

Your professors are people, too, and they are there to help you! They will be more than happy to answer questions about your assignments. There are many ways to go about this; however, if you are unsure about what to say, here are some generic tips and suggestions for asking your professor for help.

1. **Be specific:** Before message your professor, try to figure out what you need help with. Is it a specific homework question? Is it guidance in refining your own ideas? Is it uncertainty regarding professor's feedback?
  - a. Figuring out what you want to ask can help you to formulate a specific question that will guide you and your professor's conversation. Saying "I need help" is a good opener, but it is wise to narrow down your inquiries beforehand.
2. **Be resourceful:** Once you have figured out what you are specifically struggling with, be sure to check Canvas for answers. Use your course syllabus, assignment prompts, and previous feedback to try to come to a conclusion.
3. **Be proactive:** When you run into roadblocks, do not wait until the last minute to reach out to your professor. If you reach out the day before the assignment is due, it is unlikely that your professor will be able to respond to you in that short time period.

There are several ways that you can reach your professors:

**Email:** The easiest way to reach your professor outside of class is through email. Using Canvas, you can message your professor at any time by clicking the mail icon.

- a. If your professor has office hours listed on their syllabus, keep these in mind!
- b. Here is a general idea of what you can say:

*"Dear [Professor's name],*

*I have been working on [assignment], and I am struggling with [topic/question/idea/etc.]. I am confused about [SPECIFIC question/issue/idea]. I would like to meet over Zoom / in person to discuss solutions. Are you available to meet [time during professor's listed office hours]?*

*Sincerely, [Your name]"*

**In class:** You can also approach your professor before or after lecture, time permitting, to ask for help. If the question is short, asking outright may be appropriate; if the question requires more detailed follow-up, then you can talk to your professor about meeting options.

- a. Again, keep your professor's office hours in mind when considering your availability!
- b. Here is a general idea of what you can say:

*"Hello [Professor's name], I was confused about [assignment] and needed help with [specific topic/idea/question]. When would be a good time to talk more about this?"*