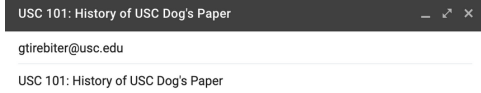# How To Professionally E-Mail Your Professor

Knowing how to properly e-mail your professor allows you to make a good impression and adjust to communicating in a professional setting.
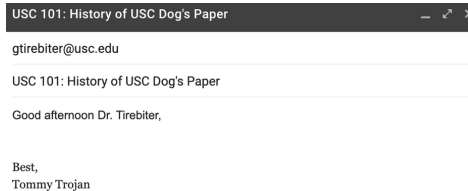
1. Create a clear subject heading

- State either the course title or number
- State what the email is about

> **USC 101: History of USC Dog's Paper**   _ ⤢ ×
>
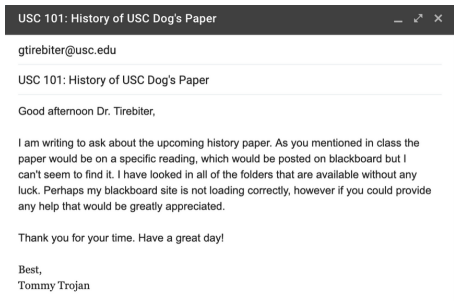> gtirebiter@usc.edu
>
> USC 101: History of USC Dog's Paper

2. Use a greeting and signature

- Remember to use proper punctuation, capitalization, spelling and grammar throughout the e-mail
- Helpful app: Grammarly

> **USC 101: History of USC Dog's Paper**   _ ⤢ ×
>
> gtirebiter@usc.edu
>
> USC 101: History of USC Dog's Paper
>
> Good afternoon Dr. Tirebiter,
>
>
> Best,
> Tommy Trojan

3. Explain why you are reaching out

- Make sure that before asking for help or notifying of absence you have checked all resources available (i.e. syllabus, blackboard)
- Try to describe your thought process prior to asking a question as it is perceived as more considerate rather than just asking a question without context.
- Understanding your professor's time is valuable, try to keep the message concise.
- At the end of emails always thank your professor for their help

> **USC 101: History of USC Dog's Paper**   _ ⤢ ×
>
> gtirebiter@usc.edu
>
> USC 101: History of USC Dog's Paper
>
> Good afternoon Dr. Tirebiter,
>
> I am writing to ask about the upcoming history paper. As you mentioned in class the paper would be on a specific reading, which would be posted on blackboard but I can't seem to find it. I have looked in all of the folders that are available without any luck. Perhaps my blackboard site is not loading correctly, however if you could provide any help that would be greatly appreciated.
>
> Thank you for your time. Have a great day!
>
> Best,
> Tommy Trojan

4. Proofread

- Confirm professor e-mail
- Re-read for clarity
- Check for errors

Reference: https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2015/04/16/advice-students-so-they-dont-sound-silly-emails-essay

3 Most Common Reasons to E-Mail Your Professor

Clarifying Questions

New Message   — ⤢ ✕

Recipients   professor@usc.edu

Subject   USC 101: Clarification Question

Dear _____,

I am writing to ask about **[essay, material covered, readings, etc.]**. I have a question about **[specific portion or readings, etc.]** and I was wondering if you could provide me any assistance to clarify my question. I have checked **[syllabus, blackboard, etc.]** for additional information. Am I looking in the right spots?

Thank you for your time. Have a great day!
     Best,
      YOUR NAME

Setting up Meeting

New Message   — ⤢ ✕

Recipients   professor@usc.edu

Subject   USC 101: Set Up Meeting

Dear _____,

I am reaching out to set up a meeting with you. I have a [question/concern, etc.] about [homework, project, essay, etc.] and would appreciate any help. I am available to meet at the following times **[INSERT DATES AND TIMES].** Please let me know if any of these times work with your schedule or if another time would be better.

Thank you for your time.
     Best,
      YOUR NAME

Notice of Absence

New Message   — ⤢ ✕

Recipients   professor@usc.edu

Subject   USC 101: Absence

Dear _____,

I am writing to **1) ask if it would be possible to miss class** or **2) notify you that I will be absent** on **[INSERT DAY]** due to **[medical reason, emergency, etc]**. Although, I will be missing lecture **[make up missed work, submit assignment, etc]**.

Thank you for your time. I will see you in the next class.
     Best,
      YOUR NAME