

# Student Success & Accessibility Services

*Monmouth College*

Tutor  
Handbook  
2020-2021

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## Welcome!

Congratulations on your appointment as a subject area tutor at Monmouth College! Being a tutor is a rigorous but rewarding job. You are likely to gain as much from the experience as the students you will be helping. This handbook is meant to help guide you through the aptitudes, attitudes, and details which you will need to be successful in your tutoring. It will serve as a guide through the administrative side of the job, as well as a valuable resource to return to when seeking guidance on how to do your job well.

## **Mission**

Student Success & Accessibility Services (SSAS) promotes intellectual engagement, cultivates critical thinking, and fosters academic success.

## **Academic Tutor Goals**

- To promote independent learning
- To personalize instruction
- To share information about additional campus resources  
(adapted from LSU's Center for Academic Success)

This Mission and these Goals are now *your* Mission and Goals. Keep them foremost in your mind as you work with those students who need your help.

## Information we share with students:

### What to Expect from a Tutor:

- ✓ Knowledge of the subject area
- ✓ Courtesy, respect, patience and confidentiality
- ✓ Working with you until you understand the material
- ✓ Attempting different techniques to help you understand the material
- ✓ Review material from class that you do not comprehend, help you find answers to your questions, and work on practice problems when needed.

### Your Role as a Student:

- ✓ Remember, *you* have a key role in tutoring – it's a partnership to discover how you can best comprehend material, now and in the future
- ✓ Try to seek out help early so you are not cramming information in right before a big assignment or exam.
  - If you visit tutoring on a more regular basis, you will be more effective in learning the material at a reasonable pace.
- ✓ Be prepared for your tutoring session: bring class assignments/problems, textbooks, notes, past tests, past writing assignments, etc.
- ✓ Bring your questions. Know what it is that you need help with so there is a place to begin. This includes concentrating on things that you, or your professor, believe are most important.
- ✓ Come ready to work. A good tutoring session is a give and take between the tutor and you, where you're both working to deepen your understanding and improve your performance.

### What Tutors Will Not Provide:

- ✓ Direct answers to your homework – they will help you figure out and solve the answer, so you know how to do it independently next time.
- ✓ Direct answers to your questions – they will teach you to seek out the answers so you can learn.
- ✓ Simple corrections of work for the student
- ✓ Remember, the tutors are not the teacher of the course. Tutoring is in addition to, not a replacement, for your course itself. Tutors will not know everything about a subject and may refer you back to your professor in some instances.

## **What Does It Mean to Be a Tutor? What Does It Take?**

### ***The Goal***

Your ultimate goal is to help students develop the necessary skills for independent academic success through a friendly and supportive experience.

### ***Aptitudes and Attitudes***

Tutors are hired to provide peer-supported help to their fellow students.

Tutors will be trained in tutoring techniques in order to benefit students to the fullest extent, and tutors are expected to use these techniques on a regular basis during their tutoring sessions.

Tutors are students competent in a wide variety of study skills, problem solving, and critical thinking skills. They believe in collaboration to achieve their goals.

Tutors are responsible, maintaining academic quality and academic integrity in their own classes and while working as a tutor.

Tutors are flexible, cooperative, and share the workload with fellow workers.

Tutors are respectful of all students at all times.

Tutors focus on individuals in order to foster their ability to help themselves.

### ***Qualifications***

In order to be a subject area tutor, students must:

- Be recommended by a faculty member in the subject area
- Be approved by the Director of Student Success & Accessibility Services
- Maintain a subject area GPA of 3.0 for the duration of their employment
- Maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher for the duration of their employment
- Abide by all expectations laid out in this handbook for the duration of their employment

## ***Responsibilities***

All tutors will:

- Attend all required training sessions, both before and during the semester, conducted by the Coordinator of SSAS;
- Meet monthly with departmental faculty to discuss and receive updates on any necessary course materials.
- Submit a schedule of availability and be available for appointment requests;
- Attend all appointments as scheduled by SSAS; if they need to miss, they will contact the Coordinator of SSAS and then arrange for a replacement tutor to maintain scheduled hours (see below);
- Hold drop-in tutoring sessions for the assigned number of hours each week;
- Complete “Tutor Management” reports for every tutoring session that occurs;
- Maintain confidentiality about any student with whom they work;
- To act in accordance with Monmouth College’s Academic Honesty policy at all times;
- Give priority to students rather than to their own coursework while on duty;
- Report any concerns or needs to the Coordinator of SSAS promptly

## ***Communication Rules and Expectations***

As part of the Student Success student staff, tutors are expected to stay in clear and consistent contact with our offices, as well as your tutees. In order to facilitate that, here are some things we expect:

- Tutors are *required* to file a current cell phone number with SSAS
- Tutors are *required* to check and respond to all e-mail sent to their official Monmouth College e-mail address. Responses should come within two working days.
- Tutors are *not required* to share their personal cell phone number with students. If you choose not to, please direct the student to SSAS if they need to get in touch with you.
- SSAS will send tutors an email, text, or phone call regarding short-notice appointment requests, that is, those that come in with less than 24 hrs. notice. We try not to let these happen often but, when they do, a response to all email messages is expected within a reasonable time so that we can confirm or deny the appointment.
- As with any office, emails and phone messages – and texts, if necessary – will be considered official confidential communications. Please treat them accordingly.

## ***Cancelling and Rescheduling Tutoring Sessions***

- ***If there is more than one tutor available*** for a subject area, tutors can work with each other to cover shifts.
- ***If there is only one tutor*** employed for a subject area, the tutor must do the following:
  - Notify the Coordinator of SSAS as well as the Department Chair with the reason, time, and date of the cancellation.
  - E-mail all class lists for the department informing them of the cancellation, reminding them that you are available for private appointments through the SSAS office. Copy the Coordinator of SSAS and the Department Chair on the email.
- ***Emergency College Closures:*** If the college is closed due to an emergency (severe storm, power outage, etc.) then tutoring will also be cancelled. If classes are cancelled due to severe weather, but offices remain open, then tutoring will proceed as scheduled unless it is too dangerous to travel to the tutoring location.
- ***You are limited to 3 cancellations and/or reschedules per semester.*** Any cancellations beyond the limitation may result in removal from your position.

## ***Drop-in Tutoring Sessions***

Drop-in sessions occur at scheduled hours, when tutors are available and any student can come by for help. As a tutor, your commitment is to be there for the time frame scheduled. For drop-in sessions you will need to recognize that flexibility is important, because you will need to meet the tutees needs.

## **Confidentiality Statement (FERPA)**

I understand as a tutor employed by Student Success & Accessibility Services I may be privileged to information regarding student grades, attendance, and other factors affecting academic performance. Under the Federal Educational Right to Privacy Act, I understand that all information related to academic performance that I come in contact with should be treated confidentially, and I agree not to reveal such information about the students I tutor, or other students I encounter in my role as tutor, to outside parties. I further understand that all information included in session reports can, and most likely will, be shared with the course faculty member.

I understand that violation of the above expectations, or those additional expectations outlined in training, could result in immediate dismissal from my position. I agree to abide by the above policy, and to treat all confidential information in a necessary manner.

## **Ethical Responsibility**

Like teachers, tutors have to adhere to the highest standards of ethics, as well as confidentiality. The SSAS expects all academic tutors to abide by these standards:

- Tutors will be committed to acting in the **best interest of tutees** as specified by the employing organization or institute.
- Tutors will take **responsibility** for their own behavior and work to resolve conflicts that may arise between themselves and a student.
- Tutors will act with **integrity** by practicing and promoting accuracy, honesty, and truthfulness.
- Tutors will be **fair**, exercising reasonable judgment and taking precautions to ensure that their potential biases, the boundaries of their competence, and the limitations of their expertise do not lead to or condone unjust practices.
- Tutors will fulfill **commitments** made to learners.
- Tutors will **respect** the dignity and worth of all people, and the rights of individuals to privacy, confidentiality and self-determination.
- Tutors will also **respect** cultural, individual, and role differences, including those based on age, sex, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language and socioeconomic status
- Tutors will strive to maintain **excellence** by continuing to improve their tutoring skills and engage in applicable professional development activities.
- As noted above, tutors will maintain the highest **privacy standards** in terms of protecting personal information relative to those whom they tutor.

(adapted from the Association for the Tutoring Profession's Code of Ethics)

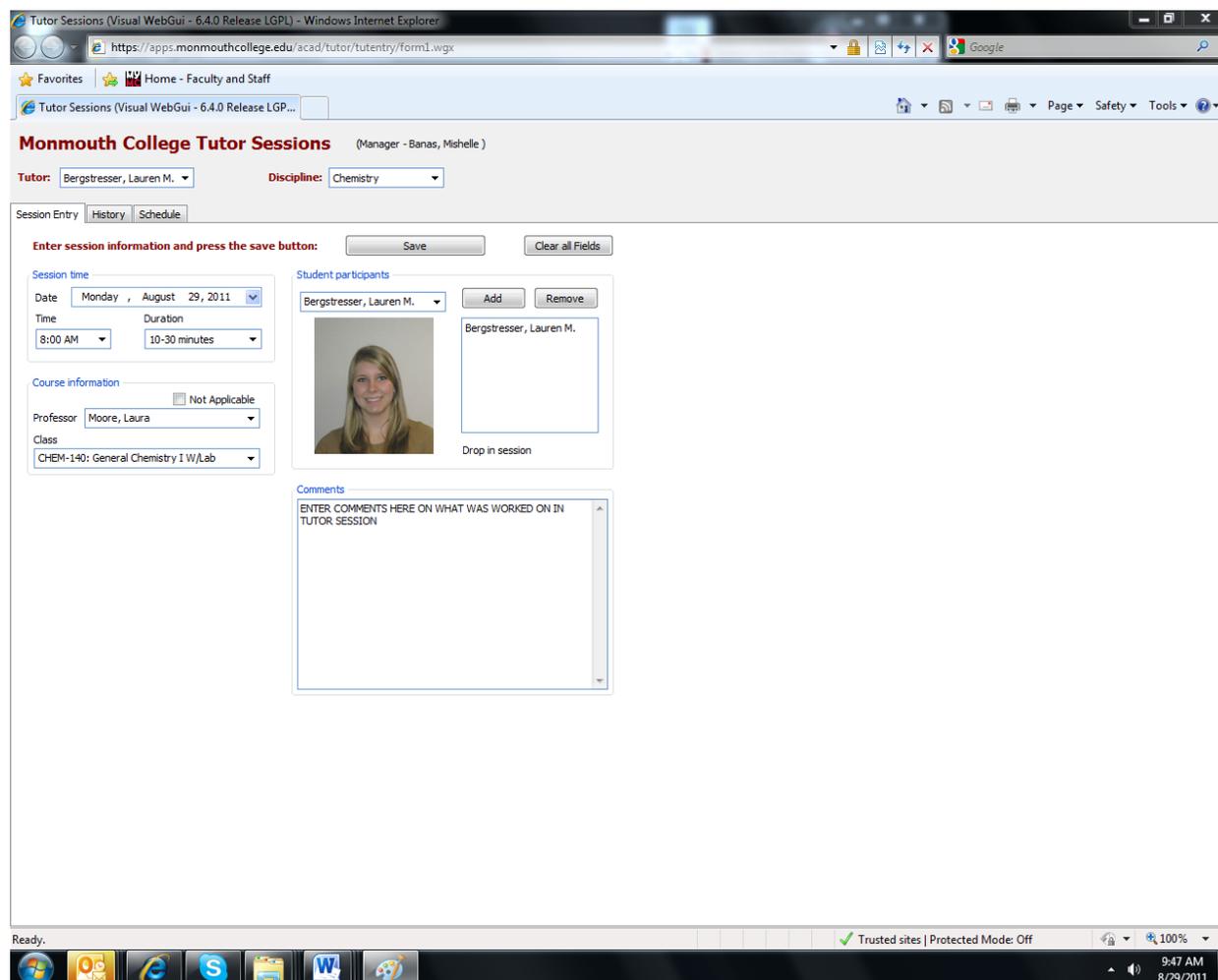
## Keeping Track of Tutoring Sessions

It is imperative that you enter your session notes in order for your time to be approved. All reports must be completed within 24 hours of a tutoring session. Timesheets will not be approved by your supervisor until all data entry/session notes have been completed. You will still be paid for your session even if no one is there. Please be mindful of the amount of hours you have been approved for as well.

Tutors, Supplemental Instructors, and Academic Coaches are responsible for entering all data from tutor visits into the Monmouth College Tutor Management program. The Tutor Management data entry screen can be accessed at the following link:

<https://programs.monmouthcollege.edu/acad/tutor/tutentry//form1.wgx>

You will need to enter your Monmouth College username and password to access the data entry screen. Once you have gained access, you will see the following screen:



The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "Tutor Sessions (Visual WebGui - 6.4.0 Release LGPL) - Windows Internet Explorer". The address bar shows the URL: <https://apps.monmouthcollege.edu/acad/tutor/tutentry/form1.wgx>. The page title is "Monmouth College Tutor Sessions" with a manager name "(Manager - Banas, Mishelle)".

At the top, there are dropdown menus for "Tutor:" (Bergstreser, Lauren M.) and "Discipline:" (Chemistry). Below this are tabs for "Session Entry", "History", and "Schedule".

The main content area is titled "Enter session information and press the save button:". It contains several sections:

- Session time:** Date (Monday, August 29, 2011), Time (8:00 AM), and Duration (10-30 minutes).
- Course information:** A checkbox for "Not Applicable", Professor (Moore, Laura), and Class (CHEM-140: General Chemistry I W/Lab).
- Student participants:** A dropdown menu (Bergstreser, Lauren M.), an "Add" button, a "Remove" button, a photo of Lauren M. Bergstreser, and a "Drop in session" button.
- Comments:** A text area with the prompt "ENTER COMMENTS HERE ON WHAT WAS WORKED ON IN TUTOR SESSION".

At the bottom, there are "Save" and "Clear all Fields" buttons. The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the system tray with the time 9:47 AM and date 8/29/2011.

- Select your name from the list of tutors, and the appropriate Discipline area (the Discipline area will be automatically selected unless you tutor for more than one discipline).
- Fill in the date, time, and duration accordingly
- Select the student names from the list, and hit add (you can add more than one student)
  - If you met with more than one student for the same class and the same issues, this can be the same entry.
  - If you met with more than one student for the same class but a different issue, this should be different entries.
  - If no one attended, add your own name and enter “No Attendees” in the session notes.
- Select the appropriate professor and class from the drop down bars
- Some of you will have “areas discussed” come up on the left hand side under professor/class – if so; please check the boxes for what was discussed in your session.
- Type in the comments box a brief report detailing what happened in the session.

These reports help us identify the subject area students need the most help with.

- Here are some good examples of reports:

**Comments:** Jessica came in need of help on her homework assignment. We worked over problems similar to those on her assignment practicing techniques. From practicing she was able to complete the problems with more ease. She still had a few questions about the graph drawing tools on the internet homework because they are somewhat difficult to understand. She also asked for help making sure she was completing the math problems correctly. I found little errors. When an error was found I asked her what she thought looked wrong and she was able to figure it out.

**Comments:** Elisa has a 2-3 page paper due this upcoming Monday about a documentary she saw in class. She came in with what she had written already (about a page and a half) and she had plenty of notes from the documentary. She really just wanted my help in making her arguments stronger, or to find any weak points that she should improve upon. We brainstormed some different ideas for her to talk about and she said she will work on it and stop in on Sunday when Leah is working.

**Note:** All reports must be completed within 24 hours of a tutoring session. Timesheets will not be approved by advisor until all data entry has been completed.

## Time Entry Directions for Students

To access Time Entry through WebAdvisor, follow the steps below. (For assistance, please contact the Personnel Office at x2122.)

1. Go to the MC home page (<http://www.monmouthcollege.edu>).
2. Select **MyMC**.
3. If prompted, log in to the Forefront Threat Management Gateway page with your MC user name and password. Otherwise, proceed to the next step.



4. Under **Self-Service (WebAdvisor)**, select **EMPLOYEES**.



5. Select **Time Entry and Approval**.



6. Select **Time entry**.



7. Select the appropriate timesheet for the position and pay period by selecting its checkbox in the **Choose Only One** column.



**IMPORTANT!** Electronic timesheets are issued for a specific position assignment. If you have more than one position assignment, then you'll have a separate timesheet for each position assignment. When recording time worked, you **MUST** use the appropriate, position-specific timesheet. Time worked for one position assignment **SHOULD NOT** be recorded on a timesheet for another position assignment.

8. Click **Submit**.

9. Before entering your time, double-check to make sure that you're using the correct timesheet.

10. In the **Time In** and **Time Out** fields, shown circled below, enter the "time in" and "time out" for the appropriate date/day. (For example, if you worked a two-hour period from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m., then enter 08:00AM in the **Time In** field and 10:00AM in the **Time Out** field.)



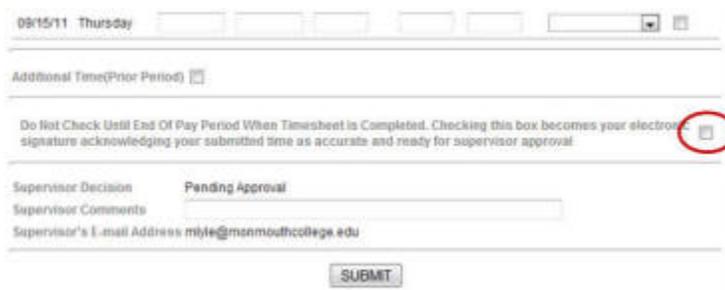
**Note:** If you need to enter additional time in and time out times for a specific day, then select the checkbox in the **Insert Line** column and then click **Submit**. The timesheet will reappear with the additional line inserted.

11. When you're finished entering your time worked, click **Submit**.

**IMPORTANT!** To avoid forgetting to enter time worked or to be locked out at the end of the pay period, **you're strongly encouraged to enter time on the same day that it is worked.**

12. When you're finished entering your time worked for the **ENTIRE** pay period, check the box near the bottom of the appropriate timesheet that says, "**Do Not Check Until End of Pay Period When Timesheet is Completed. Checking this box becomes your electronic signature acknowledging your submitted time is accurate and ready for supervisor approval.**" This box is shown circled below.

**IMPORTANT! DO NOT** check this box until the end of the pay period when your timesheet is fully completed and ready for supervisor approval. If you prematurely check this box, you'll no longer have access to your timesheet and will need to contact your supervisor or the Personnel Office (x2122).



The image shows a screenshot of a web-based timesheet form. At the top, it displays the date '09/15/11 Thursday'. Below this is a section for 'Additional Time(Prior Period)' with a small icon. The main body of the form contains the text: 'Do Not Check Until End Of Pay Period When Timesheet is Completed. Checking this box becomes your electronic signature acknowledging your submitted time as accurate and ready for supervisor approval'. A small square checkbox is located at the end of this text and is circled in red. Below this section, there are fields for 'Supervisor Decision' (containing 'Pending Approval'), 'Supervisor Comments', and 'Supervisor's E-mail Address' (containing 'myle@msnmoahcollege.edu'). At the bottom of the form is a 'SUBMIT' button.

13. Click **Submit**. Your timesheet is now available to your immediate supervisor for his or her approval.

**IMPORTANT!** Submission deadlines: **Final submission of your timesheet(s) must be completed by no later than two days following the end of a pay period.** For the semi-monthly pay period ending on the 15th of the calendar month, time entry must be completed on or before the 17th of the month. For the semi-monthly pay period ending the last day of the month, time entry must be completed by the 2nd of the following calendar month. Upon lapse of these deadlines, students will be locked out and will no longer be able to make entries on the timesheet for the corresponding payroll.

## Planning for Tutoring Sessions

As a subject area tutor, the more prepared you are for your sessions, the better your sessions will go. How do you prepare for a session? Where can you possibly begin if you are unsure what questions a student will bring to your session? How does planning differ for a regular private appointment versus drop-in sessions? The goal of this portion of the Tutor Handbook is to provide you with some basic planning tools and worksheets which will be expanded upon in training.

Planning begins with some basic set-up, and by preparing your expectations. In order to plan your sessions well, it will help to complete the following checklist at the start of the semester:

- Visit with the Coordinator of Student Success & Accessibility Services to review last year's reports for your subject area.
  - a. Which courses had the most students come to tutoring?
  - b. Who is teaching those courses this year?
- Get a copy of the text book for the entry level courses in your subject area.
  - a. The text can be stored in the ACE for your use during tutoring sessions. Any other courses which tend to have a large number of students should also have textbooks available there, so be sure to request these as well from the Director of SSAS.
- Set-up a monthly meeting time with your department's faculty or faculty representative.
  - a. Meeting with faculty on a regular basis can be very valuable. It will help you know what to expect with regards to drop-in tutoring (plus, you are required to do this as part of your job).
  - b. In your first meeting with faculty members, ask for copies of their syllabi to keep on hand. Being able to follow along with the course calendars and having a general outline of the professor's expectations will help you assist your students in a more effective manner.

During the academic year, you can plan for drop-in sessions by completing the following checklists:

- Be a few minutes early to all tutoring sessions so you have a few minutes to pull out any materials you may need, glance over a syllabus, and review your notes from a certain course.
- Make a quick list of topics you remember as difficult when you were in those courses. This will help you to anticipate questions the students may bring in with them.
- Set a goal for that tutoring session. This goal should be focused on you as a tutor (as you are unable to predict what students will come, if any, or what questions they will bring).
  - Goals should be SMART goals: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely. Example goals could be:

- During my session, I will check my student understands by using a method other than asking him/her “Do you understand?”
- By the end of tonight’s drop-in session, I will have asked my student at least 5 higher-order questions, and no more than 2 yes or no questions.
- If no one attends my session, I will spend at least 15 minutes working on marketing my services including creating a new flyer to give to the departmental faculty the next time we meet.

Do a quick mental checklist of skills discussed in training that you might use for the session.

- Remind yourself that students may not be as prepared as you would like, or may have unrealistic expectations for how the tutoring session will go.
- Remember that students taking the initiative to come to tutoring is a good first step in getting help, and be sure to be positive and encouraging with students even if they need some gentle reminders about expectations for a tutoring session.

While it is good to plan as much as possible with regards to content, this can be difficult to do with drop-in sessions. However, the better your tutoring preparation is, the better you will be with assisting your students. And, if you are continually setting, and meeting goals to improve yourself as a tutor, you will be helping the students that attend even more.

If you’re lucky enough to work with the same students over the course of a semester or year, your planning can focus more on content area and student-centered goals. In planning for these sessions, you should work closely with the student to develop learning goals appropriate for him or her. SMART goals should be used to help assure progress is made at each session. The first session of the semester can be started by developing goals for that session, which can then be evaluated as part of the session’s conclusion, while also developing goals for the next meeting.

Regardless if you are planning for an unexpected drop-in appointment, or for your tenth meeting with a student in a semester, taking the necessary steps to do so is important in order to achieve a successful tutoring session. Planning helps to ensure both you and your student’s time are used wisely, and will help minimize any bumps in the road during your tutoring sessions.

## ***Tutor Observations***

As part of your evaluation as a tutor, and as part of quality assurance with regards to the subject area tutoring program, you will be observed while tutoring. The number of these visits is variable, but you can expect the Coordinator of SSAS to observe your tutoring throughout the semester. Observations may take place during drop-in tutoring. You will not know when the Coordinator is coming to observe you.

Observations serve multiple purposes. First, it helps to assure students that they are attending a quality tutoring session if they know their tutors are undergoing continual training. Second, tutors gain more confidence and work more effectively with students when they receive both positive feedback and constructive criticism. Faculty buy-in is increased when tutors are observed on a regular basis. Problems with students and tutors alike can either be avoided or quickly resolved when regular observations are occurring.

Observations are a crucial part of a successful tutoring program and should be viewed as an opportunity for development. Observations are in no way meant to make tutors feel pressure to perform at a certain standard, but rather to help tutors perform their job to the best of their ability by receiving immediate, personal feedback.

## **Important Phone Numbers**

Amy Warrington, Coordinator of Student Success & Accessibility Services, Hewes  
Library..... (309)457-2257  
Facilities.....(309)457-3333  
Security..... (309) 337-5708

## Being the Best Tutor You Can Be

Tutoring can be challenging and stressful but is one of the most rewarding jobs available on campus.

Tutors at Monmouth College become much more to a student than simply a content area helper. Tutors grow to be mentors, role models, facilitators of learning, study skill helpers, and more. Tutors are expected to embrace their role as a leader on campus and to provide the best services possible to all students.

Scholar Jack Truschel discussed the *six habits of highly effective tutors*:

1. **Be proactive**
2. **Assess** the student
3. **Work** with tutees as a partners in their own learning
4. **Model** appropriate behavior
5. **Match** learning styles with tutor styles
6. **Communicate** Effectively

Training and practice will help you learn the skills to achieve these six effective habits, and you are expected to strive for achievement of these habits at all times.

*What behaviors should a tutor avoid?* The University of Queensland has provided the following habits which bad tutors engage in:

1. Wasting a student's time (by arriving late, leaving early, or not devoting full attention to the student)
2. Arriving unprepared
3. Lacking basic knowledgeable about their content area
4. Appearing bored and disinterested
5. Providing only correct answers without helping a student to explore the process of achieving the correct answer, and helping the student to analyze and learn from mistakes
6. Trying to conceal their ignorance

Monmouth College tutors are expected to avoid these behaviors. Please remember you are not expected to be an expert in your subject area, so it always acceptable to admit that you do not know an answer, and to help the student to work through the problem or refer them to more appropriate resources as necessary. The SSAS Coordinator is always available to address any concerns that may arise and provide you with the support you need to do your job efficiently and effectively.