



Why become a GBS Self-Advocacy Skills Seminar Facilitator?

Being a Facilitator of the GBS Self-Advocacy Skills Seminar will provide you with a uniquely challenging and rewarding opportunity **to make a difference in the lives of young adults** who have not had the advantages of a stable home life or support system in their past, but are nonetheless motivated to do something positive with their future.

How much time is involved in being a Facilitator?

The seminar class meets weekly for 2 ½ hours for 10 consecutive weeks. In addition, there is an orientation session for the students prior to the start of the seminar, as well as a wonderful graduation event at the conclusion of the seminar. The Facilitator should also plan on spending an additional 1 to 1 ½ hours each week preparing for class and grading homework.

How large is the seminar class?

For the seminar to be effective, the class size cannot be so small that discussion will be limited or so large that it will not be a personalized and engaging experience for the participants. Based on these parameters, the optimal class size appears to be anywhere from 6 to 12 students.

Is there an established curriculum for the seminar?

Absolutely! There is a wonderfully designed curriculum for the course developed by the founders of GBS and the Youth Advocacy Center (YAC) in New York City. Each student receives a copy of “On Your Own as a Young Adult”, which contains 22 case studies about young adults who face challenges in their lives that mirror many of those faced by the seminar participants. In addition, YAC has designed a Facilitator’s Guide which provides the Facilitator with a detailed session by session lesson plan, including suggestions for possible in-class discussion questions.

How is the seminar conducted?

One of the things that makes this seminar so unique is that it is conducted using the Socratic Method. This means that rather than being “the Sage on the Stage”, the Facilitator must be “the Guide by the Student’s Side”; in other words, rather than lecturing and being directive to the student, your role is to facilitate discussion and lead the students into understanding the basic tools and skills of self-advocacy and discovering workable solutions to problems. (See the Seminar Learning Outcomes document)

What skills should a qualified GBS facilitator have?

The desire to make a difference in the lives of vulnerable young adults is probably the most important characteristic of a successful GBS Facilitator. In addition to this, however, the Facilitator must be a patient individual who does not have an overriding need to provide students with directive advice on how to handle situations or what he or she believes are the right answers to problems.

As a Facilitator what kind of support can I expect from Future Link?

Dr. Ken Weiner, a Future Link board member, will be available for support and consultation as needed. Dr. Weiner participated in a two-day facilitator training conducted by the founders of the program, and facilitated the first two Self-Advocacy Skills seminars sponsored by Future Link in Spring and Fall 2008.

How can I find out more about being a Facilitator for a GBS Self-Advocacy Skills Seminar?

If you're interested in learning more about becoming a Facilitator, please contact Future Link's Executive Director Mindi Jacobson at mjacobson@myfuturelink.net or 240-393-9443.