Statement of Tutoring Philosophy

I know what it’s like to be proud of the essay that you think is your absolute best; I also know how it feels to have absolutely no idea what to write for your essay that’s due tomorrow. I, like most writers, understand that writing can be both fun and challenging, rewarding and frustrating. As an Ott Memorial Writing Center tutor, I hope to assist writers at their highest and lowest stages of the writing process and thus to empower them to compose pieces of which they are proud.

As a future high school teacher, I understand the importance of being “conversational partners”—working with writers rather than for them—in order that they may continually improve their writing capabilities. Accordingly, I use the Socratic method when conversing with writers, since I believe that this method allows for writers’ active engagement in the writing process. As a writer, it is one thing to get suggestions from a tutor; it is another thing to consider various options, debate tutors’ suggestions, and then consciously choose the one that you believe to be most effective for the purpose of your work.

In writing conferences, therefore, I ask writers to articulate what they want to convey through their writing before I offer suggestions. By using their narrative voice to guide my advice, I aim to foster a collaborative atmosphere that ultimately empowers writers to craft the pieces that they envision, rather than molding their ideas as I envision them. I aim to put writers’ ideas at the center of the conversation, and in doing so, I believe that they can use their agency and voice to direct our discussion effectively and meaningfully. Ultimately, too, they can produce the best work of which they are capable.

Through my experience and observations as a Writing Center tutor, I have noticed that most writers who come in anxious about or doubting of their work simply need reassurance of the strength of their ideas. Thus, I make sure to validate their ideas prior to suggesting ways to improve their writing. Only once I have established the successes of writers’ work do I discuss the areas in which they could improve. This strategy ensures that writers know that I am here to help them work through their thoughts, rather than dictate countless changes necessary to produce a universally effective piece.
Through these tutoring approaches, as well as compassion and laughter, I collaborate with writers to develop their best work, no matter whether they are two weeks ahead of schedule with a full essay draft, or two sentences into their due-tomorrow piece.