Self-advocacy is the ability to voice one's own needs to another person. In college, you will need to inform instructors and staff of your accommodations. If a problem arises that you cannot resolve on your own, let Disability Access Services know. Before you approach an instructor, consider the steps below. (Note that you may also want to refer to the Tips for Successful Communication with Instructors for additional guidance.)

1. What accommodations have I been granted?

You and your DAS Specialist established your accommodations at your intake meeting. You are the only one who knows EXACTLY what works for you and you want to be able to explain this clearly to your instructor.

1. Why do I need the accommodations?

Answering this question will aid you in identifying yourself as well as your strengths and weaknesses. You do not have to disclose your specific disability to your instructor.

1. To whom am I presenting these accommodations and when should I approach them?

Scheduling a meeting with an instructor or staff member will ensure you get the time you need to discuss your accommodations. Also, a great time to talk to instructors is during their office hours.

1. When can I utilize my accommodations?

Accommodations are effective from the point your instructor receive your Accommodation Letter. Be sure to request copy for your instructor(s) by filling out the Accommodation Letter Request Form as soon as possible. If you wait until the last minute, it may be difficult or impossible to provide accommodations within the time frame needed. Remember, accommodations are not retroactive.

1. Where can I use them?

You may have classroom accommodations, test accommodations or both. Be sure you know where you will be taking your tests and the procedure for scheduling tests. If you are taking tests in the Testing Center, visit before your first test so you are familiar with what you will need to do at your scheduled test time. Discuss with your instructor how the procedure works. Discuss classroom accommodations with your instructor to ensure you receive the accommodations.

Speaking one-on-one to an instructor might be stressful for you. Some tips to help lessen the stress:

* Write your 5 W responses (above) on 3x5 card; refer to your notes when needed.
* Practice what you will say **out loud;** do this in front of a mirror, a friend or DAS Specialist.
* Once you feel comfortable approaching the instructor, go for it! You will come across as a confident student who knows how to take charge of your own needs.