

## Letter to Myself

In “How writing down life goals helps students boost their semester grades” Eric Schulzke discusses research aimed to improve retention among college students. Schulzke describes how students who were asked to write down life goals or to write about their imagined future selves had both higher retention rates and more positive college experiences.

This assignment asks you to write a similar essay. For this essay I want you to anticipate where you want to be in the future after graduation, consider potential obstacles to your success, and discuss interventions to those obstacles by describing how you plan to set your academic goals and to stick with them. This assignment asks you to write many of the ideas we have been going over in class into a unified, cohesive education plan.

Using your notes, reflections, any writing assignments completed in class so far, and general observations you’ve made during your time on campus, write a letter to yourself in which you discuss the following:

- What are your goals for attaining a college education? That is, what do you want to do after you graduate? Describe why you want to do those things (i.e. why are they important to you?).
- What kind of student will you have to be in order to reach these goals? What behaviors and strategies will you use in order to facilitate a successful academic career?
- What obstacles do you anticipate you will face (not enough time to complete tasks because of class load, trouble balancing social life with school, learning curves), and how you will overcome these obstacles (be specific-What is your ‘action plan’ for overcoming these obstacles? What resources will you be able to rely on?)
- What do you plan to do if your education plan gets derailed at some point?

One of the major goals of this assignment is to help you think through things that might derail you as a college student at some point so that when you experience any of these problems you have already thought of (consciously processed) ways to deal with them. Do so will allow you to act earlier and more effectively when tackling these problems.