Tips for talking to your instructors:

If you choose to talk to your instructors about your accommodations and your Accommodations Card, follow these tips.

1. Set up a meeting with your instructor to talk about your accommodations. Doing it in this way helps to remind the instructor that this information is confidential and not to be shared with others.
   a. Visit the instructor during office hours (hours are usually posted in the syllabus).
   b. E-mail your instructor to set up an appointment.
   c. Ask your instructor after class to arrange a meeting time.

2. At the meeting, discuss your accommodations with your instructor. The Accommodations Card will not identify your specific disability.

You do not have to share specific disability information. You may just want to share that you are a student with a disability and what your accommodation needs are. Use assertive communication skills to discuss your needs with your instructor. Self-advocacy involves effective communication. Using assertive communication to advocate for our wants and needs can help us achieve our goals, help us feel good about ourselves, develop positive relationships with others built on respect and support our decision-making abilities. Here are some tips to help you communicate assertively.

- Use “I” statements and consider the feelings of others.
- Be conscious of your tone of voice. Be firm and calm but nice.
- Stick to the facts.
- Be respectful of others’ opinions and feelings.
- Use appropriate body language such as make eye contact, face the individual you are talking with and have a pleasant but serious facial expression.
- Listen to the individual you are talking with about their opinions or feelings.

3. If you decide to share specific disability information, be sure to use brief, positive everyday language that focuses on your strengths and abilities and effective accommodations.

- Be prepared when you talk with your instructors; have an idea of what you want to talk about with them. With busy schedules, instructors appreciate to the point and clear explanations.
- It is your choice as to how much information you wish to share concerning your disability.

4. Discuss the information on the Accommodations Card by approaching it as you are a student registered with Disability Services and these are the accommodations that you are to receive. Be prepared to answer any questions.

   If you do not feel comfortable answering the instructor’s questions, you can refer him or her to Disability Services.