

How to E-mail your Professor

Do:

- **Use the subject line.** Write a brief, specific description of your objective, such as, “Absent for ENGL 1010 9/15/13.” Be sure to include the **course number** in the subject line.
- **Use a greeting.** The safest way to start is with “Dear Professor _____.” This will avoid the issue of whether the professor has a PhD or not.
- **Be concise.** Your message should be brief and clear.
- **Use proper grammar.** You want your professor to view you as a serious student. You’re not texting a friend or updating your Facebook status. If not careful, your professor may LOL@u.
- **Acknowledge any and all replies.** If your professor answers your e-mail, points you to a resource, or agrees to write you a reference, acknowledge him or her with a thank you in reply. Your professor will appreciate your good manners.
- **Sign with your full name and a thanks or regards.**
- **Remember!** E-mail is forever. Once you send it, you can’t take it back.

Do Not:

- **Use a high school e-mail address.** Sk8rboy420@e-mail.com is not appropriate at the university level. Always use your Tulane e-mail address for class correspondence.
- **Embarrass yourself.** Remember to proofread before you send. Mistakes might be misinterpreted as humor or an insult.
- **Expect an immediate response.** Professors run on different schedules than students. Twenty-four hours is a standard window of time for an e-mail response during the business week. Professors are people, too, so don’t expect one to answer an e-mail during Mardi Gras weekend or at 1 AM on a Saturday night.
- **Complain about your grades.** Unless you have been specifically directed to use e-mail for grading topics or issues, don’t. Make use of office hours and discuss grade questions face-to-face.