Cuesta College Embedded Tutoring

Embedded tutoring is an academic support model designed to enhance student learning and success by providing real-time academic support within the classroom environment. Embedded tutors are faculty recommended students who collaborate closely with instructors to support course objectives, reinforce key concepts, and promote active learning. By taking place directly within scheduled class sessions, this model provides immediate, contextualized support, and strengthens the connection between instruction and student learning through integrated peer assistance.

Embedded tutoring is prioritized in high-impact courses. High-impact courses are defined as those that significantly influence student progression, persistence, and completion within an academic pathway. These courses are identified through institutional research and program review processes (e.g., APPW and CPPR) as having lower success, retention, or persistence rates, particularly for disproportionately impacted student populations, and/or serving as critical milestones such as gateway, transfer-level, or sequences courses. These include math, English, and STEM (Biology, Earth, Engineering & Physical Sciences, & Math and Computer Science) disciplines, with a specific emphasis on transfer-level math and English in alignment with AB1705.

The Purpose of Embedded Tutoring at Cuesta College is to*:*

The purpose of embedded tutoring at Cuesta College is to align with institutional priorities and faculty-informed approaches to improving student success and equity. This model is designed to provide targeted, in-class academic support that enhances learning, engagement, and persistence, particularly in high-impact courses.

- Prioritize support in high-impact courses, including transfer-level math and English in alignment with AB 1705, as well as STEM courses, identified through program review data, with a focus on closing equity gaps and improving outcomes for disproportionately impacted student populations as outlined in the Student Equity Plan
- Advance equitable access to learning and support services, with a focus on disproportionately impacted (DI) student populations
- Foster student engagement and a sense of belonging through peer-to-peer interaction within the classroom environment
- Provide early identification and intervention for students experiencing academic challenges to support persistence and completion
- Strengthen alignment between faculty and tutors to ensure support is responsive to course objectives and promotes equitable student outcomes
- Connect students to campus resources and services that support student success and reduce barriers to achievement

Embedded Tutoring Best Practices

Effective embedded tutoring is grounded in intentional collaboration between faculty and tutors to support student learning, engagement, and success. The following best practices are intended to guide the implementation of embedded tutoring in a way that is student-centered, equitable, and aligned with course objectives, and are informed by faculty recommendations and institutional practices outlined in the *Review and Recommendations for Embedded Peer Tutoring at Cuesta College (2025)*.

- **Establish Ongoing Collaboration**
  Faculty and tutors should maintain regular communication to align on course expectations, learning outcomes, and areas where students may need additional support.
- **Integrate Support into Class Sessions**
  Embedded tutoring should be intentionally incorporated into class time to provide real-time, relevant support that reinforces instruction and course content.
- **Promote Active Learning and Engagement**
  Faculty and tutors should work together to encourage student participation through guided practice, collaborative activities, and peer-to-peer interaction.
- **Foster an Inclusive and Supportive Learning Environment**
  Create a classroom climate where all students feel comfortable asking questions, engaging in the learning process, and seeking assistance.
- **Advance Equitable Practices**
  Ensure embedded tutoring supports equitable access to learning by being responsive to the needs of disproportionately impacted (DI) student populations and reducing barriers to participation and success.
- **Encourage Student Independence and Confidence**
  Support students in developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills by guiding their learning rather than providing answers.
- **Reinforce Connections to Campus Resources**
  Promote awareness of and connection to additional academic and student support services to extend learning beyond the classroom.
- **Provide and Utilize Feedback**
  Tutors should share general observations about student learning and engagement, and faculty should use this feedback to inform instructional practices and support strategies.
- **Prioritize High-Impact Courses**
  High-impact courses are defined as courses that significantly influence student progression, persistence, and completion within an academic pathway. These courses are identified through institutional research and program review processes (e.g., APPW and CPPR) as having lower success, retention, or persistence rates, particularly for disproportionately impacted student populations, and/or serving as critical milestones such as gateway, transfer-level, or sequence courses. Priority for embedded tutoring is placed on high-impact courses within the Math, English, and STEM divisions

Roles and Responsibilities

Embedded tutoring is a collaborative effort between faculty and embedded tutors. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities ensure effective implementation, alignment with course objectives, and a consistent, high-quality experience for students.

Faculty Responsibilities:

Faculty serve as the instructional lead and are responsible for integrating embedded tutoring into the course in a purposeful and structured way.

- Commit to regular collaboration with the embedded tutor outside of class sessions, including scheduled planning and mentorship, to ensure the tutor is prepared to effectively support course content and student learning in the classroom
- Clearly communicate course expectations, learning outcomes, and key content areas to the tutor
- Integrate the tutor into class sessions through planned activities, group work, or targeted support opportunities
- Provide guidance on how the tutor should support students during class
- Maintain regular communication with the tutor to provide direction, feedback, and clarification
- Monitor the effectiveness of embedded tutoring and adjust strategies as needed to support student learning
- Verify tutor monthly hours, including time spent in class and monthly planning meetings

Embedded Tutor Responsibilities:

- Support student understanding of course concepts and promote active engagement during class sessions
- Provide individualized and group assistance to students by helping to clarify concepts, and offering guidance during class activities
- Follow faculty direction to ensure support is aligned with course structure, expectations, and instructional goals
- Facilitate learning activities by assisting with assignments, reinforcing key concepts, and helping students prepare for assessments
- Maintain regular and proactive communication with faculty regarding student needs, questions, and any concerns
- Demonstrate professionalism by being punctual, prepared, respectful, and a positive role model for students.
- Successful completion of Tutoring Training Course is required within the first year of tutor employment.

Embedded Tutor Scope and Limitations

Embedded tutors are intended to support student learning within the classroom and do not replace the role or responsibilities of the instructor. To maintain clear boundaries and ensure effective use of the embedded tutoring model, the following outlines activities that fall outside the scope of embedded tutoring:

- Do not provide direct instruction or introduce new course content independently of the faculty
- Do not grade assignments, exams, or determine student grades
- Do not serve as a substitute for the instructor or lead the class in the instructor's absence
- Do not provide answers to assignments or complete work on behalf of students

- Do not offer support outside of the structure and expectations established by the instructor
- Do not act in a disciplinary or evaluative role with students
- Do not replace existing academic support services, but instead help connect students to them when appropriate
- Do not perform personal or administrative tasks for faculty, including running errands unrelated to their tutoring responsibilities
- Do not provide tutoring support for courses or sections not included in the approved embedded tutor assignment

Courses Eligible for Embedded Tutoring

Embedded tutoring is currently offered for:

- **Math and English Classes with Co-requisite Support Classes:** Co-requisite courses are prioritized as they provide structured academic support for students enrolled directly in transfer-level coursework under AB1705. Embedded tutoring in these courses enhances support by reinforcing concepts in real time and increasing student engagement, particularly for students with varying levels of academic preparedness, as supported by findings in the Embedded Peer Tutoring Proposal.
- **Transfer-Level English and Math Classes:** In alignment with AB 1705, Cuesta College is committed to ensuring all students have equitable access to and success in transfer-level English and Math within their first year. Embedded Tutors are placed in these courses to provide real-time academic and peer support, helping students build confidence and succeed in college-level coursework.
- **STEM Courses:** STEM courses identified as high impact through institutional research and program review processes may be prioritized for embedded tutoring to support student success, retention, and progression within academic pathways, particularly in gateway and sequenced courses where early success is critical to continued student advancement.

Course Selection and Prioritization Process

The Deans overseeing Math, English, and the Student Success Center (SSC), in collaboration with SSC Supervisors, will collectively review all submitted embedded tutor requests to determine course selection and prioritize embedded tutoring placements based on institutional priorities, student need, available resources, tutor availability, using the following criteria:

Data-Informed Identification: Courses are identified using institutional research and program review processes (e.g., APPW and CPPR), with emphasis on courses demonstrating lower success, retention, or persistence rates, particularly for disproportionately impacted (DI) student populations.

1. **Alignment with Institutional Priorities:** Priority is given to courses that support key institutional initiatives, including AB 1705 implementation and the goals outlined in the Student Equity Plan.
2. **Focus on High-Impact Courses:** Emphasis is placed on high-impact courses, including transfer-level English and math, as well as STEM courses that serve as critical entry points or sequences within academic pathways.

3. **Course Capacity:** Sections with higher enrollment caps may be prioritized, as larger class sizes can limit opportunities for individualized and group support during class time.
4. **Availability of Qualified Tutors:** Course placement is dependent on the availability of qualified embedded tutors who meet hiring criteria and possess the appropriate content knowledge and skills to effectively support the course.
5. **Resource Allocation:** Embedded tutoring assignments are made based on available funding, staffing capacity, and prioritization of courses with the greatest potential to improve equitable student outcomes.

Requesting an Embedded Tutor

Faculty requesting an embedded tutor must follow the established process to ensure alignment with instructional priorities, available resources, and program criteria.

- **Submit Request Form**
  Faculty must complete and submit the Embedded Tutor Request Form (via Dynamic Forms) by the established deadline for the upcoming term.
- **Provide Course Information**
  Requests must include course details (discipline, course number, section, meeting times, and location), as well as enrollment cap and modality.
- **Justification of Need**
  Faculty must provide a justification outlining the need for embedded tutoring, including how the course aligns with priority criteria (e.g., transfer-level math/English, STEM, equity gaps, course capacity, or student need) and, when applicable, reference relevant data or findings from program review processes (e.g., APPW or CPPR).
- **Proposed Tutor**
  Faculty may recommend a qualified student to serve as the embedded tutor, which will be included in the request submission. All recommended students must meet hiring requirements and complete the onboarding process.
- **Submission Timeline**
  All requests must be submitted by the established term deadlines. Requests submitted after the deadline will not be considered.
- **Notification**
  Faculty will be notified of the status of their request following the review process.

Student Employee Hiring Guidelines

Embedded tutors are student workers and are subject to the College's student employment policies and procedures. Students may be selected for employment as embedded tutoring if they meet the following requirements:

- Must be a current Cuesta College student enrolled in a minimum of 6 units **AND**

- Meet institutional academic standing requirements and maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 **AND**
- Successfully completed the course they are being hired to support with a grade of “B” or better.

Supervision and Oversight

All student employees must be assigned a direct supervisor/manager responsible for oversight, scheduling, payroll approval, training, and accountability. Supervisors must be administrators in one of the following classifications: Supervisor, Associate Director, Director, Executive Director, Associate Dean, Dean, or Vice President. Student employees may not be supervised by classified staff, faculty, or division chairs.

For embedded tutors, the assigned supervisor is the Student Success Center Supervisor, who coordinates with the Deans of Instruction to support program implementation and monitor the quality, effectiveness, and consistency of embedded tutoring standards across instructional areas.

- **Program Oversight**

  The Student Success Center Supervisor manages embedded tutors, including hiring coordination, onboarding, payroll processing, and compliance with student employment policies, in coordination with the Deans of Instruction.

- **Faculty Responsibility**
  Faculty are responsible for supporting time accountability by verifying and confirming embedded tutor monthly work hours, including time spent in class and required planning meetings.
- **Hiring Compliance**
  Embedded tutors must complete all hiring requirements and be cleared to work through Human Resources prior to receiving an assignment or beginning any work hours.

Acknowledgements

This guide reflects the Student Equity and Achievement (SEA) Plan, Educational Master Plan (EMP), institutional priorities, and faculty-informed recommendations developed through a faculty workgroup analysis of embedded tutoring.