



## Graduate School

# Contacting Faculty

Your emails to faculty should serve a specific purpose and should always be professional, courteous and concise.

## Etiquette:

Until you establish a relationship with the faculty member, address them in a formal fashion. You may be able to relax this a bit once you get to know one another.

- The subject line of your email should reflect what your email is pertaining.
- Address your recipient by title and last name (Dear Professor Jones). Remember you are not texting a friend or posting on social media, you are emailing a professor. Use complete sentences, proper grammar and punctuation.
- Always avoid using slang and emojis
- Sign your email with a complimentary close such as "Sincerely" or "Best regards" and then add your name.

## General Guidelines:

- Keep it brief, but substantive - consider using bullet points. If you need to discuss something more involved, it is usually better to meet unless the faculty member prefers otherwise.
- Make sure you directly ask for what you want (summer internship with them, to join their lab during the school year, an in-person or Zoom meeting, etc.)
- If a response is required on your part, reply in a timely fashion and be sure to prioritize that.

## Emailing a Potential PI/Mentor for the First Time:

- When you email a faculty member who you are hoping to work with, either on an internship or in graduate school, your ultimate goal should be to set-up a time to meet with them.
- You must make a connection between your interests (and experience if you have some) and the work that they are doing.
- If you don't have much experience yet, let them know one of the reasons why you want to work with them is so you can get experience in that area so you can possibly do \_\_\_\_ in the future (this shows that you have a somewhat longer-term goal in mind)
- Attach a copy of your CV or resume – if you don't have much background in the research area yet, make sure you list any relevant coursework you are taking or have taken (some faculty won't read your attachment, but best-case scenario is that they do!)

- If you don't receive a reply, please know it is not personal. Send a follow-up email about two weeks later. If you still don't receive a reply, don't take it personally and move on to the next faculty you are interested in.
- If they do email you back, pay attention to their communication style (i.e., how formal are they, how quickly do they respond, do they seem to prefer email, phone, Zoom meetings).
- If you are reaching out to the faculty member to find out whether or not they could be a potential graduate school mentor/PI, whether or not you receive a reply, you should also feel free to reach out to their graduate students.

**Last Updated: June 2023**