



Email Etiquette



Why are Email Skills Important?

- Primary method of communication between students and university faculty
- Creates an impression of the sender
- Builds lasting communication skills

Parts of an Email

To: use an email address for the person receiving the Email.

CC: “Carbon Copy” -use this when you want someone else to get a copy of your Email. (It is not directly to them, but you want them to see it.)

BCC: “Blind Carbon Copy” -use this when you want someone to get a copy of your Email and only they know they got a copy.

SUBJECT: Keep it short, but not too vague

Basics

- When Emailing your instructor, always include your name, course, section number, and student ID #.
- Your subject should be meaningful.
 - Bad example: Question
 - Good example: Question about Introduction Assignment
(Your Name)
- Always include a salutation like you would in a letter.
- Read your email out loud or to a friend and think twice before sending.
- Always end with a salutation.

Basics

- Try to keep emails brief and to the point (one screen length)
- Do not expect your instructor to immediately reply. Expect appropriate wait time (24 hours for most instructors, M-F)
- Always use complete sentences with correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Tone

- Write in a positive tone
- Never type in all caps
 - It makes it seem like you are shouting
- Do not bold an entire email
 - Only bold words you want emphasized
- Keep emojis out of Emails
- Ask questions, do not demand

Good Topics for Email

- When asking an easy question that can be answered in a paragraph or less
- When you do NOT need an immediate response
- To inform your instructor you will be missing class unless instructed otherwise
- To schedule a face-to-face meeting

How to email an instructor in higher education (and beyond):

Follow the steps in order to achieve the proper email etiquette when messaging college instructors, potential job supervisors, and all other persons in authority.

1. **The Subject Line:** Make sure that you are typing a 2-5 word summary of the overall message of your email in the subject line of every email you construct. If there's one thing instructors hate, it's receiving emails with <no subject> as the subject line. Be specific and organized so that your instructor will prioritize your message and also have an idea of what it's about.
 1. Examples of subject lines: "Missing Grade," "Homework Question," "Late Work"
2. **Begin with a Greeting:** Next, begin the actual body of the email, starting with a positive greeting towards your audience. This will make your message more pleasant, despite the kind of contents it has.
 1. Examples of greetings: "Good morning," "I hope you're having an excellent day so far," "I hope this email finds you well"
3. **The Body of the Email:** For the actual body of the email, actually lead into your main message and reason for writing it. This could be about a homework question, a missing grade, or a general question about the course.
 1. Examples of how to start off the body of an email: "I am writing to you because . . .," "I need help with . . .," "I'm confused by . . ."

1. **End with a Closing:** After you are finished writing your main message, lead into a closing, which will wrap up your message completely.
 1. Examples of closings: “Thank you so much for your time,” “Have a wonderful day,” “Sincerely”
2. **Sign Your Name:** Of course, at the end of the email, sign your first and last name, just like you would an actual handwritten letter.

Other Tips for Emailing Instructors

- Always be sure to use proper grammar; this includes capitalization, punctuation, etc.
- Always make sure that you are using positive language and are never sounding like you are attacking the instructor or demeaning them in any way; they do a lot of hard work, and they do not deserve to be talked down to by their own students. This is disrespectful, no matter what issue you are addressing so always be sure that the language of your email is positive and sincere.
- Be sure to spell out your words, meaning do not use common text abbreviations such as “plz,” “ur,” “lol,” etc.

Good Example:

Subject: Composition I- Submission Question

Hello Professor Smith,

I am a student in your MWF 2:00-2:50 Composition I course, and I am confused by the submission process for our Unit I paper. Would you like a hard copy in addition to the blackboard submission?

Thank you,

John Smith (student ID)

Poor Example

Subject: none

Body:

I need help with my homework that is due in class tomorrow can u please help me. I missed last week and didnt get the notes from anyone and now i dont know what to do. Please respond ASAP.