
Connecting With Your Instructor

A key to your university success is knowing your instructors and what they identify as important in each of your courses. Developing good relationships with instructors involves good communication in and outside of class times. They are available to meet, communicate, and talk with you, but you must plan how to connect with them during their available times.

In-Class Communication

To build your relationship with your instructor in-class, consider ways that you can show your interest in the course material. Some ways to do this are:

- Listen actively during class to determine what is most important to the instructor.
- Avoid arguing with the instructor. If you disagree with something said in class, try to ask questions about the topic after class.
- Read the textbook before class and prepare questions to ask.
- Let your instructor know what interests you about the course.

Communicating in Office Hours

Instructors hold office hours outside of class. Whenever possible, try to meet your instructor during these times. You can use office hours to ask questions about the course material, to get clarification about the requirements for an assignment, or to learn more about a topic from the class that you find particularly interesting. Some tips for using office hours effectively:

- Arrive on time to be respectful of your instructor's and other students' time.
- Come prepared by bringing your textbook and other course materials.
- Prepare questions ahead of time.
- Summarize key points to make sure you understand.

Communicating By Email

Instructors often receive many e-mails from students. To write an effective e-mail, consider the following:

- Use your university e-mail account when possible.
- In the subject line, write the course name and topic of your email (e.g. *BIOL 1100 Lab Report 2*).
- Use a professional greeting in the e-mail ("Dear" rather than "Hey!").
- Write your question or concern in short, clear sentences.
- End your e-mail with an appropriate conclusion (e.g. "Thank you in advance for your help", or "Thank you for your time and consideration").
- Allow time for your instructor to respond – don't expect an instant reply.

By showing an interest, taking time to communicate with your instructor throughout the course, and using e-mail effectively, you will be well on your way to building a good relationship that will support your communication and learning.

Some content adapted from: [A Student's Guide to Emailing Professors](#) and [Influencing Teachers](#)