

How to Write a Professional Email to your Professor or Advisor

updated 11/ 12/21

- Maintain a courteous tone
- Be brief and to the point

Below are recommendations on how to write a formal and concise email. If you are emailing a professor or BC staff for the first time, *it's better to err on the side of being too formal rather than too casual.*

- Add a topic on the subject line. Do not leave the subject blank. (*Appointment with professor: Jane Doe*)
- Address your recipient by title and last name (*Professor Doe*)
- Use full sentences, standard punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and proper grammar. Avoid slang and emojis.
- Add details to the body of the email
- Re-read and use spell check before pressing 'send.'
- Avoid writing an email when upset. Take time to collect your thoughts prior to writing or sending the email.

Below is an example of how to write an email to your **professor** about a concern:

1. Salutation (*Dear Professor*)
2. State the purpose of the email (*I am in your 10:00 AM Math class. I do not understand a key concept you taught in class.*)
3. State the topic/solution/idea you would like to be considered (*Can I make an appointment with you to review that concept?*)
4. Take responsibility for your actions or inaction (*I reviewed my class notes. I may need to spend more time in the ASC.*)
5. State who you have spoken to or what you have done to find an answer or solve your problem (*I talked to fellow students in my study group but they were not able to help me.*)
6. Closing Salutation – Your signature should include: your full name and student ID number. (*Sincerely, Jane Pupil, Health Science Pathway, Nursing Major, and student ID: ZZ234567*)

Dear Professor Jones:

I am in your Monday 10 AM Mathematics class (MAC1105C; 686776). I did not understand one of the concepts you taught in last week's class. Can I make an appointment with you during your office hours so you can review it with me? I reached out to some of my classmates, but I still do not understand. Thank you for your understanding. I look forward to meeting with you at the appointment.

*Gratefully,
Mary Student, SBHS Pathway, Psychology, ZZ2345667*

Below is an example of how to write an email to your **Advisor** about a concern:

1. Salutations (*Dear Advisor Mary Jones*)
2. State the purpose of the email (*I am interested in changing my major.*)
3. State the topic/solution/idea you would like to be considered (*I would like to complete a major change.*)

4. Take responsibility for your actions or inaction (*I know I missed the deadline. However, I would still like to discuss my major change.*)
5. State who you have spoken to or what you have done to find an answer or solve your problem (*I spoke with my instructor and she suggested that I email you.*)
6. Add program and relevant course or reference numbers. (if needed)
7. Closing Salutation – Your signature should include: your full name and student ID number.
(*Sincerely, Jane Pupil, Business Pathway, Economics Major, Z9234567*)

Dear Advisor Simon:

I had an appointment scheduled with you last week. I missed the appointment because I had a minor car accident at that scheduled time. I tried to schedule a new appointment, but you are booked for the next week. Can you suggest the next available time when I can meet with you? I want to make sure that I have chosen the right program to match my career goals. Thank you for your flexibility. I am sorry I was not able to cancel the appointment. I will prepare a list of questions for our next appointment.

*Gratefully,
Mary Lopez, Humanities Pathway, History, Z16012726*