Tutors’ Guide to eTutoring

2009

A quick-reference resource to introduce new eTutors to the eTutoring platform and to help walk them through the training documents and the online training process.

An eTutor’s Resource Guide

Revised 5 May 2009 by Scott Perkins
Introduction

Greetings and welcome to eTutoring!

If you are reading this, you have been selected for eTutor training! You were chosen because you have the skill sets we feel are necessary to provide the same top-notch tutoring online as your school offers in the on-campus tutoring center! This guide was written specifically for new eTutors to help you through your first few weeks of the training process plus familiarizing you with the eTutoring platform.

Tutors for these subjects are drawn from a pool of peer tutors and paraprofessionals provided and trained to the meticulous standards of the Northwest eTutoring Consortium, the newest iteration of the celebrated Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium.

This guide is specifically geared toward illustrating what the students will see when they use the eTutoring platform to better aid you in talking to students about this program.

![eTutoring Platform Screenshot]

Welcome to eTutoring.org: A Collaborative Online Tutoring Program & Platform

Thursday April 02, 2009

New and Returning Students

If you are a student attending one of our participating institutions, you may have access to online tutoring services, delivered via a dynamic user-friendly tutoring platform. If you are currently registered for courses or are matriculated with one of these institutions, start the login process by clicking on the arrow button to the right.

As a participant in eTutoring, you could have access to:

- **Our Online Writing Lab** where you can submit a draft of your paper to a tutor, ask for specific feedback, and receive your work back with a tutor’s response within 24-48 hours.
  - *Note:* Our eTutors will not edit, correct, or rewrite your paper but will help you improve your work and writing skills.

- **Live Tutoring** where you can meet with a tutor in one-on-one tutoring sessions via a fully interactive, virtual online environment.

- **Online Questions** where you can leave a specific question for an eTutor who will respond within 48 hours.

- **Get tutoring help online wherever and whenever you need it.**
  - **Our Writing Center** or **our online writing center** if you are tight on time. Connect live with a tutor in a virtual room.

- **Enhance your Writing Center** by connecting to an online community of writing tutors. Offer additional hours and resources to your students.

- **Increase the number of subjects tutored** and the hours of service provided to your students. Connect with other institutions to collaboratively deliver online tutoring support.

- **Share the combined expertise and tutoring resources within your system or consortium.** Provide your schools with a viable, collaborative online tutoring program.
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Author of this document. Please send your questions, comments, anecdotes and especially your suggestions to make future editions better suit our ever-changing needs.
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A Snapshot

In 2008, the Northwest eTutoring Consortium in association of Washington community colleges, Washington State University (along with several of their branch campuses) and the award-winning Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium (CTDLC) united to create an online tutoring environment where students can get help with their studies from home or other locations on campus. This is a new West Coast iteration of the existing CTLDC program, which has been in operation since 1996 and won the 2007 “WOW Award” from the Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications.

Northwest eTutoring Consortium member schools provide member schools provide online tutors for the program, who interact with students electronically with the tools provided by the eTutoring platform. All member schools contribute to the pool of tutors and resources to provide the widest possible coverage for live tutoring via the web. Students can access accounts set up for them by their school by following the link provided to them (www.etutoring.org) and access a wider selection of tutoring during off-hours than any one school could afford to provide on their own. Tutees can submit questions via the web anytime and even submit their papers online for tutor review. The site promises that we will respond within 24-48 hours.

eTutoring.org utilizes a unique synchronous communication tool powered by Adobe/ Macromedia Breeze™ allowing students and tutors to interact via chat, whiteboard, and share files via a stable web connection. The site features “an online Question Queue where students can submit new questions and review their previous postings; an Online Writing Lab where students request help with written assignments by submitting their work along with a questionnaire about what areas need addressing (all correspondence is archived, including a document revision history); and an Online Resource Center where students & tutors review an extensive resource library that is full of links, tips, and techniques for improved writing skills.”

eTutoring Services are offered in as wide an array of subjects as we can find tutors to provide. Tutors are sought and offer tutoring for: Anatomy & Physiology, Accounting, Biology, Calculus, Chemistry, Computer Use, Math, Spanish, Statistics, and Writing. All tutoring takes place online via one of the following three portions of the eTutoring site:

- **Online Writing Lab** allows students to submit a draft of your paper to a tutor, ask for specific feedback, and receive their work back with a tutor’s response within 24-48 hours.
- **Live Tutoring via eChat** allows students to meet with a tutor from one of the member schools in one-on-one tutoring sessions in a fully interactive, virtual online environment.
- **Offline Questions** allows students to leave a specific question for an eTutor even when no live tutors are available for eChat. They will receive a response within 48 hours (usually sooner).
eTutor Training Checklist

In order to begin, your local coordinator must contact the consortium coordinator and arrange the following:

- eTutoring.org tutor account specific to your subject specialties,
- Welcome email from the current NWEC Coordinator
- An internet connection and computer (and peripherals) suitable to the variety of tutoring you will be undertaking.

Once you have received your welcoming email (one sample can be found in the appendices), you will be guided to log into the system to begin your training. As part of your training you will need to:

- Log onto www.etutoring.org using the “Tutor2” username and password provided in the email,
- Explore the site,
- Go to the “Resources” page and enter the eTutor Training University,
- Complete every module of the training appropriate to your training specialty (synchronous and/or asynchronous) including all exercises and assignments,
- If your specialty has an assessment or assignment to submit to an eTutor trainer, complete and email it to your trainer in a timely manner,
- Wait for a response (up to a week, depending upon season and workloads),
- Correct and re-submit your sample or assessment if necessary,
- Upon successful completion of your training, contact the consortium coordinator via email with your schedule availability and any known possible scheduling conflicts.

Welcome to eTutoring!
**eTutor Training**

When you are selected for eTutoring, you will receive your username and password for the eTutoring system in an email similar to the one found in the appendices of this handbook. It will also include some general instructions on how to find your way through the training modules of the CTDLC eTutor Training Institute. This manual will serve as a supplementary guide to steer you through the process and make sure you find and complete all of the modules.

To get started, go to [www.etutoring.org](http://www.etutoring.org) and select “Login Now” to bring up the list of options for entry into the eTutoring.org website. The CTDLC is comprised of two consortiums (Northeast and Northwest) as well as a few individual member schools and the eTutor Training Consortium.

Before you leave the homepage, take a quick look around. This page bears some general information about eTutoring (which you are encouraged to read), outlining the offerings of the eTutoring platform (eWriting Lab, eQuestions, etcetera) and the names of the consortiums and schools that are using the platform for online tutoring. It’s good information to have, if only to understand the full scope of the undertaking.

For your initial training, you need to log into the training area. On subsequent visits, you will select our consortium and choose your school from the dropdown list which appears (above). **For the purposes of training**, you will enter the “CTDLC eTutor Training Institute” as shown below.
Clicking on CTDLC eTutor Training Institute will bring you to the login page. To log into the training institute and begin your training, please select your User Type (“Tutor”) and then log in using the following information:

Username: tutor2
Password: password

NOTE: Passwords are not case-sensitive for this website. However, please note that **if you do not click the correct user type (tutor), you won’t get in.** Also, there is no space between “tutor” and the number “2”. When you click on the “Sign In” button, you will be taken to the main screen of the Training Institute.

This will take you to a sample Tutor Homepage.

The portion of this handbook titled “eTutor Orientation” will show you the homepage and walk you through each of the functions and pages accessible from here. The information is setup as a “reference guide” organized to help you with each specific page and how to navigate the functions found there.

Take some time before you dive into your training to explore the site, familiarize yourself with the controls available to you, add some of your favorite web resources to the “Resources” page and get comfortable with the site. This familiarity cannot help but improve the quality of your training as you will have in your mind the context you will be operating within once you have reached the point where you are interacting with actual students.
**NOTE:** In order to complete your training and fully utilize many parts of the site, you will have to turn off or otherwise disable any “Popup Blockers” you might have installed on your computer.

Nothing you do within the confines of the training environment of the TestTutor2 account will reach real students, so if you need to experiment, even later, this is a great place to come for that. Each page has a brief explanatory paragraph at the top explaining the page. This handbook acts to expand upon and unfold more fully these nuggets of information.

When you are ready to begin the training program, click on one of the “Resources” links and then click on the tiny blue text that reads “eTutoring University: Online Training for eTutors” to commence your training.
eTutoring University
The eTutoring University is an online classroom designed to walk you through several stages of training to familiarize you with the standards and practices of your eTutoring consortium and the CTDLC as a whole. Consistency and quality are the backbone of any tutoring program, so be sure to read each portion of the University thoroughly and complete any exercises before progressing on to the next stage.

The “University” training classroom is navigated through the menu visible on the left side of the page.

English/Writing tutors will additionally be required to create a sample eTutoring interaction on a paper that will be provided in the course of your training (also found in the appendices of this handbook) and submit it to the eTutoring Consortium trainer for your subject by email or posting on the consortium’s Blackboard classroom bulletin board provided for that purpose.

Other tutors may similarly be required to undertake a test or sample interaction to prove their facility with the subject matter and eTutoring site tools either by their institution or the consortium. These requirements will be made known to you as part of your orientation.

Each portion of the classroom will be addressed here in a general fashion to give you an outline of the path you will follow for your eTutor training to make sure you do not miss or rush through any portion of the training.

PLEASE NOTE
(an impassioned plea from your coordinators)
No matter how long you have been tutoring – even if it was in another online environment – do not push past or through any section of your training “because you’ve been doing this long enough not to need it.”

Some of it may seem redundant, but each piece of the eTutoring standards & practices serve a very specific function and purpose. The introductory comments on a paper you are reviewing are there to provide context and a look ahead and look back to cement the concepts you addressed in the embedded comments. Making embedded comments boldface and placing them within brackets rather than using a different color of text or italics or some other formatting trick is to make all comments stand out from the students’ text and make certain it is visible on any monitor or regardless of the availability of a color printer.

There are similar (though often less format specific) guidelines for every aspect of eTutoring. Nothing present in the training is there for no reason and even if it’s a concept or practice you are already familiar with there’s nothing wrong with a refresher.

Please complete the training IN FULL before you begin tutoring students. Doing so will ensure that all students are consistently given the same quality and quantity of tutoring, no matter which eTutor is on the other end of the computer connection.

Thank you!
Writing Tutors

Your training will (mostly) take place in the section labeled “eWriting Labs Training Modules”.

- **“Getting Started”** - This module will further familiarize you with the site. Begin here if you have not already taken the recommended tour of the site through the “Test Tutor2” account or if you feel you need a refresher or a guided tour.

- **“The eTutoring Online Writing Lab: Our Practice”** - This section is focused on the specific ins and outs of the eWriting Lab and what is expected of you and what you can expect during student interactions.

- **“The eTutoring Online Writing Lab: The Platform”** – This section is devoted to the technology you will be utilizing in your student interactions. The two sections will guide you on how to view the two key sections of the site that English/Writing eTutors utilize in each of their sessions: The eWriting Lab and eQuestions.

Begin by clicking on the section highlighted in the screenshot above: “eTutorings OWL: Standards of Practice and Formatting Guidelines.” This will take you to yet another menu, laying out the path through training for those eTutors who will be utilizing the eWriting Lab.
As previously mentioned, you must disable your popup blocker to allow the eTutoring.org site to create “Pop Ups” in order to use it. If you don’t know how to do this, consult with your institution’s IT department for instructions specific to your web browser.

Each module will “pop up” in a new window (see screenshot at right) and will be navigated like a PowerPoint™ presentation or slideshow. Click the little ➔ button in the lower right corner of each screen to proceed to the next page. The next page will discuss the controls, which are similar to a stereo with ➔, ■ and ◄ buttons as well as “Exit” and “Menu” buttons and a constantly-updated progress meter to let you know how far you’ve come and give you some idea of how far you have yet to go in this module of your training.
Our eTutor trainer “Carolyn” (pictured above) will walk you through the different aspects of your training. In the text, additional links will be provided to underline and accent each portion of your training. These are in bright blue boldface text and underlined to offset them from the rest of the text in each pane of the module as you can see above.

The modules will take you through several scenarios and samples to cement in your mind what you can expect, how to fully-utilize the site and what will be expected of you as you begin eTutoring. This handbook isn’t designed to take you through every section in detail. Suffice to say that the training progresses in a linear fashion. Be sure that you complete each section (and all exercises) before proceeding to the next and there should not be any problems.

At the end of your training, you will be given an assignment to download, read and respond to a sample student submission (as shown above) and then submit it to your consortium via email or the consortium forum provided (see section regarding the NWEC Blackboard Classroom below). Click on the two links “Assignment Student Request” and “Assignment Student Essay” to download the assignments to your computer.

This is your dress rehearsal for eTutoring. Be certain to fully-utilize all aspects of your training in these sample interactions just as you will when you have a live student on the other end of the paper.
Once you have submitted your sample to Sarah Bergfeld, our Master Tutor, you will receive a review of your response and an evaluation from the trainer on what you need to improve and how to proceed. If something was missed, or if you forgot to do something, the trainer may recommend that you review sections of your training before proceeding to live interactions. If you have made full and accurate use of the Standards & Practices you learned during training (as I am sure you will) then you will be inserted into the schedule as an eTutor and begin eTutoring.

*Welcome to the team!*
Synchronous eTutors

Tutors who utilize the synchronous tutoring portions of the site (eChat), will conduct most of their training in the section labeled “Synchronous eTutor Training Modules”.

You will need to complete each part of this module to become fluent in all aspects of the eChat classrooms you will be using for live interactions with your students.

- **“Getting Started”** - This module will further familiarize you with this aspect of the site. Begin here if you have not already taken the recommended tour of the site through the “Test Tutor2” account or if you feel you need a refresher or a guided tour of the system.

- **“eChat (Breeze) System”** - eTutoring utilizes an Adobe program called Breeze™, which will launch in a new window. This program was originally designed as a basic interface for business, which has been pressed into service for live meetings with eTutors, so some of the quirks of the program must be recognized upfront to keep them from interfering with the tutoring interaction. More than just a review of the technology, however, this module will discuss how to handle multiple students, how to record sessions and how to best manage the online ‘classroom’ environment.

- **“eQuestions System”** – This section is devoted to how to best utilize the eQuestions system for the asynchronous aspect of your tutoring. Tutors in mathematics and the sciences especially will make use of the functions of the eQuestion system allowing you to upload images, graphs and other image files to the system to illustrate your answers to your students.
Once you have familiarized yourself with these sections of the site, either through the guided tour (recommended) or by exploring on your own in the Test Tutor2 account, you will begin your training by clicking on the first section under the “eChat (Breeze) System” heading. This will take you to yet another menu, laying out the path through training for those eTutors who will be utilizing the Breeze online classroom environment.

As previously mentioned, you must allow the site to create “Pop Ups” in your web browser in order to use it. If you don’t know how to do this, consult with your institution’s IT department for instructions specific to your web browser.

Each module will “pop up” in a new window (see screenshot at right) and will be navigated like a PowerPoint™ presentation or slideshow. Click the little ▶ button in the lower right corner of each screen to proceed to the next page. The next page will discuss the controls, which are similar to a stereo with ▶, ■ and ◀ buttons as well as “Exit” and “Menu” buttons and a constantly-updated progress meter to let you know how far you’ve come and give you some idea of how far you have yet to go in this module of your training.
Our eTutor trainer “Carolyn” (pictured above) will walk you through the different aspects of your training.

The modules will take you through all of the myriad functions of the eChat environment. As you progress through each module (in order, please) you will be presented with scenarios and examples to cement in your mind what you can expect, how to fully-utilize the site (including audio & video where available!) and what will be expected of you as you begin eTutoring.

This handbook isn’t designed take you through every section in intricate detail. A broad overview of this module is available in the section titled “eTutors Using eChat” in the reference section of this. Suffice to say that the training progresses in a linear fashion and you should not skip any part of it. Be sure that you complete each section (and all exercises) before proceeding to the next and there should not be any problems.
At the end of your training in this program, there isn’t a sample to download and interact with. Each tutoring section has developed (or is developing) methods of evaluating a tutor’s readiness to begin eTutoring specific to their subject matter.

However, two computers can be logged into the Test Tutor2 account and if both enter the eChat classroom space, it is possible to interact and role-play as tutor and student. You are encouraged to do this as much as possible, using every aspect of the program that you just learned to better acquaint yourself not only with the tools available to you as a tutor, but also how things look from the student perspective.

This is your dress rehearsal for eTutoring. Be certain to take it seriously to more fully absorb all aspects of your training in these sample interactions just as you will when you have a live student on the other end of the ‘chat’.

**Welcome to the team!**
Online Training Resource Documents

The “Resources” portion of the training site will provide you with a categorized reference list of online documents and publications to refer back to whenever you have a question about what you have undertaken as part of your practice or training. The assignments and sample papers can be accessed here as well, should you need them.

Writing eTutors

- eTutoring Protocols
- Guiding Principles and Mission Statement
- Instructions-Online Writing Lab
- eQuestion Tutor Platform Procedure
- Effective Tutor-Student Interaction: Standards of Practice
- Guidelines for Writing Submissions
- Version Two
- Original Version
- Effective Writing Strategies
- eTutor Response Checklist
- Sample Response
- Step by Step Guidelines
- Assignment Student Essay
- Assignment Student Requests
- Assignment Student Essay

Assignment Student Requests
Online Training Resource Documents

- Standards of Practice
- Plagiarism

Synchronous eTutors

- eTutoring Protocols
- Guiding Principles and Mission Statement
- eChat Set Up and Sequence
- Synchronous Tutor Best Practices
eTutor Orientation:  
*The eTutoring.org Website*
A Brief Overview

This will be an outline and reference guide to each of the different pages of the eTutoring.org website that you will be using in the course of your time as an eTutor. The function of each page will be discussed on a slightly technical level and then how that page relates to your role as an eTutor and to your interactions with students via the site.

The eTutoring site is constantly being updated and customized as each school joins the consortia, so some of the minor functions discussed in the pages that follow might not be germane to your school. For instance: some schools maintain the student accounts and passwords on behalf of their student population, so information below related to updating or changing student profile information naturally would not apply to your school.

Likewise, the update and continued growth of eTutoring.org as a vibrant and ongoing enterprise relies upon an ongoing dialogue between tutors, coordinators and staff on what works, what does not, and how the site can be made better and easier to use. Always, the goal is to find the best way to facilitate the interaction between tutor and student without getting in the way.

If you have any comments or suggestions on any part of the site (or this handbook for that matter) please never hesitate to contact the people listed on the contact page at the front of this book. For problems specifically related to the technology or to the overall functionality of the website, there are contact points provided on the site to put you in touch with the CTDLC’s tech support division.

Welcome to eTutoring!
The eTutor Homepage

This home page screen below is nearly identical to the screen you will see when you eventually log into your own account to begin tutoring. This is the “Test Tutor” account, so some of the things showing will not appear on your personal homepage (q.v.: Only your actual specialties will appear).

NOTE: This screen is similar to the screen students see, but includes additional tools and information not available to the students you will be tutoring. It would behoove you to familiarize yourself with how things look from the student perspective as well so that you may better assist students in using the site.

Across the top of the screen, there are tabs labeled with the four key screens you will be using to interact with students: Home, eChat, eQuestions and the eWriting Lab. We will discuss each in synopsis form and then delve...
into the intricacies of each later. Not all tutors will use all portions of the site. English/Writing tutors, for instance will not use the eChat function as often as Math tutors.

On the far right of the page is an array of pertinent information including announcements, subjects you will be tutoring, support information, and tutor schedules for the day, plus links to view a week-at-a-glance schedules to assist you with long-range planning.

This page is the nexus of the eTutoring functions. You can maneuver through the site by either clicking on the tabs at the top of the screen (shown below) or on the individual icons shown in the center of the page. We will examine the pertinent sections of the page in a piecemeal fashion, the better to focus on their utility as a guide to the site.

The Tabs
The tabs appear at the top of the screen and act much as the tabs in most newer web browsers, allowing you to flip through several open screens without closing the previous one. These remain at the top of the frame in almost every screen except eChat, which opens in a new window using a program called Macromedia Breeze™ which will be discussed in depth in the eChat section of this manual.

- **Home**: Click this tab to get back to the main page.
- **eChat**: A regularly-scheduled Q&A session with one of our eTutors. This is the part of the site that happens ‘live’ and most closely resembles a face-to-face tutoring session, utilizing a ‘Whiteboard’ and messaging function to host a discussion. If you and/or the student have a webcam, microphone and speakers attached to your computer, you can even discuss problems using this tutoring environment. Though we are experimenting with live tutoring for Writing/English using this part of the site, for the moment, this is used mostly for Math, Calculus, Statistics, and Accounting questions.
- **eQuestions**: This is a place for students to post short-form questions for an eTutor to answer the next time they log in. Open to questions of any topic eTutoring covers (English, Writing, Math, Calculus, Statistics, Accounting, Anatomy & Physiology, etcetera). The eQuestion functions include the ability to insert arithmetical symbols and even upload illustrations by way of explaining concepts to your students.
- **eWriting Lab**: This is an online tutoring session where students can submit all or part of a paper for later review by an English/Writing eTutor. Covers all manner of grammar, academic style and notation concerns. eWriting is the oldest and currently the most-utilized portion of the site. Students may submit papers more than once, which makes it absolutely imperative that tutors in eWriting adhere to the format laid down by the consortium to maintain consistency for the students in terms of what they are hearing back from tutors and in what order the concerns are addressed and how.
- **Resources**: A repository of information relevant to subjects covered by the eTutors. This includes the ability to modify and personalize the resources available to suit a tutor, school or consortium’s specific needs. This feature is discussed in detail below.

Students additionally have a “Profile” tab on their screen, which takes them to the part of the program which allows them to update their account information, including passwords. Depending on their institution, some or all of this information may be managed by the institution on the students’ behalf.
Up by your name (“Test Tutor2” in this case) you will see additional links: Resources, Support and Logout as well as a “Print” icon.

- **Resources:** This will take you to the accumulated shared resources of the consortium on all of the subjects we provide tutoring for. This is more than just a series of shortcuts to the Purdue OWL (as we have had in the past) because a lot of the links shown will be user-generated. This part of the site can also be personalized by the eTutoring coordinators for each school if the tutors have favorite sites that are not shown, and those sites can be presented to addition to the resources page for the entire consortium! (NOTE: Please do not offer up Wikipedia or other ‘Wiki’ open-source reference sites for the reasons noted below)

- **Support:** This links you to a page maintained by the CTDLC’s tech support gurus. It includes contact information as well as tutorials, alerts, known issues and an FAQ among other things. If you encounter issues during your eTutoring session, this is the place to find answers or the people who can find them for you!

- **Logout:** Self-explanatory.

- **Print:** This icon will print the information currently on the screen.

**The Buttons**

At the center of the page are large friendly buttons. Though some of them will take you to the same spots as the tabs, this is more than a repetition of the information available from the tabs above. The buttons provide shortcuts to the archived submissions you have previously used in an easily-accessible format for your personal reference. As before, each of these will be discussed in some detail in their own sections.

From the top-left of the screen shown above:

- **New Student Questions:** When a new eQuestion is submitted by a student, it will appear here.

- **Student eQuestion Archive:** After you have answered an eQuestion, it will be moved to your archive, accessible here. It is often useful (and expedient) when a student’s question is among those most frequently asked to copy what you said to the previous student and then modify it to meet the specific needs of the current student.

- **Student eWriting Lab:** New papers submitted for review to the eWriting Lab.

- **eWriting Lab Archive:** Again, this is an archive of your past interactions with students so that you can go back and reflect on your previous responses in light of new questions and adapt and reuse them as appropriate. Acknowledging that there are questions and issues that come up again and again and being
willing to reuse past answers to the same questions and issues will help you maintain the high degree of tutoring expected of you without having to reinvent the wheel.

- **eChat:** Clicking “Enter Room” will take you into the eChat environment.
- **Resources:** This will take you to the accumulated shared resources of the consortium on all of the subjects we provide tutoring for. This is more than just a series of shortcuts to the Purdue OWL (as we have had in the past) because a lot of the links shown will be user-generated. This part of the site can also be personalized by the eTutors with their favorite sites. When you add sites to the list, you will be given the option to make the new site available to just tutors or also to students. You may also choose to restrict the link to your institution, or open it up to your consortium, or even to all consortial! (NOTE: Please use the latter option with discretion and please do not offer up Wikipedia or other ‘Wiki’ open-source reference sites for the reasons noted below)

The eQuestion and eWriting Lab buttons on the tutor page include a continually updated (in red) feature displaying the current length of the queue so you will know immediately upon entering the current volume of papers waiting for you to review them.

eTutoring.org promises students an average turnaround time of less-than 48 hours. This is an average predicated upon an average flow rate of papers submitted over the course of the year. The current rolling average over the most recent 72 hours is shown on the student version of this page (also in red) so it is imperative that we keep our turnaround time down in order to keep students confident in our ability to answer their papers in a timely manner.

**Web Search**

At the bottom of the Homepage eTutoring has provided fields for Google Search and Wikipedia. Most instructors specifically forbid their students from referencing Wikis due to the history of unreliability and bias that has historically been endemic to those sites. For this reason, tutors are actively discouraged from referring students to those sites in the course of their tutoring or to – at the very least – present such referrals with a healthy helping of salt. It is assumed that tutors know and understand the appropriate usage of this media, but these fields do not appear on the student version of this page.

**Announcements, Your Subjects & Your Schedule**

**Announcements:** The directors of the Consortium will periodically have updates, warnings, requests and announcements that they need to put in front of all tutors in the consortium. This information will generally be distributed to an email list as well as being posted in the “Announcements” section of the homepage. This will include calls for additional help to clear a backlog in the writing queue, notices on updates to the system and any attendant
outages, etcetera.

**Your Subjects:** This serves as a reminder of the subjects you are signed up to tutor for the consortium and also provides you with the opportunity to notice any discrepancies in your list before the students begin to queue up for Chemistry tutoring from an English tutor. Mistakes happen; this is your best chance to catch them.

(The list shown on the training homepage is obviously the renaissance tutor to end all renaissance tutors! Rest assured that most tutors do not offer this scope of subjects.)

**Your Schedule:** This field will fill in daily with the hours you are signed-up to work by way of reminding you what is expected of you. The links below it will take you to a calendar displaying an entire week at a time.

**My Resource Favorites:** This link takes you to your list of “Favorite” resources as you have selected or created in the resources module detailed below.

**Tutor Discussion Board:** The Tutor Discussion Board is a forum for tutors and coordinators to discuss matters germane to eTutoring, swap tutoring shifts and generally further the missions of the consortiums. Each consortium has a forum for issues specific to their corner of the eTutoring.org world.
The eTutor Resources Page

The resources page was created to share the accumulated resources of the Internet consortium on all of the subjects for which we provide tutoring.

This is more than just a series of shortcuts to the various portions of a single reference site such as the famed Purdue OWL (though they are certainly linked here for good reason) because a lot of the links shown are (and will be) user-generated in the sense that the links listed are recommended by the eTutors. (NOTE: Please thoroughly vet the site to the best of your ability before recommending it and do not offer up Wikipedia or other ‘Wiki’ style open-source sites.)

This part of the site can be personalized by the coordinators for their individual institution, the entire consortium and even for all of the consortia! You will note in the screenshot above that there aren’t resources available for every subject. In part, this is owing to the fact that those subjects were relatively new options for us at the time the screenshot was generated.
Every page of the eTutoring site is created with usability and the ease of access for tutors and students foremost in mind. This page more than any other illustrates the degree to which eTutor input and feedback helps craft and hone the eTutoring.org site over the long term.

“Add a (Personal) Site”

If you click on any one of the broad categories listed, you will be taken to a screen listing only links pertinent to that subject. Beside each resource, you will note that the person originating the link is given credit for finding it and the last time that link was added or updated.

**To Add a New Resource Link**

Test Tutor2 wants to link to a site called “Dave’s Math Tables”, because she finds the site to be handy when trying to quickly locate the perfect examples and graphics to illustrate a problem for answering an eQuestion or referencing during eChat sessions.

1. She checks to verify that no one else has already provided a link to the site under another heading.
2. She decides that – because Dave’s provides information germane to a broad cross-section of math-related problems – that “Math Web Links” is the best topic under which to file her link. So
she clicks on that heading to bring up the attendant list of links.

3. Test Tutor2 then clicks “Add New Resource For Math Web Links” in the upper right corner of the page to bring up the page to better craft a link and the attendant information that will help your fellow tutors (or students) to decide how to use it and whether or not it will cough up the information they are seeking.

The more information she provides, the better her peers will be able to decide at a glance whether her new resource is the one they are looking for. The rich text editor allows a great deal of latitude in creating the description of the new site. Below the text box she will need to select whether this is “Tutor Content” or “Student Content” which determines whether the link
will appear in the student version of the resources page. She must also decide whether it will be only for her institution, the entire Northwest Consortium, or if this is a tragic oversight by all of the eTutoring consortia that they have not linked to “Dave’s Math Tables” and she needs to rectify this oversight. Naturally, the latter option needs to be used with the utmost discretion.

4. Once she clicks “Save This Resource” at the bottom of the page, she will be taken back to the list under the topic “Math Web Links” with her new link now present on the list.

If Test Tutor2 had not found an appropriate topic to file her new resource under, she would have to create one. Doing so is simple. If she wanted to link to a website of Mnemonic devices designed to help Anatomy students remember key element of their course of study, she might want to create a special topic to hold those websites.

Under the correct heading (in this case, Anatomy & Physiology), she would click on the blue link labeled “Add New Main Topic For Anatomy and Physiology” and fill in the blank on the following screen as shown above.
Once she has done this and clicked “Save this Topic”, the new topic will appear on the list and she can then go in and create as many resources under that topic as she deems necessary by following the steps outlined previously.

“My Favorites”
Each resource you find or create in the eTutor resources section will give you the option of adding to your “Favorites” list. This list is accessed by clicking on the blue text in the upper right corner of the main Resources page.

Your “Favorites” page will list only those resources you have deemed useful to your tutoring and flagged. This should make returning to them time and again in the heat of the tutoring session faster because you won’t have to search for them.
The eWriting Lab

The eTutor’s Perspective

Writing eTutors interact with students primarily through the “eWriting Lab” portion of the eTutoring.org website. The eWriting Lab is an asynchronous system, meaning that students submit papers and then have to wait for a writing tutor to view and respond. For this reason alone it is imperative that we keep our promise of responding to papers within the 48 hour timeframe. Students are always waiting.

Step One: Entering the Queue & Selecting a Paper

Student papers are selected from the eWriting Lab’s queue to be responded to in the order in which they have arrived. Below is a sample shot of the writing queue similar to what the writing tutor will see each time he or she logs into the system for a tutoring session.

To select a student to tutor, simply use your mouse to click on the title of the paper.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Once a paper is selected by a tutor, it “belongs” to that tutor and is shifted from the queue into the tutor’s archive where it will remain until it has been completed. Tutors must finish every
paper that is opened by them! At this point only our consortium eTutoring Coordinator or CTDLC Support staff can return it to the queue.

**NOTE: If you click, it’s yours.**

When you select a paper from the queue, a new screen will open to tell you more about the paper you have selected (subject, assignment parameters, style, etcetera) as shown in the sample screen shown below.

To continue tutoring, click the link to the uploaded document found under “Submitted Writing Assignment Files” at the bottom of the screenshot above. When you click on the title, your web
The browser will display a popup window similar to the one pictured below which will prompt you to open or save the file to your computer.

Select “Save” and save the file to your computer before you begin. Most eTutors maintain a folder in their “My Documents” file specifically for eTutoring. Saving the document right away gives you a backup and reference copy of the file to refer later in case your computer freezes, a power outage strikes, aliens attack, or any one of a hundred scenarios that life and computers can throw at you.

Computers are unpredictable, life even more so. Save early and save often or risk repeating your work.

**NOTE:** If students include underscores, asterisks or other symbols (many of which double as .html operands) in their file names, it can corrupt their file. If this happens, there’s not much you can do other than respond with a note in the response field (see below) and move on to the next document. The student can re-submit their paper in an uncorrupted format if they so choose.

**Step 2: eTutoring**
Once you have saved the document as a backup file, you will be able to open the document in your word processing program. Complete your eTutoring reaction to the submission within the standards of the eTutoring consortium, remembering to include:

1. Introductory statement welcoming the student to eTutoring, stating your familiarity (or lack thereof) with the subject, giving initial reactions to the submission and how well it fulfills the assignment as stated. It is also a good idea to state what you will be addressing in your reactions, beginning with global issues and working down, etc.
2. Comments within the text in [Bold and Brackets], not utilizing other colors or review functions that would be dependent upon the student having the same version of the same word processing program you are using.
3. A closing statement reviewing what you see as the most significant issues with the paper and repeating key pieces of what you found in the paper.
4. A “Next Steps” statement outlining what the student can and should undertake next.

Our writing tutors are selected by their coordinators because they have demonstrated the requisite skills and attention to detail necessary to provide our students with quality tutoring for their writing projects within the stringent guidelines put in place by the CTDLC and the consortium. The eWriting tutors are expected to follow all aspects of the eTutoring guidelines with each student.

The complete Standards of Practice are laid out in the training modules provided in the eTutoring University. The eTutoring.org website contains documentation detailing the complete standards of the eTutoring.org consortium as a whole. These documents are also available from your coordinator in their
Coordinator’s Manual. Making hardcopies of these standards available to the eTutors is an excellent idea.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** eTutors will find that certain common mistakes and errors can be addressed from one paper to the next using essentially the same words and phrases. Keeping a file of “Frequent Responses” that you can copy into a response is not only ok, it is actively encouraged. Tutors are encourage to keep track of questions they answer frequently and gather them together into one place. When the question or issue crops up in the course of tutoring, the tutor can then paste the previous verbiage into the new paper and tweak it to fit the current situation.

**Step 3: Returning the Paper to the Student**

Save your version of the student’s paper as a Rich Text File (.rtf format only, please) and use that version to respond to the student. To do this, you will need to post it back to the eWriting Lab. Once you select a paper, the system moves it into your eWriting Lab Archive where it appears in red on your homepage as an unanswered paper.

The eWriting Lab Archive page for a student paper you have claimed is identical to the queue where you claimed the paper in the first place, except that only papers you have claimed will appear.

Open the paper being responded to and click “Browse” to find the modified version of the student paper where it is saved on the hard drive of your computer. Write a brief note in the “Post Your Comment” field and click the “Submit Your Response” button.
The eWriting Lab
The Student’s Perspective

The eTutoring platform is designed to be easy to navigate for students of all levels. Nevertheless, the first time a student wants to submit a paper to the eTutors, they may have detailed questions about how the system works and how to submit their papers via the website.

The section of the site dedicated to helping students with their writing is called the ‘eWriting Lab’. From the homepage that comes up when they login (each time after the first) the students click on the link for the eWriting Lab (shown at right) which will take them to a screen outlining submission guidelines and what the tutors will and will not cover on their paper.
NOTE: Your institution’s logo will appear on each page where you see the Tacoma Community College logo is seen in the screenshots.

There’s a lot of information on this page, and most of the questions students have about the system seem to be generated by the students not reading this page thoroughly. Please encourage students to read everything!

When the student has read the guidelines and is ready to submit their paper (first draft), they click “Submit a NEW Writing Assignment”. This will take them to the submission page where the screen will walk them through each field as they submit their paper. The goal is to get just the right information we will need to properly assess the correct way to help them.

NOTE: The warning (in red on the actual page) about documents created in Microsoft Word 2007 format (.DOCX) will go away in Fall Quarter of 08, by which time all consortium schools are required to have downloaded the Microsoft Compatibility Patch. However, most schools have already done so either voluntarily or as part of an “automated update” schedule when it was introduced by Microsoft. Tutors have been instructed to save any documents going back to students in the .doc or .txt formats to ensure compatibility with all computers regardless.
This page is so long that I cannot fit it all into one screenshot. Below is the bottom half of the screen. Students need to fill it out to the best of their ability and get us as much information as possible to improve the quality of our response to the student’s submission.

When the student is ready to upload their document to the system, they will have to “browse” for it in their documents file or portable hard drive and click the “Submit Your Writing Assignment” button.

We aim to get them a response within 48 hours. Please remind them to keep this timeframe in mind when they are planning their homework schedule.
eQuestions

The eTutor Perspective

eTutors from every subject area can interact with students through the “eQuestion” portion of the eTutoring.org website. The eQuestions forum is an asynchronous system, meaning that students submit questions and then wait for a tutor specializing in the subject to view it and respond. Answer quickly and thoroughly and provide links to trusted websites for additional follow-up and research. Students are always waiting. Our pledge to the students using our service is that we will try to get them a response within 48 hours. It is imperative that we keep our promises or we will lose the students’ trust.

The eQuestion queue should be checked first when the eTutor logs into the system for their shift and continuously monitored throughout the shift for new questions.

Student questions are selected from the eQuestion queue to be responded to in the order in which they have arrived. Below is a sample shot of the eQuestion queue similar to what the writing tutor will see each time he or she logs into the system for a tutoring session.

To select a question to answer, click on the “Topic”.

**Remember: Once you click it, it’s yours.** If you do not or cannot answer the question for any reason, you must contact the eTutoring Consortium coordinator or CTDLC support to have it removed from your account and put back into the queue.

An eQuestion opens in a screen like the one pictured below.
The information provided by the student is at the top of the screen. As you will see in the next section, the students are given an array of tools to create their questions similar to the ones you will use to answer them in the Rich Text editor at the bottom of the screen.

The student section provides information on the class, textbook and the framework for their question. They have the same tools the tutors have to upload images, symbols, and create the equations they are seeking help with.

**Using the Rich Text Editor (RTE)**

The eQuestion page provides you with an array of tools so that the tutors can answer questions ranging from the very simple to the very complex. The RTE allows you to do almost anything you would be able to do in a standard word processing program such as Microsoft Word. This includes not only italics, boldface and formatting, but also inserting superscript, subscript, symbols and operands for mathematic notation.

The toolbar (shown above) contains shortcuts to the tools tutors will need to answer student questions. By clicking on the symbols, a fairly elaborate equation or diagrammed sentence can be created, or a link can be posted to an equation, article or tutorial found elsewhere. An image can also be inserted into the screen to demonstrate the concepts involved in your question.

Some of the key elements of the rich text toolbar are discussed in detail below:

\[ \sum \]

Click on the sigma button to select operands from a menu such as square roots, fractions and division not commonly available in the 'Insert Symbol' field of most word processors.
NOTE: When you click the “Insert” button, the symbol will appear in the textbox as *images* which can be moved around or resized by clicking on them and dragging them from place to place. The symbols which display a dotted box on the popup menu will allow you to insert a number or character into the space occupied by the placeholder square in the image.

Use the omega button to bring up a menu of special characters. Currency symbols that do not appear on the American keyboard are available here (€, £, ¥) as well as most mathematical symbols and Greek letters.

Unlike “Insert Symbol”, these will appear as characters, same as any letter or symbol you type in using the keyboard and will therefore change size and font with the rest.

The “Create & Edit Link” buttons look like a chain and a broken chain respectively. These buttons will only appear as “active” when you have highlighted a section of text in your answer.

To create a link to an article on UC Berkeley’s Mathsite, that illustrates a point she is making, an eTutor would need to highlight a section of the text (usually no more than three words) and bring up the pertinent webpage on another page of her web browser. She would then copy the URL of the page ([http://mathsite.math.berkeley.edu/main.html](http://mathsite.math.berkeley.edu/main.html)) and click the chain button to create the link, which brings up the Insert/edit link window shown below.
There are many advanced options available from this window. At its most basic, paste the URL for the site to be linked to in the “Link URL” field as shown and then click the “Insert” button.

The “Insert Image” button looks like a little tree. This function allows the student to illustrate their question by linking to an image on a website that they are using as a resource, allowing specific questions. A popup window appears when you click on the tree icon where you can type or paste the URL of the image you want to use as shown below.

Shrödinger’s Equation is complex enough and contains symbols that are not available from the RTE. The easiest way to recreate this equation is to find it on a website such as Wikipedia and insert the equation as an image.

\[
i\hbar \frac{\partial}{\partial t} \Psi(r, t) = \hat{H}\Psi(r, t)
\]

This can be done with pictures or sentence diagrams as well. Any image that is appropriate to illustrate your point to the student can be inserted into the answer. These can be created in a drawing program such as Microsoft Paint or other simple graphic program (see caveats below).
NOTE: You cannot upload an image directly from your computer’s hard drive; you must “hotlink” to an image found elsewhere on the internet. So-called “Hotlinking” is a sticky issue in protocol circles because it uses the target website’s storage and bandwidth without earning them any pageviews for their image.

You can sidestep hotlinking concerns by uploading a custom image to a blog or free photo-sharing website such as Picasa (http://picasa.google.com) and Flickr (http://www.flickr.com) and then you may then link to it from there. It might be a good idea for tutoring centers to create free accounts at one of these (or other) sites in order to have a library of images and equations they can use for these purposes.
Sample eQuestion:

Students are forwarned about what we will and will not cover in the eQuestion forum. Each time a student clicks on the “eQuestion” button from their homepage, they are greeted with the warning screen displayed below.

They cannot continue until they have closed this window, forcing them to pay at least that much attention to the rules under which eTutoring.org operates.
eQuestions
The Student Perspective

The eTutoring platform is designed to be easy to navigate for students of all levels. eWriting allows the student to post all or part of their paper for comment and feedback from our tutors. When the student just has a question about English, Writing or Math (and the synchronous math tutors aren’t available for live help) the student can go into the eQuestion portal to post a query for a tutor to answer at a later time.

The first time a student wants to submit a question, they may have detailed questions about how the system works, how long they will have to wait for an answer and when to submit their eQuestion as opposed to going into the eWriting Lab or the eChat section for live tutoring in mathematics.

From the homepage that comes up when they login (each time after the first) the students click on the link for the eQuestions forum (shown above) which will take them to a screen outlining submission guidelines and what kind of questions are appropriate to the eQuestion part of the site versus the eWriting Lab or the eChat.

Students should use eQuestion when:

- No tutors are available for eChat (Math, Calculus and Statistics only for now). Tutor schedules and specialties are posted on the Welcome Page in the right-hand sidebar.
- If the question is not a homework or quiz question, but about a homework assignment or concept (an important distinction). The eTutors will not answer any math, statistics or chemistry problems for the student. Our tutors are trained to help the student develop strategies for working through their problems and give them benefit of their guidance, not do their homework or take quizzes for them.
- If the question is short-form and does not include pasting large sections of their paper into the question box. (The eWriting Lab is set up to handle these questions and better-suited to getting at the correct and desired tutoring response).

When a student has an eQuestion pending, a tally of open questions will appear on the welcome page under the eQuestion icon. The students can access an archive of past eQuestions they may have posted through the same eQuestion node (at the top of the screen shown above). **NOTE:** To manage system load and to encourage students to use the system responsibly, eTutoring only allows students to have two open questions at a time.
eQuestions about: English & Writing

Above is the screen that greet students who select “Writing” from the menu available from the “Subject” menu at the top of the screen. It is substantially different (asks them fewer questions) from the screen seen by students who select one of the other science or math-based subjects.

Because (at the moment) English and Writing tutoring isn’t being conducted through the live eChat system, students may find themselves with simple, short-form questions about style and notation, citing sources etcetera that do not seem appropriate for the eWriting Lab, which is generally geared toward reviewing larger sections of (or completed) papers.

The eQuestion page provides students with a rich text editor so that their question can be as simple or elaborate as they need it to be in order to get their point across to the tutor (and vice-versa). The editor allows you to do almost anything you would be able to do in a standard word processing program such as Microsoft Word. This includes not only italics, boldface and formatting, but also inserting hyperlinks and images when appropriate.

If the student is writing a paper, the eQuestions are usually relatively simple and most of the entered in a rich text editor (shown below). The student can therefore compose the question in the word processing program of their choice and paste it into the question field without losing most formatting or compose their questions in the field if they desire. A combination of the two is more common.

The student shown in the sample below has a question about APA style and properly citing online sources.
Despite the fact that the subject of the paper is mathematics, this is essentially an English/Writing question no matter what instructor it’s being written for.

The eTutor won’t format their quote for them, but this question opens up the field for the eTutor to talk about APA style and give them an example of proper citation and/or an online source as well as guide them to one of the many books and websites (such as Diane Hacker’s) that will help guide them in future papers that will utilize APA style.

**NOTE:** Just as the eQuestion system is designed for short-format questions, so too is it intended to provide short-format answers. The eTutors are encouraged to provide enough of a push for the student to continue on under their own inertia by providing strategies, resources and answers that encourage this approach to problems in the writing process.

**eQuestions about: Math, Calculus & Statistics**

The eQuestion page provides students with a rich text editor so that their question can be as simple or elaborate as they need it to be in order to get their point across to the tutor (and vice-versa). The editor
allows you to do almost anything you would be able to do in a standard word processing program such as Microsoft Word. This includes not only italics, boldface and formatting, but also inserting superscript, subscript, symbols and operands for mathematic notation.

The toolbar (seen above) will help guide students through the creation of their question. By clicking on the symbols, you can create a fairly elaborate equation you might be having issues with. Some parts of the toolbar are worth focusing on:

∑  Click on the sigma button to select operands from a menu such as square roots, and division not commonly available in the ‘Insert Symbol’ field of most word processors.

Ω Use the omega button to bring up a menu of symbols -- including custom characters -- from the same list available to you in a word processing program such as Microsoft Word. Currency symbols that do not appear on the American keyboard are available here (€, £, ¥) as well as the Greek letters commonly used in mathematic notation.
As always, the student has the option of crafting their question, math problem, etcetera on their home computer and pasting it into the window can therefore compose the question in the word processing program of their choice and paste it into the question field without losing most formatting. The system does not allow you to paste an image into the text field. You must use the ‘Insert Image’ function found by clicking on the little green tree in the Rich Text Editor’s toolbar.

The “Insert Image” button looks like a little tree. This function allows the student to illustrate their question by linking to an image on a website that they are using as a resource, allowing specific questions. A popup window appears when you click on the tree icon where you can type or paste the URL of the image you want to use as shown below.
The student shown in the sample below has used the superscript function to create exponents for their question. Ideally, the student would include more information about the class and instructor’s wishes as far as showing their work. Note that the student not only posts the problem they’re having the issue with, but also a description of the specific issue they’re trying to resolve. In this case, the tutor would be able to give them some general guidance on the problem shown but would have to ask clarifying questions regarding which class so they can better judge how much and what kind of work the student is expected to show.
eChat Synchronous Tutoring

For Students & Tutors

NOTE: Due to the nature of the eChat system, the experience of interactions within the forum is so similar for tutors and students that the two perspectives will be addressed in the same section.

The eTutoring platform is designed to be easy to navigate for students of all levels. The eChat portion of the system allows the student to get remote help in synchronous sessions with the eTutors that have specialized in the area their question covers. During scheduled times, eTutors will be available to answer eChat queries in Math, Accounting, Calculus and Statistics.

The first time a student wants to step into an eChat session, they may have detailed questions about how the system works, how they will know when tutors will be available for eChat sessions and the interactive nature of the eChat environment. They may also need guidance on how to disable any ‘popup’ blockers that they have running on their internet web browser.

eChat Tutoring utilizes Adobe’s Macromedia’s Breeze™ online meeting software. This is a multifaceted program and full utilization of all its attendant functions is beyond the scope of this guide. Only the most basic functions will be discussed that will be needed to get students up and running for an eChat tutoring session. For further information on the more advanced functions of this program, students should be referred to the “Help” functions of the program.

Students should use eChat when:

✦ There is a tutor scheduled at a time convenient for the student in the subject covering their question.

✦ They have specific questions on Math, Calculus, Accounting or Statistics that will lead to follow-up questions best posed in a live tutoring session without the lag of the eQuestion forum. The eChat forum is not (yet) set up to include English_Writing questions.

✦ If the question is not a homework or quiz question, but about a homework assignment or concept (an important distinction). The eTutors will not answer any math, statistics or chemistry problems for the student. Our tutors are trained to help the student develop strategies for working through their problems and give them benefit of their guidance, not do their homework or take quizzes for them.

✦ If the question is short-form and does not include pasting large sections of their paper into the eChat box. eChat. This doesn’t mean the student shouldn’t insert math problems into the system to illustrate their questions, just that the system isn’t setup for long-form questions better suited to the eQuestion forum.
As previously noted, students can check tutor schedules for times when a specialist in their subject will be available to help students in the eChat environment. Daily eTutor schedules are posted in a field on the student homepage.

By clicking on the “This Week” and “Next Week” links at the bottom, the student is also able to view an entire week of eTutor schedules (sample schedule shown below) to give them a chance to plan ahead if they need to synchronize their study schedules with tutor availability.

When the student finds an eTutor scheduled in their subject, they will need to click the link shown above, located on the eTutoring Homepage. This will take them to a screen displaying all of the current subjects that can be discussed and which tutors are available for eChat sessions, as well as any students that might already be in the queue. (See below)

eTutoring offers scheduled times for synchronous “eChat” tutoring in Math, Calculus, Accounting and Statistics. Currently-available eChat tutors will appear under the eChat icon on the Student Homepage.

If the student does find their tutor has a student in the queue, they will still be able to enter the ‘room’, essentially enter the environment where the ongoing eChat session is taking place. Depending upon the settings of the room (controlled by the eTutor), they may even be able to see the ongoing session happening on their screen.

In this event, the student needs to wait their turn and be respectful of the other students in the queue ahead of them by not interjecting or interrupting the session in progress. The eTutor is made aware the
moment a new student steps into the ‘room’ and will pivot to acknowledge them as soon as possible without interrupting the flow of the session in progress.

**NOTE:** The next phase may require students to disable any popup blockers they have in effect on their browsers.

In the screen above, “Tutor-1” is available for immediate tutoring, with no other students in the queue ahead of our sample student. The student in this case is looking for Math tutoring and will click on the link for Tutor-1 to launch the program that will act as the ‘chatroom’ for the tutoring session. eTutoring utilizes an Adobe program called Breeze™, which will launch in a new window. Students’ popup blockers and some Firewall programs might block or bring up warnings depending upon the settings of that program. In order to use eChat, the students will need to allow the Adobe-Macromedia Breeze™ program to run in its new window.

The first screen they see will be a gray one like the image shown above, with a status bar labeled “Breeze Meeting” which will remain until the program has loaded. How long this takes depends largely upon the speed of the student’s internet connection and the speed of their computer. Patience is advised. (On a TCC school computer, the wait time averages less than five minutes.)

The program being used for eChat was designed as a basic interface for business, which has been pressed into service for live meetings with eTutors.

**NOTE:** eTutors must **always enable the “Record Session” function.** This serves as a backup record of what happens during a session should there be a question or complaint from the student, instructors or administration. This protects the tutor and the consortium from the sort of unfounded suspicion of cheating that sometimes gets attached to tutoring efforts.
Above, you see a blank eChat room, ready to help students. Each of the sub-windows on the eChat screen (referred to henceforth as ‘pods’) have a specific use. There are three primary pods we will focus on, as they are the most commonly utilized functions for students.

“Chat” & “Q&A” Pods
If the student has ever participated in a discussion in an internet chat room, the chat functions of eChat will be familiar to them. The system allows you to track the conversation – along with input from fellow students in a group-chat session – in two different Pods, labeled “Chat” and “Q&A”. The two pods are linked for the sake of convenience.

The student enters their question in the “Chat” pod, which tracks the questions posed for the student (as shown below in red). The system takes care to notate questions and answers. It is difficult to show this in screenshots where the Test Tutor is essentially talking to herself, but it looks something like what is shown below.
The ongoing conversation (all sides of it) is tracked in the “Q&A” pod as shown below. Questions larger than the screen can be viewed in full by clicking on them and reading in the ‘Selected Question’ screen at the right of the pod.

It is assumed that the conversation will be tracked and illustrated in the “Whiteboard” Pod, which is set up to allow students and eTutors to draw, doodle and create equations to the full extent necessary to get the most out of the eChat tutoring session.

**The “Whiteboard” Pod**
This pod acts like a physical whiteboard hanging on the wall of a classroom. This is the main interface the student and eTutor will use to communicate concepts and illustrate both questions and answers. Along the right side of the Whiteboard the student will find a list of tools available for creating these illustrations.
Whiteboard Tools

If the list of tools are not showing when the student logs into the room, they will need to click on the icon in the lower right-hand corner of the whiteboard that looks like a pencil hovering over a blank piece of paper (shown at left). This will bring up the text and graphic editing functions that you can see in the screenshot shown above. Students viewing the eChat screen on a laptop or other low-resolution monitor might have to expand the whiteboard pod by clicking and dragging on the lower corner to stretch the whiteboard to its full size. The tools can be used to write or draw in within the white area of the pod for the purpose of illustrating the tutoring interaction.

Print: Students can print the contents of the whiteboard pod by clicking on the print icon. This allows them to take their eTutor’s notes with them to refer back to when they leave the eChat session.

Erase: This function deletes (‘erases’) the entire contents of the Whiteboard pod. It cannot be used to selectively erase part of the screen.

Redo and Undo: Because the ‘erase’ function is a holistic operation (erases everything) the best way to delete a specific error in the Whiteboard pod is to use the Undo function. This can be troublesome if the error occurred several steps before you become aware of the mistake, but it is the only way to remove a single step.

NOTE: if you accidentally hit the ‘Erase’ button and blank the entire pod, you can use Undo and Redo to correct the problem.

Stamp: This function allows the creation of selected mathematical symbols into an equation. The full list appears to the right. The student will use the stamp tool alongside the textbox tool to create equations in the Whiteboard.

See note below re: Superscripts & Subscripts.

Text Box: The capital “A” button allows students and tutors to create text boxes within which they can write short messages and equations that are visible to anyone viewing the whiteboard pod. The students are able to create their equations in a word-processing program or copy them from another source and paste them into the text box they’ve drawn, as long as they do not utilize any symbols or text modifications not shown in the ‘Stamp’ menu at the right!

(See note below re: Superscripts & Subscripts.)
**Draw Circles, Squares and Lines:** The whiteboard pod functions in many ways like a simple drawing program, with its text boxes and drawing functions and has tools similar to those available in programs like Microsoft Paint, such as the circle, square and line tools. The student can select these tools and the system will automatically create the selected shape (or line) from the point where they first clicked in the whiteboard after selecting the tool. Some experimentation with these tools will lead quickly to mastering them.

**Pencil & Highlighter:** The pencil and highlighter functions allow the eTutor or Student to draw freehand within the whiteboard pod. They can choose to change the color of just about anything they are drawing or writing in the whiteboard. This is especially useful for differentiating the marks of the eTutor and the student during the session. This is done by clicking on the square in the lower right-hand corner of the pod to select from the colors available.

**A Big Friendly Arrow:** The arrow button brings up a large green arrow that allows the eTutor to point at and draw temporary squares around things in the pod that are indicative of the subject being discussed, much like a laser pointer during a lecture.

**Superscripts & Subscripts:**
One unfortunate quirk of the Adobe Breeze program is that it isn’t set up to allow superscripts and subscripts in the text boxes. Students will need to notate superscripts using the caret (shift+6 on the standard QWERTY keyboard) to denote that the number or variable that follows should be read as a superscript. $6^{10}$ would read as “Six to the power of ten”.

Similarly, subscripts in scientific notation appear in-line with the letters or numbers they modify. For instance: (H2)O is the equivalent of H$_2$O. The parenthesis in this instance specify that there are two Hydrogen molecules, not two Oxygen molecules.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The eTutors can and should assist the students with Scientific Notation by asking clarifying questions when the situation arises in an eChat tutoring session.
Appendices

Assuring Quality Tutoring

- **Disruptions**: If a session is interrupted by interjections, interruptions from other students or non sequiturs or any sort of behavior that would detract from the quality of a tutoring session, eTutors have ‘moderator’ capabilities to mute or eject problem students from the chatroom.

- **Recording Sessions**: All eChat sessions are recorded by the system for future playback. This serves to ensure quality and that training issues for tutors can be addressed if future playback indicates a problem. Playback of recorded sessions is at the discretion of the eTutoring administrators.

- **Tutor Selection**: Tutors are selected and trained by the coordinators of each member school for their tutoring ability, as well as an ability to interact effectively through an online system and operate with minimal supervision.

- **Tutor Training & Evaluation**: Tutors for all sections of the eTutoring program are trained according to standards created by the original CTDLC and the Northwest eTutoring Consortium Advisory Council, a governing body of faculty, staff, paraprofessionals and experienced tutors. They are evaluated on an ongoing basis in accord with the standards set during their training.
A sample introductory letter welcoming the new eTutor

Hello Tutor, we are excited to have you joining eTutoring as a _______ tutor!

I am the Coordinator of the Northwest eTutoring Consortium, and would like to welcome you to this collaborative endeavor, and to provide you with the information you need to start and complete our online training modules!

To get started, please go to www.etutoring.org, select CTDLC eTutoring Training Institute from the drop down list of institutions, and log in with the following username and password, making sure to select “tutor” as your user type before clicking “Sign In.”

Username: tutor1  
Password: password

To start the training once logged in, please click on Resources, and then select eTutoring University. This page will come up in a separate window and it contains all of the training modules you will want to review. Click on Instructions and read through carefully the instructions for Synchronous eTutors, following each step as noted. The first modules show in detail how to work within the eTutoring eChat and Breeze web-conferencing system. You will want to review the different aspects of the Breeze functionality and practice each within your training account.

The remaining modules will guide you through the basics of using the rest of the eTutoring platform. Most find it quite user-friendly, but like all new technologies, it takes a little practice to feel confident in what you are doing. Again, make sure you read and follow the posted instructions so you can act as student and tutor within the training account to acquaint yourself with the platform’s tools.

Another aspect of our program is the BlackBoard classroom we have set up for tutors and coordinators to interact in. Please visit: http://www.wool.org to complete your registration. Choose the Faculty and Staff section at the lower right of the page. Then choose Training on the blue menu bar across the top. Next choose NW eTutoring Consortium. You will need to have a password to get the registration screen. The password is "northwest". Then you can fill out the registration form and get into the classroom on Blackboard. If you review the information on the discussion board it should be fairly self-explanatory. There will be useful resources available through BlackBoard (still in development), and the discussion board will also give you the opportunity to get to know other tutors, discuss tutoring issues, and arrange schedule swaps when needed.

Now, on to the next step. You will need to talk with _______ to let her know you have completed the training, and she will provide you with your username and password to access eTutoring, at www.eTutoring.org. Begin by selecting your institution from the drop-down menu
on the right and click Next. Then enter your login information for eTutoring.org, making sure to mark the bullet next to Tutor, and click Sign In.

Feel free to browse around and get to know the platform. If you have any questions, please let me know! When you have finished the training, please contact me directly with your availability, so I can get you added to the schedule as soon as you are available to start working. Keep in mind, we are trying to schedule according to student needs, so the more flexibility you have the easier it will be to fit you into the schedule. And, once you start tutoring if your schedule changes or you will be unavailable on a regularly scheduled day, please let me know as soon as you possibly can so we can make arrangements - with at least two weeks notice being ideal.

Please be in touch if I can help you through any part of this, and I hope you enjoy working with us!

Thanks!
Writing/English Sample Paper for Training
February 16, 2006

English 066

Essay #1

Laws define what has to be done and how to follow those rules but many people won’t follow the rules because of certain beliefs they hold at a higher standard. Some laws contradict people’s beliefs; therefore, this leads people to create controversy when citizens try and break those laws. The United States Government creates laws to reduce the prejudices in the country but laws can only go so far, we as a people need to take laws and put them into action.

The morality of the United States has dropped dramatically with teenage pregnancy being at an all time high and divorce rates doubling since 1960. Also the number of abortions has risen drastically since the 1960s (since they are legal now) and the violent crimes that take place on the streets and how violent crimes have gotten into the school system.

Although this case doesn’t deal with abortion it does deal with violent crimes. In Baton Rouge, Louisiana a seventeen year old student, Leslie-Claire Spillman, the center piece for “High School Controversial” written by Marc Peyser and Donatella Lorch. Spillman, an openly bisexual student at McKinley High School who is cochairman of the Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA), also shares her duties with friend Martin Pfeiffer. They both started the GSA in their school to for gay and straight students to learn about laws and each other. However, living in the Bible Belt and being homosexual or bisexual and starting a group for Gay and Straight people to integrate was just not something the parents, locals, or school board wanted. Spillman and Pfeiffer fought for recognition of the GSA, and brought it to the school board but when the school board turned it down, Spillman and Pfeiffer went to the courts, where
by law McKinley High School and their school board could not discriminate against gay and straight students creating a group to teach about diversity. However many administration in the public school system say they follow rules about allowing any group to form under their administration, but it takes more than just students protesting about how their groups are being shunned because of what they believe in. Usually it takes the United States Constitution and bringing that to state and local courts.

Segregation of people in America has been illegal for nearly fifty years but in “Growing Up, Growing Apart” written by Tamar Lewin students feel they need to separate themselves once they get into high school. Lewin finds that Kelly Regan an Irish/Catholic girl, Aqeelah Mateen, an African-American/Muslim girl and Johanna Perez Fox, half Jewish, half Puerto Rican girl are all best friends despite their extremely different backgrounds, that was until high school came the one fall day. They all attend Columbia High School. On Kelly Regan’s first day of school she sat in her seat in homeroom next to an African American boy, she introduced herself in a polite manner “But he answered in like one word, and looked away. I think he thought I was a normal white person, and that’s all he saw” (368). Although desegregation laws have been legal for nearly fifty years, students feel that they still have to segregate themselves for reasons only known to them. No matter how many parents, teachers, or the United States Constitution telling the students to stop segregating themselves, the students will do whatever they please.

While homosexuality is against all laws in the military, the government says that they aren’t homophobic and accepts all people who are willing to serve their country. Such as Joseph Steffan the author and narrator in “Honor Bound”, Steffan writes how his experience in the Naval Academy forced him to be discharged because it was found out that Steffan is a homosexual. Steffan’s essay had taken place years before the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” law was enforced. While it was only two weeks before his graduation from the Naval Academy and Steffan could have easily denied he was gay, he felt
he needed to be true to himself and tell his commandant he was in fact a homosexual. Upon news of
his homosexuality being released, his commandant was forced to discharge Steffan because of a law in
the military stating: No Homosexuals Allow. While the laws in our country prohibit segregation in all
places, one of the largest pieces of American History still segregates people, the military although it’s
not a segregation of race or religion it is something that identifies people and that is their sexuality.