



The Writing Center
University of Maryland
1205 Tawes Hall
College Park, MD 20742
(301) 405-3785

WRITING CENTER TUTORS' CODE OF PROFESSIONALISM

RESPONSIBILITY: Completing tasks punctually and to the best of your ability helps keep our office running smoothly.

- Be sure to call in ahead of time if you're sick and need to stay home or if you're caught in traffic. Otherwise, manage your time efficiently and be at work when you are scheduled, especially during busy times of the semester.
- Budget time realistically during sessions, and prioritize according to the client's needs and time allotted.
- Complete all paperwork fully, legibly, and on time to make Louise's and the receptionists' jobs much easier.

RESPECT: Tutors are responsible for the professional appearance of the Center—even during downtime. For example, always dress appropriately and engage in acceptable workplace behavior.

- An awareness of each others' needs fosters a positive work environment. To promote this environment, minimize distractions to yourself and others (e.g. turn off your cell phone and hold all conversations at a moderate level).
- Clients deserve the benefit of your attention. Greeting them promptly and courteously is important, as is being engaged and patient for the entire session.
- Clients have the right to their opinions, even if you disagree. It is always appropriate to ask questions to explore all sides of a topic or to encourage further research, but do so diplomatically.
- We all want to work in a comfortable and professional environment. Take responsibility for keeping the Writing Center tidy, and be careful about what you say regarding teachers, other tutors, or student writers.

ACCOUNTABILITY: Part of tutoring ethically involves avoiding the editor or teacher role and placing accountability in the client's hands.

- If you aren't sure of an answer, you can look it up or ask someone. We have the benefit of computers, books, worksheets, and each other.
- Since we are not accountable for students' grades, if a student presses you to judge a paper or estimate a grade, explain that you're not familiar with everything the professor might consider (e.g. information from previous assignments, oral directions, etc.).

POSITIVITY: Tutors should foster an environment where clients feel empowered to become better writers.

- Establishing a positive tone for working together begins with the first smile and greeting, as does making an effort to pronounce names correctly and remembering repeat clients.
- To encourage clients to take ownership of their projects, express sincere interest in and curiosity about their topics.
- Listen and empathize with a student's concerns, but be careful not to criticize assignments, professors, or their grading.
- While constructive criticism gives clients a handle on what they need to work on, specific encouragement reassures them of their strengths. It is important to point out where things are working well in a client's writing.

**I affirm that I have read the Writing Center Code of Professionalism carefully, and I promise to abide by it.*

Student Name (Printed)

Student Signature

Date