

# Tips for successful interactions with your professors

## Individual interactions with your professor

- **Know how to address them-** General rule- if they have PhD listed in their signature or on your syllabus, call them Dr. \_\_\_\_\_. If they have a master's degree, call them Mr. or Mrs. If in doubt, Professor \_\_\_\_\_ is always safe!
- **Introduce yourself at the beginning of the semester** -helps them put a face to the name. Also helps you get past any fears you might have if initiating communication with them later in the semester.
- **Know how they want you to communicate-** office hours only, email, phone? Most will say via the class syllabus.
- **Initiate!** - If they don't know, they can't help
- **Go to office hours-** office hours should be used mostly for discussing academic questions, or for continuing a prior conversation, not just "hang out"
- **Be on time to meetings and class!**
- **Be proactive-** Don't wait until right before a test or assignment is due. Also, don't wait until the end of the semester to bring up concerns on how you are doing in the course.
- **Use proper etiquette and grammar in emails** with any professional communications. (emails are not text/ instant messages)
  - Always start with a "Hello/ Dear Professor \_\_\_\_\_."
  - Request- don't demand- whatever you need (I can't make your Thursday office hours and was wondering if you'd be available to meet another time.)
  - Give options! ("I could come to office hours between 12-2 on Monday or between 1-3 on Tuesday. If that doesn't work, I could send you an email with my questions.")
  - Thank your professor at the end and sign off with your name, you may want also include the class you inquiring about.
  - Proofread!
- **Remember talking with you is part of their job-** Don't apologize for taking up their time by emailing or going to office hours. Most professors want you to reach out.
- **Say "hello" outside of class-** They are people too!
- **Take advantage to interact with professors outside of the classroom-** Department open houses, department social gatherings, student organizations, volunteer in research labs.

## Classroom interactions

- **Sit in a seat in class where you will pay attention-** This will help you be an active participant and attentive to the professor.
- **No phone or internet in class**
- **Ask questions if needed for clarification of information from class.** Don't ask questions that you can find on your own (in syllabus or other course materials).

**Ultimately you are responsible for your own success so stay informed and stay engaged!**