

Email asking about a RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY should:

- have an informative subject line
- be concise
- be formal: Dear Dr. Smith; Sincerely, Your Name
- not use Mrs. or Ms.
- NOT have slang, abbreviations, or emoticons
- address any qualifications the professor is looking for
- demonstrate your experience
- state specifically your interest in that research group (you need to read the professor's website)
- explain why research is important for your goals
- ask to schedule a meeting or say that you will be coming to office hours

DO NOT SEND THIS EMAIL

Hi Joe,

My name is Sebastian Fox and I am a major in Biochemistry. Is there space in your lab for an undergraduate? If so, what is the pay rate?

*Thanks,
Sebastian*

EMAIL TO A LECTURER

Miscommunication can occur if an e-mail is unclear, disorganized, or just too long and complex for readers to easily follow. **Here are some steps you can take to ensure that your message is understood:**

1. Briefly state your purpose for writing the e-mail in the very beginning of your message.
2. Be sure to provide the reader with a context for your message. If you're asking a question, cut and paste any relevant text (for example, part of a previous e-mail message) into the e-mail so that the reader has some frame of reference for your question.
3. Use paragraphs to separate thoughts (or consider writing separate e-mails if you have many unrelated points or questions).
4. Finally, state the desired outcome at the end of your message. If you're requesting a response, let the reader know what type of response you require (for example, an e-mail reply, possible times for a meeting, a recommendation letter, etc.) If you're requesting something that has a due date, be sure to highlight that due date in a prominent position in your e-mail. Ending your e-mail with the next step can be really useful, especially in work settings.
5. Format your message so that it is easy to read. Use white space to visually separate paragraphs into separate blocks of text. Bullet important details so that they are easy to pick out.

SEND AN EMAIL LIKE THIS

Dear Dr. Jones,

I am a **year** student at **university** majoring in **major**. **How you found out about the professor's research. Expression of interest in specific paper or topic.** I would appreciate the chance to talk with you about your research in **topic of interest** and about possible undergraduate opportunities in your lab.

My experience in **research experience or class**, confirmed my intention to develop my research skills and **goal**. I know you are very busy. We could schedule an appointment or I can drop by your office hours on **day and time**.

I have attached my resume and unofficial transcript. Please let me know if there is any other information I can provide. I look forward to talking to you soon.

Sincerely,

Name

A BAD EMAIL

*hey,
i need help on my paper i have no idea what the instruction means
can i come by your office tomorrow
thx*

A GOOD EMAIL

Dear Dr. Jones,

I am in your ENGLISH 101 class on Thursdays, and I have a question about the paper that is due next Tuesday. I'm not sure that I understand what is meant by the following sentence in the prompt:

"Write a 10-page paper arguing for or against requiring ENGLISH 101 for all freshmen and provide adequate support for your point of view."

I am not sure what you would consider "adequate" support. Would using three sources be o.k.?

Can I come by your office tomorrow at 2:00 pm to talk to you about my question? Please let me know if that fits your schedule. If not, I could also come by on Friday after 1:00.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

Tim Smith