

Writing a Professional Email

In professional settings, such as this mentoring program, your first communication with someone is often via email. Thus, people form their first impression of you from your email. Put your best foot forward by writing a professional and kind email.

What is included in a professional email?

1. Professional, descriptive subject line

- SUBJECT: UNIV 101 Yadéeh Sawyer Missing 3/8 Class
- SUBJECT: UNM STEM Mentoring Program - Schedule first meeting

2. Professional greeting including the person's name and prefix

- Dear Professor Sawyer, | Dear Dr. Sawyer, | Dear Captain Sawyer,

** I've never met a person who is mad at being called Dr. or Professor when they don't have these titles. But, people with these titles get upset when you do not include them.

** Call the person by their title until they sign their email differently or tell you to call them something else.

3. Who you are/ how you know them

- I am in your UNIV 101 course that meets on Mondays and Wednesdays.
- I am your assigned mentee for the UNM STEM Mentoring Program.

** Eventually, you will build a relationship and may not need this type of line in an email.

4. Why you are writing

- I will not be in class today, March 8, 2018.
- I would like to schedule our first meeting for the mentoring program.

5. Next steps

- I will review today's slides and complete the make-up assignment before next class.
- I am available to meet on Monday, March 19th after 2 PM, Thursday, the 22nd all day, and Friday, the 23rd after 5 PM. What time works best for you? Would you like to meet on campus or off campus?

6. Thank you or other expression of gratitude.

- Thank you for understanding.
- Thank you for your time.
- Thank you in advance for working with me through this mentoring program.

7. Sign off and your name


Best regards,
Yadéeh Sawyer

Sincerely,
Yadéeh Sawyer

Thank you,
Yadéeh Sawyer

8. Email signature


Full Name, Any credentials Degree and expected graduation year Any leadership positions School Name Email address	Yadéeh E. Sawyer Bachelor of Science in Biology, Expected 2019 Secretary, Advancing Women in Science The University of New Mexico yadeeh@unm.edu
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** You can set up LoboMail to automatically add an email signature to each email you write by clicking the gear icon  and searching for “signature”.

** Keep font and font size the same as the text in an email (no fancy fonts or colors). But, a bold name is acceptable.

Automatic replies:

When you will be away from your email for more than two business days, set up your email account to automatically reply to emails you receive. This automatic reply lets people know when you will return to your email. Automatic replies are good for situations like spring break, summer, holidays, family emergencies, etc.

Set up LoboMail to automatically send a reply to each email you receive during specific dates/times by clicking the gear icon  and searching for “automatic”.

Your reply can be short.

I am away from my email through January 15, 2018 and will respond to your message when I return.

In work situations, automatic replies also suggest who to contact while you are away.

If you need immediate assistance, contact the Engineering Student Support Center at (505) 277-4354.

Emailing is often the preferred method to communicate with your professors or employers. This will help you to practice your current and future workplace skillsets.

Practice Writing a Professional Email

In this activity, write a generic email to your professor about the following topics:

- You need clarification on a homework assignment
- When you submitted an assignment on Learn, there was an error in your submission.
- A mistake you have found in the professor's lecture

The following is a guide for the process of writing a professional email to a professor:

1. **Read the syllabus, assignment instructions, course website, or classmates:** Often, your question has already been answered in the material the professor has provided.
2. **Use your academic account:** Using your academic account helps avoid having your personal email address be removed by the spam filter
3. **Format:** Using an appropriate format is highly professional.
 - a. **Meaningful subject line:** Start with a professional and descriptive title. You should include the course number and the topic of your email. Saying "Question" is not enough detail.
 - b. **Greeting:** Start with a greeting. Spell their name correctly. "Dear Professor" will typically cover most of your professors' circumstances. Do not use the professor's first name unless you have been invited to do so.
 - c. **Brief and polite reason for your email:** Explain why you are emailing in a way that is short and to the point, while also giving your professor enough information to address your situation. Include dates where necessary. Name the assignment or projects you are referring to instead of using pronouns or phrases, such as "this assignment".
 - d. **Reminder:** If your professor cannot understand why you are emailing, they may not respond or they may ask what you meant which just prolongs the time until you get your question answered.
 - e. **Suggest a solution:** If you are having a problem, suggest a solution. Don't simply say "I missed class". Instead, introduce that you missed class and suggest a solution such as, "can I come to your office hours to talk about what I missed?"
 - f. **Thank them:** Remember, professors often teach multiple classes; they may have hundreds of students. Thank them for their time and consideration of your email.
 - g. **Sign your name:** Sign it with your first/last name and course/section number. Do this even if you know your professor knows you by name.
 - h. **Attachments:** If your email is regarding an assignment or article, attach the document. This way, your professor does not have to hunt around for it. You can also attach screenshots of any problems you are having with online computer software.
4. **Proofread:** Read your email over and use spell check. If your email account does not have spell check, paste the message into a word-processing program to run spell check. Strive for a polite, concise, and clear message. Check that documents are actually attached to the email.
5. **Timing:** Leave enough time for a reply. Some professors do not have email access everyday so it may be a while before you get a reply. For time sensitive questions, it may be better to call or go to office hours.
6. **Acknowledge the reply:** A simple "Thank you, Professor." may do the trick. You can also send a longer, professional thank you message. If the issue is not being resolved, ask to meet in person.
7. **Consult:** If you have questions related to emailing professors, review the online article, search for other online resources, ask mentors/peers, etc.

Adapted from Wiki How's "How to Email a Professor" at <http://www.wikihow.com/Email-a-Professor>

EXAMPLE EMAIL

Subject Line: UNIV 175—Question about Planning to Achieve Your Dream Assignment

Dear Professor Hackel,

My name is Mary and I am a student in your UNIV 175 course. I am working on the “Planning to Achieve Your Dream” Assignment and am having trouble with question number four. Question four reads “Which undergraduate majors does the graduate school accept and is a BA or BS version of that major required?” I am pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Nursing which is not a graduate program. Could you help me identify how I should address this question? I have attached the assignment for your reference. Thank you for your time

Best regards,
Mary Cianflone
UNIV 175, Section 2

Attached: Planning to Achieve Your Dream.docx