
Sending Email to Faculty and Administrators

Email you send to faculty and administrators should follow the conventions of professional email in any workplace: craft an informative subject line; address the recipient appropriately; be concise and courteous; proofread to avoid sending messages with typos. These are some guidelines for composing professional email messages:

Craft a specific subject line

A good subject line tells your recipient what your email is about. Make yours clear and direct. If your email pertains to a class, include the class number and section in the subject line.

Example subject lines:

ENGH 101.067 Final Paper Questions
ENGH 101.067 Absence

Don't "reply all" when you want to email your professor only

Sometimes professors send out email to the entire class. If you are responding to such an email, do not "reply all" unless you want everyone on the list to see your message.

Start with an appropriate greeting

Start with "Dear" or "Hello." These greetings are formal and should be used when greeting your professors and administrators in a professional message.

Examples of appropriate salutations:

Dear Professor Deems,
Hello Professor Spivak,

Examples of salutations that are **too informal**. Do **not** use these:

X Hi Professor
X Hey there Professor

Address the recipient properly

- If you are writing to an instructor or professor, address them as "Professor [Lastname]."
- If your instructor or professor who has a PhD or DA, you may address them as Dr. [Lastname]," but using "Professor" is also fine.
- If you are writing to an administrator who is not a faculty member, address them as "Mr. [Lastname]" or "Ms. [Lastname]." (If you want to be super-precise, you can look up their profile to see if they have a PhD or DA.)

- Do not address faculty or administrators by their first names, or with “Professor [Firstname],” “Dr. [Firstname],” or “Mr. [Firstname].”

Introduce Yourself

- Introduce yourself to your recipient if you haven’t met them or if you think they may not remember you.
- Give some background and why you are writing your email. Be specific about what exactly you are writing about.

Dear Professor Wattwau,

I am a first-year graduate student in the MA program in Professional Writing and Rhetoric, and I am enrolled in your course English 502...

Be direct, clear, and courteous

- Be polite, but get to your point quickly and clearly.
- If you have any questions, ask them in a courteous way.
- If you have lists or information or more than just a few questions, don’t be afraid to use bullet-points or numbers in your email. This will make it easier to read.

Dear Professor Sullivan,

I am a first-year graduate student in the MA program in Professional Writing and Rhetoric, and I have been assigned to you as your advisee. I have some questions about the program requirements and courses. Do you have time this week or next week to meet with me before classes begin?

Dear Professor Yang,

I am enrolled in your course SOC 402: Research Methods, and I am looking forward to taking this class. Due to a wedding in my family, however, I will be unable to attend our first meeting. Would you send me an electronic copy of the syllabus? I would like to prepare any assignments that are due on the first or second class meeting.

Close the message

End your message with a professional closing like “Sincerely,” “Best,” or “Thank you” followed by your first and last name. If you are writing about an administrative issue, include your Mason G-number.

Sincerely,
Miranda Castanga

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