

CIEP Tutor Guidelines

Below are basic guidelines for tutors who work with Culture and Intensive English Program (CIEP) students. For further information, contact the CIEP Curriculum & Assessment Coordinator or the CIEP Director.

1. Work with the classroom teacher.

It is essential for the tutor to communicate with the classroom teacher to learn about specific student needs. The tutor can ask for more information and additional materials to help the CIEP student.

2. Get a copy of the Student Learning Outcomes.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are established learning outcomes for every class and level in the CIEP. These lists are the established expectations of student performance. When you have the SLOs, you can see what students should (and should not) be able to achieve at their level.

3. Don't "fix" the student's work.

This is a hard one to do. It's essential that you don't make the student's work correct. Then it no longer is their work; it's yours. When you see errors in student work, you should guide them to the correct answer. Point out an error and give corrective feedback. Ask students to say the sentence out loud. You can also say it correctly yourself, and see if the student picks up on your language. Try to lead students to the correct answer. Give students time to process and come up with the correct answer (5-10 seconds). Focus on making corrections to the skills or tasks in the lesson. For example, if the assignment is to practice simple present verb forms, only focus on this grammar point. If the assignment is to write a reflection, focus more on supporting the ideas effectively.

Do not try to fix everything. Teachers don't expect perfect work. It's most important to give positive feedback; point out when a student has done something correctly or accurately.

4. Assess learning as you go.

There are so many ways to assess and evaluate students' learning without grading them. Formative assessment is the term for evaluating progress (not mastery of instruction, which is summative assessment). To assess formatively, here are some suggestions: Ask "What is this? What are 2/3/4 things that I just said? What does this mean again?" etc. These questions check understanding and see if students have grasped your instruction.

5. Meet in a visible location on campus.

We hope you have a great experience tutoring. However, this is a professional (not social) opportunity for both the tutor and students. Select a public location on UNI campus to meet, and stick to a planned time. The CIEP Library (BAR 3024) or CIEP/ESL Collection at the Rod Library are great spaces to work with CIEP students. Check the availability of these rooms with the CIEP office or Rod Library.

6. Observe cross-cultural expectations and customs.

Be knowledgeable of the cross-cultural differences between you and your students. Observe and follow the expectations of CIEP students in regards to gender, touching, etc. This may not be a concern at all, but take each student as a case-by-case basis and know the customs that operate in the background.

7. Speak and write at the student's level.

Of course, you shouldn't talk down to students or be condescending, but you're going to have to limit your language. You should use language at a level of difficulty that the students can understand. This is where the SLOs can help you. For example, if you are tutoring a level 2 student, you should speak and write in simple sentences, using simple present or past tense verbs. Use basic vocabulary. Repeat and rephrase your words, but be consistent in the words in your directions. You may have to rely on images, gestures, and facial expressions, especially at lower levels. Don't use idioms, expressions, or slang.

8. Take advantage of the CIEP Library.

Use any of the textbooks in the CIEP Library to support your instruction. You may make copies or create material from the textbooks. You are free to take books from the CIEP Library, as long as you return them. One good resource is the reference, *Pace Yourself: A Handbook for ESL Tutors*.

9. Don't hesitate to ask for help!

Members of the CIEP, both instructors and staff, are happy to help. We always have time to give you suggestions or point you in the right direction.