The goal of every tutoring session is not simply to answer a content question but rather to provide you with the tools to solve a similar problem on your own.

• **Remember that Improvement Takes Time**
  Learning a subject improves with time and practice. Each exercise that you do, each conversation with your tutor will carry over into improvement on all your future assignments.

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