

Difficult Scenarios Practice

Scenario: *The student is forced to be there.*

While most students are here of their own choosing, occasionally, a professor will require a student to come to the UCLA for extra credit points or as part of a contract with the student. When students are required to do something, they may react negatively. In a counseling setting, it is not unlikely that a client may become angry at whomever they have to meet with, even if that person did not set the requirement. Similarly a student who is required to visit a tutor may resist a tutor's attempts to engage in any conversation. The student hopes he/she can leave as soon as possible.

What to Do:

Scenario: *This subject is not important to this student.*

Many students see some of their courses as something that has little to do with their lives or their future careers.

What to Do:

Scenario: *The student may be anxious about revealing ignorance and he/she may be nervous about being critiqued.*

Students may be apprehensive when coming to visit a tutor. When we have no idea what's expected of us and we feel shaky about whether we are going to be ridiculed or asked to demonstrate what we don't know, we do sometimes respond by withdrawing until we can get a better handle on what's happening or figure out how we can retreat from the situation with minimal embarrassment.

What to Do:

Scenario: *The student is overwhelmed by other concerns.*

The student may have just found out that he/she is running out of financial aid, learned that he/she did not perform well on a test, or had a fight with a close friend. Students bring with them a variety of other problems and worries and disappointments that affect their ability to attend to what's going on in the tutorial.

What to Do:

Scenario: *The student doesn't have the language to talk about his or her problems.*

Effective resolution of difficulties in a course requires the ability to detect problems and develop a strategy to solve those problems. The students who come to see you often do not have these abilities. Therefore, they do not know how to explain to someone else what they would like to work on. These students are likely to come in frustrated and unable to say more than, "I don't understand," or "I need help." They sit in silence because they do not know what to say or how to say it.

What to Do:

Scenario: *The student is simply a very quiet person.*

Some students are naturally shy or quiet, and they are not given to a lot of chatter or small talk. Introverts prefer to deal with the world by taking things in and reflecting on them quietly.

What to Do:

Scenario: *The student knows that if he or she shuts up, the tutor will do all the work.*

These students wait for the tutor to tell them what to write, how to fix their assignment, or maybe – if they sit silently for a long period of time – the tutor will do the problem for them. In large lecture settings, these students have learned to be quiet and wait for the instructor to tell them what to do.

What to Do: