The TSU Student’s Guide to Being an Effective Tutor/Mentor

* **Be on time.** 
  + When a student is expecting you to be there, don’t let them down. You might be the only person in their life that doesn’t.
* **Be consistent.**
  + Consistency is where trust is built. The student needs to be able to depend on you to be a reliable source of support and guidance in order for the mentorship to be effective. When you are consistent in spending time with your student you are sending them the message that they are worth caring about.
* **Devote at least one hour a week.**
* **Be completely focused on the student.** 
  + Allow no distractions during your time as a tutor/mentor. This includes keeping your cell phone put away at all times and focusing only on assisting students and not allowing this time to become a socializing experience for you.
* **Maintain a sense of professionalism.** 
  + Information about your personal life should be shared in a limited way and should revolve mostly around your life as a student. Of course, it’s fine to talk about where you grew up, how many siblings you have, how you occupy your free time – information that can establish where you and your learner have things in common. But conversations that delve more deeply into your personal life are not appropriate.

* **Lead by example**
  + By becoming a mentor, you’ve already modeled the most important thing a human being can do: care about another.
  + Set the example of accepting defeat with grace and strength.
  + Let your mentee see you go out of the way to help someone else.
* **Be *authentically* engaged.** 
  + Rolling eyes, folded arms, yawns, watching the clock, etc… send a message to the students that you don’t want to be there.
  + Be the adult in your mentee’s life that is just there for them, with out having to “fix” them. They will respond to you better if you converse with them, not force them to listen. Be supportive, and give advice at due times, but be yourself. Everyone enjoys the relationship more that way. Youth pick up quickly when people are not being real.
  + Avoid inappropriate, excessive, or false praise. Steer clear of telling students their work is worthy of an “A.” If they do not get the A they will be sorely disappointed and a strain in trust will be created between you and the mentee.
* **Treat the Student with respect**
  + Like everyone else, students prefer to be treated with respect. They will find it difficult to benefit from your knowledge if it is overshadowed by a condescending or otherwise negative attitude. Students will respond with cooperation when their tutors have an authentic desire coupled with a positive attitude towards their endeavors.
* **Be patient**
  + Help them to believe that they can succeed academically if they are deeply struggling. It may take a lot of patience on your part, but often the first step for these students is realizing that “they can.” Overcoming self-esteem issues and self-defeatist attitudes are strides in the right direction to improvement.
* **Keep a positive attitude at all times and promote an alcohol and drug free lifestyle.**
* **Be a resource**
  + Never simply provide correct answers, but assist students in becoming independent and confident while taking responsibility for their own learning.
  + Remember that you are a resource, not a person with all the answers. Assist them in asking and answering their own questions, processing and organizing new information, and learning new techniques to add and fine-tune their study skills. This will allow students to appreciate their personal responsibility in the learning process and attain ownership over their work. Empowering these youth to be independent is the most valuable tool you can give them.
* **Go through orientation with the community partner of your choice.**

Guidelines for TSU tutor/mentors have been adapted from SCALES tutor training manual, Los Angeles Youth Mentoring Connection, and the Tutor Handbook and Survival Guide from the Tutoring and Testing Center / Academic Support Center of Heartland Community College