



Upward Scholars

BAY AREA

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Sequoia Adult School Scholars

Empowering low-income adults to prosper through education

Upward Scholars Tutoring Guidelines

The Upward Scholars tutoring program is a volunteer initiative that helps students succeed in their community college classes. Below are some general guidelines about how the program works and how to maximize your effectiveness as a tutor.

Focus of sessions: We set up the Upward Scholars tutoring program to help recipients be more successful academically. Thus, at least initially, the focus of your sessions will most likely be working on students' homework, reviewing past exams, etc. As your student gets to know you better, that could change. For example, you might help your student apply for a job online, practice a conversation she wants to have with her boss, etc. That's fine! How you spend your time is totally up to you and your student.

Communicating with your student: At the first session make sure to confirm both your student's email address and cell phone number. Then, ask your student how she prefers to communicate: email, text or phone call. Also, make sure your student has your email address and cell phone number so she can contact you if she's going to be late, needs to cancel, etc.

Scheduling sessions: Students' schedules are often inflexible due to work, parenting responsibilities, etc. You may want to find out your student's schedule at the first session so, if you have to cancel, you can think ahead about an alternative time you both can meet. Also, if you're going to be gone for several weeks, please contact our coordinator, Tania Ventura, at taniaventuraper@my.smccd.edu so she can arrange for a substitute.

Reminding students about upcoming sessions: Students' lives are packed and sometimes unpredictable. Thus, you may want to send your student a reminder email or text the day before you're scheduled to meet, at least for the first few sessions. You may also want to do this if you're planning to meet at a different time than you usually meet.

Length of sessions: Again this is up to you. An hour is usually a good place to start, but most sessions end up being about ninety minutes.

Where to meet: Most tutors meet with their students at either the Menlo Park or Redwood City library, but you're welcome to meet at any location that's convenient for you both.



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Online resources: Make sure your student knows about these on-line resources.

Google Translate: Best if available from the home screen.

Word Reference: An excellent bi-lingual dictionary. It's an app. and it's free.

Materials: If you find that your student needs extra help with a particular topic (e.g. more grammar practice, more reading comprehension) let us know and we can try to recommend appropriate texts. If we don't have a copy to lend you, you can purchase the book on Amazon and Upward Scholars can reimburse you.

Counseling: Upward Scholars recipients have access to a transition advisor, Melissa Martinez, who helps them register for classes, complete financial aid forms, etc. While Melissa is an invaluable resource, she is not a certified college counselor. If your student has questions about possible career paths, degree requirements, etc. she can make an appointment with the ESL college counselor by calling 650 306-3447.

Struggling students: If, after working with your student, you find that her class is too advanced (and she's not learning as a result), please let me know. Tania or I can talk to the student about possibly dropping the class. (Note that a student can only drop a class during the first two thirds of the semester.) Ideally you would continue to work with your student after she has dropped their class. The following semester, the student could sign up for a more appropriate class.

Mentoring/Resources: While your primary role is as a tutor, you're also, by definition, a mentor. Part of this means telling your student about available resources. Here are a few you may want to mention to your student, if she doesn't know about them already:

- **Tutoring at Cañada's Learning Center:** Tutors are available at the Canada Learning Center. These tutors are all students, and the quality of their instruction seems to vary greatly. Still, they're definitely a useful supplementary resource so please encourage your students to take advantage of them.
- **Laptops** Upward Scholars has laptops available for recipients who need them. If a student needs a laptop, she should contact Tania. While we may not be able to get the student a laptop immediately, we usually can find a working one within a month. Students also can go to the Learning Center to borrow a laptop.
- **Low cost Internet:** If your student has school-age children, she probably can qualify for a low-cost Internet (\$10 a month) service. See <http://www.internetessentials.com/>



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- **Online access to grades, financial aid records, etc:** Students should know how to access their grades, outstanding balances, and financial aid records online using WebSmart
[file:///localhost/\(https%3A%2F%2Fwebsmart.smccd.edu%3A443%2F\)](file:///localhost/(https%3A%2F%2Fwebsmart.smccd.edu%3A443%2F)). If your student doesn't know how to do this, and the two of you can't figure it out together, let Tania know and she can explain.