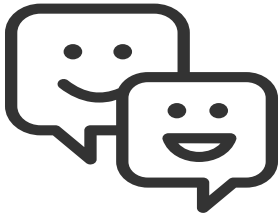


COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR PROFESSOR

Your instructors are there to help you. And, they really do want to see you succeed. Don't be afraid to reach out and talk to them. You can ask questions about the course, or maybe discuss their experience and research.

SOME REASONS YOU MAY WANT TO CONTACT YOUR PROFESSOR



1) *Ask questions!* It's okay to ask for help, whether it's clarity on assignment instructions or help with class concepts. Before asking questions about grading or due dates, read through the syllabus or Canvas first.

(2) *Let them know about emergency or life circumstances that may impact your ability to be successful in class.* Life does not happen independently from class. If you've experienced a major life event, let them know.

(3) *Let them know about technology issues.* Zoom disconnected during your class? Having issues with Canvas? Let them know as soon as you can.

(4) *Ask about their research.* This can help you learn more about this area of study, find out about research opportunities and cultivate relationships for the future.

EMAILING YOUR PROFESSOR

1) *Use the email address the professor provides on your syllabus.*

This is the one they expect students to use. Likewise, email from your university address, as some professors will not open emails from other accounts. If your professor asks you to communicate through Canvas, make sure to do so.

(2) *Address the professor formally*, e.g. "Dear Dr. Campbell," or "Professor McConnell."

(3) *Provide a clear subject in the subject line* ("Clarissa Smith's Make-up Exam"), and keep the message short and to-the-point.

(4) *Save any attachments in Microsoft Word or the form your professor specifies.*

(5) *Proofread your email.* Misspelling does not give the professor a good impression of your ability to earn an "A" in the class.

(6) *Likewise, do not use slang or text-speak.* Even if a professor can understand your language, it is not appropriate for professional communication.



(7) *Do not forget to sign the email* with your first and last names, preferably after closing with “thank you,” or “Sincerely.”

(8) *Send a quick “thank-you” message* if a professor has provided you with help in any way. If they sent you attached materials, let them know you received them.

(9) *Remember that emails never go away.* They are a permanent record of your interaction with an instructor.

PREPARING FOR OFFICE HOURS



1) *Have a purpose.* Your purpose may be getting help with class content, or just learning more about your professor. But your conversation will be more focused if you know before you go. If you’re requesting a meeting with your instructor, include the purpose in your request.

(2) *Make a list of questions.* Not only will this help you feel more prepared, it will help ensure you don’t forget anything.

(3) *Have your materials with you.* If you need to reference an assignment or textbook, having it in front of you is better than trying to remember the material exactly.

(4) *Write out what you want to say.* You may need to share personal information maybe about a life event that has come up, or maybe you would like clarification on an exam grade. Writing out what you want to say or making an outline can help you organize your thoughts and ensure you don’t miss anything.

EMAIL TEMPLATE: If you’re not sure where to start on an email to your professor, use the template below.



Dear Professor **[professor’s last name]**,

My name is **[your name]** and I’m in **[course name and number, include meeting days and times]**. I had a few questions about what we went over in class recently. Unfortunately, I am not able to attend your office hours, so I’ve listed my questions below, in hopes that you can answer them over email. If you think it would be better to meet in person, these are sometimes that I’m available: **[list at least three times that you’re available]**.

[Questions, numbered]

Thank you very much for your time.

Sincerely,

[Your name]