Computer Science Tutor Code of Conduct

1 Introduction

The Computer Science department of Portland State University prides itself on its excellent tutoring resources for Computer Science students. The Computer Science Tutors are known to provide high-quality supplemental instruction to students and are highly regarded as an invaluable part of PSU's Computer Science education.

As employees of Portland State University, the Computer Science Tutors (hereafter known as "the tutors") are expected to follow the various employee policies of PSU, including the Code of Ethics (http://www.pdx.edu/hr/code-ethics), the Professional Standards of Conduct Policy (http://www.pdx.edu/hr/professional-standards-conduct), and other applicable policies outlined in the Policies section of Human Resources' list of Policies, Contracts and Forms (http://www.pdx.edu/hr/policies-contracts-forms#POLCON). Additionally, the tutors are expected to adhere to the policies found in this guidebook.

2 Expectation of personal conduct in the work place

The tutors are in a unique position in the University such that their work place is also a study space, a class space, and a social space. The work place shall be defined as the tutor lounge (FAB suite 88), public IRC channels such as #cschat, #cshelp, and #csXXX class channels, and class rooms where CS coursework is being taught.

The tutors are representative of the CS department and are often new students' first view of the department. It is therefore of utmost importance that tutors represent themselves and the department well.

3 Expectations of the tutors' abilities

The tutors are expected to have exceptional grasp of material from the following courses offered at PSU:

- CS161
- CS162
- CS163
- CS201
- CS202
- CS250

- CS251
- CS300
- CS311

Exceptions may be made for inability to teach theoretical CS (material from CS250, CS251, an CS311) if there is demonstrable proficiency in teaching practical CS (programming).

Tutors may be hired if they have taken all of the lower division coursework and are enrolled in either CS300 or CS311.

Because the majority of practical (non-theoretical) coursework is taught in C++, C, and Java, tutors are expected to be familiar and capable in these languages. If any of the suppored courses is taught in an alternative language (e.g., Python), tutors are still expected to help students in such courses to the best of their ability.

The tutors are expected to be comfortable with using Unix-based operating systems, especially Solaris and Ubuntu. The tutors should be comfortable using the command line for programming.

4 The tutors' responsibilities to the students

The tutors are responsible for helping students with their CS class assignments. This may include:

- Reviewing and clarifying concepts addressed in class or in the textbook
- Clarifying the meaning of an assignment and making suggestions on how to start an assignment
- Reviewing a student's code to help diagnose compiler errors or run-time bugs (acting as a "second pair of eyes")

The tutors are responsible for helping students to use Unix/Linux as it relates to CS class assignments. This may include:

- Helping students access the CS Solaris system or Linux Lab remotely from their personal computers
- Helping students navigate the Unix/Linux file system
- Helping students with the process of editing, compiling, debugging, and executing programs from the command line

5 The tutors' other responsibilities

The tutors are responsible for validating students' CS accounts and granting CS-level badge access. The tutors are responsible for maintaining the two computer labs. This includes:

- ensuring that the printer is stocked with paper and toner and is in good working condition

- ensuring that students do not unintentionally leave workstations locked and thus unavailable for use by other students. Students who need to lock a workstation in order to run long-running processes may submit an LRP request to the CAT.
- ensuring that the lab computers are in working condition and reporting broken computers to the CAT
- enforcing the food and drink policy
- noting when conduct becomes disruptive to other students who are using the space to study and either taking action to end the disruption or informing the tutor coordinator so that he/she may handle the situation.
- If a tutor suspects a student of cheating in a CS class, the tutor is expected to inform the student's instructor and should also make the situation known to the other tutors and tutor coordinator.

6 Things that the tutors are not responsible for

The tutors are not responsible for helping students with classes that are not on the list of supported classes in Section 3, Expectations of the tutors' abilities. Examples of unsupported classes include CS105, CS106, CS classes higher than CS311, and classes outside of the CS department. A tutor may help a student with such classwork if the tutor possesses such expertise, but must prioritize students who need help in supported classes.

The tutors are not responsible for fixing a student's personal computer or installing software on a student's personal computer. The exceptions to this are that tutors may help students download, install, and use PuTTY, file transfer applications, and Eclipse, as required by various CS courses. The tutors are not responsible for helping students install new operating systems or other software on their personal computers. If a tutor would like to help a student with such an endeavor, the tutor must make it clear to the student that neither the tutors nor the CS department are responsible for any mishaps that may befall the student's computer.

7 Activities that are against expectations of tutors

The following conduct may result in disciplinary action for a tutor:

- Repeatedly being late or missing shifts or meetings without advance notice or any attempt to notify the tutor coordinator of unavoidable lateness or absence.
  - If a tutor knows in advance that he or she will have to miss a shift, he or she will attempt to make arrangements with another tutor to cover the shift and then notify the tutor coordinator of the changes. If no such arrangement can be made, the tutor will notify the tutor coordinator of the expected absence and reason for missing the shift no later than one week prior to the shift.

  - If issues such as illness occur that necessitate a tutor being late to or missing a shift without advance planning, the tutor will make every attempt to notify the tutor coordinator of the situation by IRC, email, or phone at least one hour before the shift starts.

- Undermining an instructor's curriculum to tutorees
  - Extreme objections to an instructor's curriculum may be addressed at tutor meetings or directly with the tutor coordinator.
  - Confusion or misunderstanding about an instructor's curriculum can be addressed with other tutors or the tutor coordinator, and may then be clarified with the instructor if clarification is warranted.

- Disrespecting a fellow tutor or anyone else in the work place
  - Conflicts between tutors may be mediated by the tutor coordinator.
  - Tutors should not engage in argumentative or combative discussion with members of the community in the work place.

- Refusing to help a student with legitimate classwork
  - If a tutor is truly unable to help a student with legitimate classwork from a supported class (see Section 3, Expectations of the tutors' abilities above) due to inexperience with the particular subject matter, the tutor may refer the student to another tutor or to the class TA, or encourage the student to come back during another tutor's shift.

- Accepting monetary compensation from students for tutoring during their paid tutoring shift

- Helping a student cheat

8 Conclusion

This guide may not encapsulate every expectation of the tutors and is subject to change. Every new revision will be shared with the tutors on staff.