Data Analysis Plan:

The First Steps of Our Qualitative Analytic Strategies:

1. **Our goal** toward answering our Research Question and Analytic Questions is to catch as many relevant (or unexpected but somehow compelling), intriguing, or important perceptions from the participants as possible, even if a given idea only emerges once.

2. **The nature of qualitative data** is that it is too messy in its original form to be able to see the gems within it. So there is a process we can take to find the important stuff and organize it into smaller documents, which are more manageable to deal with cognitively.

3. **We want to organize the data according to codes, or categories.** We code the data so that we can identify relevant information to inform our focus group sessions. There are two main types of codes.

    -   **Etic codes** are categories that we have initially identified as important as we began designing the feedback forms and survey questions. **Etic codes arise from our existing knowledge and expectations,** including our knowledge of theories and research about the subject matter, learning and teaching, the environment of higher education, the needs and goals of adult learners, our urban setting, etc.
    -   **Emic codes** are categories that **arise from the participants**, which we will try to identify and label as we find them. This requires an open mind and close reading of the data (for example, encouragement appears to be an important concept in some of the tutor surveys). We should code for anything that looks interesting (e.g., very promising, that needs clarification, or that we should get the reaction of others on in the focus group sessions).

4. **Once we have the data coded, we will surface themes to organize the data further.**

    -   We will also want to surface themes among the emic codes. We do this by creating analytic memos (AMs), which are shorter documents into which we copy and paste all relevant data that has a given code.
    -   Some etic themes we have are already expressed in our analytic questions: identifying problems to learning, solutions that can be enacted in the classroom, solutions that can be enacted elsewhere in the college or through policies, etc. Many etic themes are the focus of specific questions on the forms. So, for example, by grouping the coded data from all of the participants regarding Question 3 into a single document (analytic memo) we will already begin organizing the data into manageable chunks to answer Question 3.

Collaborative Analysis (coordinating tasks within each sub-group):

1. (before 1ˢᵗ Meeting) Assessment Co-Chairs will assign a unique number to each survey or feedback form, so we can keep track of them (I expect to receive late additions for WC feedback forms, and we will want to be able to double check that the late submissions are included in data analyses conducted by each subgroup member). To protect participants, numbers will be used instead of participant names.

2. (at 1ˢᵗ Meeting) Split up the work by divvying up the survey / feedback form transcripts. Each subgroup member will be tasked with coding one transcript before the next meeting. Electronic files will be distributed. Example file name: WC_Tutor_2_transcript_2015-09-09

3. (Assigned to be completed before 2ⁿᵈ Meeting) Each member will go through and code the data in one of their transcripts, applying both emic and etic codes. A code is a label consisting of a word or short phrase. Each label needs to be in brackets [] to set it off from the rest of the text as being an insertion that the researcher made, and also to make it easy to search for codes using the "find" function in MS Word. A key that identifies and briefly defines the codes that are used will need to be developed as a separate document (Code Key). Given that we need to preserve copies of the original, uncoded transcripts (raw data), a separate file will be created with a new file name that identifies the data as coded (date of most recent revision must also be included). Example: WC_Tutor_2_ transcript_coded_2015-09-15

4. **Code Keys will need to be emailed to Seth or Becky DeVito by the evening of Friday, Oct. 2.** We will then copy and paste all code keys into a Master Code Key for each subgroup. These Master Code Keys will contain a lot of redundancies of similar codes, and will be refined by the subgroups at the 2ⁿᵈ meeting.