OKLAHOMA CITY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

SELF ADVOCACY

How to Connect with Faculty and Staff on Campus

You've been admitted to your dream school, the scholarships are rolling in, you're gearing up for prom and graduation – what's next?

While roommate assignments and summer vacations are probably on your mind, we strongly suggest that you think about setting the tone for your college interactions next fall. Self-advocacy is extremely important when it comes to communications with faculty and staff at your college. Here are some tips to help you succeed:

1 Introduce Yourself to Your Professors

Talking to your smartypants professors can be extremely nerve-racking. We get it – Ph.D.s are scary! But connecting with your professors can benefit you in so many ways. Not only does it show your commitment and interest in the class, but a simple introduction can set you up for success for future questions and encounters. Not sure what to say? Practice! We encourage you to write down a script and rehearse before your first interaction.

> "Hi Dr. Smith. My name is Jessica Clark and I'm excited to be in your class this year. I don't have any questions yet, but I will definitely be stopping by your office this semester if I need advice. I look forward to a great semester!"

2 Take Advantage of Office Hours

Don't count on conversations with your professors to give you better grades automatically, but do ask for their feedback and advice when it comes to your improvement in the course. If you struggle with an assignment, ask for your professor's feedback and make their suggested improvements. In no circumstance should you have your parent call on your behalf!

3 Know the Cost of Tuition and Fees

Similar to your encounters with professors, we encourage you to build connections with your financial aid and academic counselors. More than likely, your parents help pay your student bills, but hearing from you rather than your parents makes a huge difference to staff. For the best experience, be sure to call ahead and make an appointment, have your student ID ready, jot down your questions and write down all scholarship and financial aid essays. Also, be nice and even send a thank-you note after your meeting – kindness makes a huge difference to financial aid employees!

We hope you have a successful transition into college next fall. For now, enjoy prom and graduation!

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