

Self-Advocacy

An advocate is someone who supports, defends, or pleads on behalf of someone else. The self-advocate supports, defends, or pleads for him/herself. It means identifying yourself as a student with a disability. It means discussing one-on-one with professors your need for specific accommodations in a classroom. It also means being aware of how your disability impacts your ability to function and then seeking out the resources to assist you in overcoming obstacles presented by your disability.

At the postsecondary level, colleges and universities are not allowed to ask about disabilities during the admittance process. Since they cannot ask, they must rely on you to make your needs known. You will need to provide the appropriate documentation to substantiate the disability and request accommodations and/or academic adjustments in a timely manner.

The disability services office will help promote your skill as a self-advocate by explaining procedures, providing resources and services, and act on your behalf when requested. Again, the onus is on you to make your needs known.