

Self-Advocacy

Self-advocacy is the ability to understand and effectively communicate your own needs.

Why is self-advocacy a must-have skill in college?

- College requires independent work, self-motivation, and assertiveness.
- In high school, teachers and other staff members (such as school counselors) kept close track of you and likely gave you many reminders. In college, those people exist, but it is up to you to seek them out and build relationships with them. It is also your responsibility to pay attention to and actively seek out deadlines, opportunities, and resources.

Who can I go to for help?

- **Peer Mentor**
 - Your peer mentor is a great resource who can point you in the right direction when you have questions or need additional support. A great way to self-advocate is to ask them your questions and let them know when you need help!
- **Professors**
 - Professors want their students to succeed. Professors typically hold office hours but are also willing to schedule appointments with their students (check your syllabus). If you are having difficulties in a class, ask your professor for help! Building relationships with your professors is important, especially in your major—they may be references for graduate/professional school or a job one day!
- **Advisor**
 - Your advisor helps keep you on track for graduation and can answer questions relating to your major and classes. This person is a great resource for you and can be a great partner to help you plan your own success!

Questions to keep in mind:

- Am I able to articulate my strengths and needs when I need to?
- Do I have an organized plan that will lead me to my goals?
- What are my goals for this semester, this year, and my college career?
- Do I know the resources I have available to help me and who my support persons are on campus?
- Am I aware of my rights and responsibilities?
- Am I being thoughtful about the decisions I am making?