

How to Advocate for, and as, BIPOC Students

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What advice would you give to individuals just starting their graduate careers on how to advocate for issues specific to the BIPOC community?

First and foremost, know what you want to advocate for. This includes researching issues and policies that you want to fight for. Ask yourself why it's important and who may challenge the position.

What advice would you give to individuals in the middle of their graduate careers on how to advocate for issues specific to the BIPOC community?

Once there is an identified issue, speak to your trusted colleagues about it and brainstorm how to present the issue to the designated person (professor, dean, etc.). It can be helpful to connect with clubs that support your issue as well.

What advice would you give individuals preparing to transition into early career about how to advocate for issues specific to the BIPOC community?

Be an example to your successors of the importance of advocacy. Show them how to promote change and connect with state and national organizations.

What is the main thing you want readers to know about advocating for the BIPOC community?

You don't need to be brave. Advocacy can be frightening and anxiety-provoking work.

What advice do you give to fellow graduate students who are advocating for global issues affecting the BIPOC community?

Know what you want, gather as much information as you can, and vote. Share your knowledge with your friends and family, and encourage them to do the same.

What's your best self-care advice?

Time management is key! Often, individuals want to absorb as much information as possible, which may lead to exhaustion and burnout. Set a designated time to research, but also allow time to sit and think and reflect on the information you gained. And set a designated time to just be and to feel grounded. Most people recall the quote, "you can't pour from an empty cup," so make sure to replenish yourself so that you can serve others.