Email Etiquette

Email offers a convenient medium of communication to send or request information, transmit documents, and/or prompt a discussion. It is important to remember that there are differences between emailing a friend or peer and emailing your supervisor or professor. This handout provides suggestions and strategies for how to effectively compose email messages in a professional or academic setting.

The Basic Structure

- Use a concise and informative subject line.
- Address the recipient by name.
- Identify yourself – name, course number or meeting time.
- Clearly state your purpose, followed by additional details as necessary.
- Conclude the email. Thank the recipient for their time. Sign your name.

Subject: Question over Annotated bib. Project

Dr. Smith,

I am in your ENGL 1301 class and I have a few questions about integrating sources and the annotated bibliography entries that are due on Friday, July 20th.

I’m not completely sure about the assignment’s requirements and I was hoping we could discuss the assignment during your office hours on Wednesday, July 11th?

If you are unavailable at that time, I could also come by on Thursday after 12:00 p.m.

Please reply with a time that is most convenient for you.

Thank you,

Jane Doe

Write your own future!
# Email Etiquette

## The Do's and Don'ts of Writing Email

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consider your audience. To whom are you writing this email?</th>
<th>Focus on your purpose. What do you hope to accomplish by writing this email?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use a professional and identifiable email address.</td>
<td>Do not assume email is private. Email is not private. Do not write anything in an email that you wouldn’t want shared.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Be mindful of your tone. In the absence of non-verbal cues, your message could be misinterpreted by the reader(s).</td>
<td>Do not expect an immediate response. Most instructors have a 24-48 hour response window.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keep message brief and to the point. Your reader doesn’t need to know everything going on in your life.</td>
<td>Do not respond to or write an email when you are angry or upset. Give yourself space and time to think before writing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Write, re-read, and revise your message before sending. Use spell-check!</td>
<td>Do not write in ALL CAPS – your reader may perceive this as SHOUTING! Also, limit your use of exclamation points!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow the conventions for effective paragraph writing. Each paragraph (section) should focus on the development of one idea.</td>
<td>Do not email your professor to ask them what you missed in class. Check the course website, talk to a peer, and/or make an appointment to visit them during office hours.</td>
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<td>Use complete sentences.</td>
<td>Do not write in textese or txt-speak. Avoid the use of emoticons.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use the top-down method: Begin with the most important information at the top of the message, followed by additional information and explanation.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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The information for this handout was compiled from the following sources:

Purdue University Online Writing Lab. (2015). Email etiquette for students. Retrieved from https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/694/01/

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