

# DEPARTMENTAL STUDENT ADVISOR (DSA)

## LET'S TALK ABOUT **your DSA experience:**

Departmental Student Advisors (DSAs) serve as voluntary liaisons between students and faculty in specific academic departments, programs, and/or concentrations. When students have academic questions related to majors, course planning, academic workload, or class registration, DSAs provide one-on-one and group guidance, and share feedback with department chairs and advocate on behalf of their peers as appropriate. They are also highly responsive to faculty requests related to departmental information-sharing, event planning, and project management

## LET'S TALK ABOUT **the transferable skills acquired:**

**1. Critical Thinking/Problem-Solving:** In an effort to thoughtfully consider ways to engage current students, you have had to identify the needs of your peers and potential solutions for their academic concerns. You have quickly pivoted from in-person to virtual programming, specifically related to Declaration of Major Day for sophomores. Constantly seeking out opportunities to connect students with answers to their academic questions demonstrates your ability to problem-solve in a dynamic way.

**2. Oral/Written Communications:** To adequately serve as a liaison between fellow peers and academic leaders, the ability to communicate clearly, concisely, and respectfully is critical. When students present academic barriers to you, the way you speak and write to department chairs, faculty, and other College administrators must accurately reflect student requests while maintaining a courteous and professional tone. You also have to adeptly analyze and identify the best medium to communicate student concerns, whether that be via email, in Microsoft Teams, in a virtual meeting, or in person.

**3. Teamwork/Collaboration:** One of the main goals of the DSA is to promote community-building amongst students in the major or program. You communicate directly with faculty members within the department to determine their objectives and to respond to their requests for you to share pertinent information with students, publicize departmental events, and provide updates on special projects. Collaborating with department chairs and faculty members to build community amongst your student peers represents a high level of cooperation necessary for success in any field or industry.

**4. Professionalism/Work Ethic:** As the DSA role is a voluntary one, you must maintain your ability to work independently, without much direct oversight or supervision. You understand College politics and power structures in an effort to help students successfully navigate them. You anticipate student academic needs and communicating those to faculty members in a confidential, sensitive, and respectful manner.

**5. Leadership:** DSAs are nominated by a faculty member; this is a privileged role that is respected amongst faculty members and the College community. You voluntarily stepped into this position to take on a challenge and model responsible leadership to your peers.



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## LET'S TALK ABOUT **sample resume action statements:**

- Fostered relationships with and between ## professors and ## students in particular major, department, and/or concentration
- Coordinated ## in-person and virtual events to promote the major/department/program and to build and sustain a strong community
- Navigated College systems to provide helpful guidance to peers on course planning, class registration, major exploration, and academic success
- Advocated for students by respectfully communicating academic concerns about major/department/program to department chair, faculty members, and College administrators
- Served as an academic role model by representing a specific major/department/program in a faculty-nominated position
- Increased knowledge of major/department/program through in-person and virtual programming, marketing efforts, and personal storytelling

## CCPD TIPS

### Behavioral Interview Prompts:

Employers often ask questions about how you responded to specific situations.

For example:

- Tell me about a time when you experienced a conflict while working on a team.
- Describe a time when you had to work well under pressure.
- Give me an example of a time when you showed initiative and took the lead.
- Tell me about a time when you made a mistake, and how you handled it.

## S.T.A.R. METHOD

You can use **STAR** as a framework to structure your response to behavioral interview questions.

- Describe the context and background for a **S**ituation that's relevant to the question.
- Explain the **T**ask that needed to be completed. What was the goal?
- Outline specific **A**ctions you took. How did you exhibit transferable skills?
- Share the **R**esults of your actions. What was the outcome? What did you learn?

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Disclaimer: Because each student's experience will vary, use this resource as a general guide for telling your unique story.

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