

Proper Email Etiquette

Follow these guidelines when emailing your professors, academic advisors, and other professionals to best represent yourself.

- **Use your VT email account.** This marks the message as legitimate and not spam. It also gives the recipient an idea of who's sending the message. You'll also look more professional than when using an old username.
- **Always use subject lines.** When writing the subject line, make sure that you mention to what you're referring in the email. You don't want it to seem like a randomly generated subject or end up in a spam folder if it is blank.
- **Address the recipient directly;** don't launch straight into a request. For example: 'Dear Dr. Smith', 'Hi Ms. Jones, 'Professor Williams, I hope you're doing well...'
- **Be succinct and specific.** Keep your message short and to the point as your email is probably one of many. Refer to the class and section you're in when emailing a professor. Remind your advisor about a previous conversation if you have spoken about this topic before.
- **Be polite.** Don't make demands, don't accuse, and remember to write please and thank you.
- **Do not use your email to argue** and never send an email when angry. You want to make sure that you maintain a professional demeanor.
- **For professors and missing class:** offer to bring written proof that validates your absence. Be sure to refer to the syllabus for the attendance policy.
- **Close your email with a closing statement** such as 'Thanks', 'Thanks for your time', 'See you in class Wednesday', 'Regards', etc. then re-type your full name. Do **not** include your ID number.
- **Check your grammar and spelling.** Be sure that you proofread your message. You shouldn't write your email as though you are texting with abbreviations or slang. Use full sentences, proper grammar, and appropriate spelling.
- **Do not write in all capital letters.** This is generally interpreted as SHOUTING.