

Rules of Academic Etiquette

General rules of thumb:

- When in doubt about how you should speak, write, or act, always err on the side of formality. You will never offend or annoy someone by being overly formal and polite.
- While you are in college, your coursework is your job. You should behave as you would in a professional work environment.

When addressing your professors in person:

- Always address them as “Professor Smith” or “Dr. Smith.”
- Do not call them by their first names or anything else unless they explicitly ask you to do so.

When writing an email to your professor:

- Begin the email with “Dear Professor Smith,” “Dear Prof. Smith,” or “Dear Dr. Smith.” Do not begin the email “Hi” without addressing your professor by their title and surname.
- Be alert to the tone of your message. Any email to a professor or teaching assistant should sound like a formal letter, not a text message or a demand to a customer service representative. For example, you should write:

Dear Professor Smith,

I cannot come to your office hours this week. Are you available at any time on Monday instead?

*Sincerely,
Jane*

Do NOT write

Hi,

I need to talk to you about the test. Can I come by Mon? Thx Jane

Do NOT write

Hello,

I'm a senior and I need your class to graduate. ConnectCarolina says I need permission. I need you to enroll me immediately.

Jane

- Write in complete sentences with correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- Proofread your email before sending it.