

How Do I Schedule and Prepare for a Meeting with Faculty?

How Should I Contact a Faculty Member?

- **Email:** This is probably the best means of initiating a conversation with a faculty member. When you compose an introductory email, please remember the following:
 - always follow the basic [netiquette rules](#) = internet etiquette rules (see also additional resources below);
 - use your USM email account;
 - choose a descriptive subject line;
 - in your salutation line, address the faculty as Dear Dr. XXX, or Dear Professor XXX (if you do not know whether the faculty member has a doctorate degree);
 - introduce yourself (name, junior XYZ major, relevant courses taken) and succinctly explain the reason for your email. Politely ask whether the faculty member would consider granting you a 30 min meeting about [insert here purpose of meeting];
 - allow a response time of at least 48 hours. If you do not hear back within a few days, you may gently nudge the faculty member by forwarding or re-sending your original email, politely asking whether your original email was received, and expressing your hope to hear from him/her.
- **Department or office phone:** Should you not receive a response to two emails, consider that some faculty prefer to correspond by phone. Look up the faculty member's phone number in the [USM directory](#); introduce yourself and politely request a meeting again. If you do not reach the faculty member by phone, leave a message with your name and YOUR CELL PHONE NUMBER (i.e. a phone number under which you can be reached).
- **Office hours:** As a last resort, call or visit the departmental office or the faculty's office to find out about his/her office hours and visit during that time to schedule a meeting. Alternatively: wait for the faculty to finish lecturing and politely approach her/him as s/he walks back to the office.
- If, despite all of these attempts, you are unable to obtain a satisfactory response from a faculty member, that probably means s/he may not be able to meet with you. If you were considering asking that faculty member to mentor your research or creative project, you may think about choosing an alternative mentor.

How Should I Prepare for the Meeting?

- If you made the appointment some time ago, send a brief email a few days before as a friendly reminder of date and time of the upcoming meeting.
- Dress professionally for the meeting in [business](#) or [academic](#) casual attire.
- Be a few minutes early to ensure that you are on time. DO NOT BE LATE!
- Come to the meeting prepared. Bring notepaper and pen/pencil or your laptop to take notes during the meeting or interview.

What Should I Do During the Meeting:

- TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONE AND LEAVE IT IN YOUR POCKET OR BAG!

- Introduce yourself.
- Do not engage in excessive small talk and keep track of time so that you won't exceed the typical 30 min meeting time.
- **Do not take out your cell phone to write and/or answer texts and emails, and/or to answer a phone call!**
- Pose your questions and talking points, and do not be afraid to ask for clarification of additional explanations if a point is not clearly addressed.
- Thank the faculty member for setting aside time to meet with you.

Should I Do Anything After the Meeting?

- Send the faculty with whom you met a handwritten **thank-you** note that expresses your appreciation, or, at the very least, a thank-you email.

Additional Resources: netiquette rules and examples of good and bad emails.

- [Tips for Writing a Contact Email](#) (Office for Undergraduate Research, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill)
- [RE: Your Recent Email to Your Professor](#) (Inside Higher Ed.)
- [How to Email Your Professor](#) (Wellesley College Project on Social Computing)
- [How to Email a Research Professor](#) (University of California Santa Cruz)
- [Business Email](#) (Colorado State University)
- [Netiquette in Online Courses](#) (University of Florida)