An integral part of the Office of Undergraduate Advisement is the Bearcat Peer Advising program. We have a team of 10 Peer Advisors, representing a diverse range of majors and minors at the college. Before meeting with students, peer advisors undergo an intensive training program to ensure they are well-prepared for their advising sessions.

In August, all peer advisors began conducting one-on-one meetings with students. By September, each peer advisor was assigned a caseload of approximately 55 students who identified as first-generation college students. This initiative, called "First Gen Connect," aimed to enhance the sense of belonging and connectedness among first-generation students. Throughout the semester, five messages were sent to students, allowing them to engage with their peer advisors and receive timely responses to their questions.

Additionally, three peer advisors served as peer success coaches, offering students the opportunity to focus on six key executive functioning skills during their coaching sessions.

Fall 2024 Feedback Survey Results:

- 100% (525) of respondents stated they were either satisfied or very satisfied with their peer advising experience.
- 97% of respondents reported receiving the overall help they needed.
- 100% of respondents said they would refer a peer to schedule an appointment with a peer advisor.
- 90% of students who engaged in Brightspace groups or met with a peer advisor reported feeling a strong sense of belonging and support at Baruch.
- 63% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: "I felt a strong sense of belonging at Baruch."

Student Testimonials:

- "Stephanie helped me a lot. She gave me additional ideas and resources to explore, which helped me better understand my direction."
- "My advisor made everything clear. I got the answers to the questions I was asking."
- "Very helpful in explaining what I need to do and the credits I need to take. Very welcoming and made sure I understood everything."
- "She provided more information than I expected, which helped me better understand how to create my schedule."

From Ashley Hernandez, Senior Academic Advisor and Peer Advising Coordinator –

"The Bearcat Peer Advising program has grown since its inception. I have been able to witness the positive impact on the Baruch Community from both the students serviced and the student workers' perspective. I have witnessed peer advisors that were very quiet and reserved blossom into individuals that are advocates for others and confident in themselves to enter the workforce. Moreover, I have witnessed students leave the Peer Lounge happy with being able to connect with someone that understands what they are currently going through and receiving the readily available service. Overall, I believe that the Bearcat Peer Advisor program is fulfilling its mission and can continue to positively impact more students through the program's growth."