RUTGERS
Learning Centers

Guide to Office Hours

Don't know what to say to your professors during office hours? Use this guide to maximize your time and increase opportunities for yourself by building a positive and productive relationship with your professors during office hours!

Tip #1: Prepare! Have a few questions to discuss in advance. Don't just show up. See the table below for some sample topics and ideas of what you could discuss

What You Could Discuss	How to Prepare	Sample Questions/Question Starters
Class Content	-Review the course syllabus and highlight areas of confusion or where you need clarification -Review readings or topics that you are interested in to discuss -Review recent lecture topics and identify areas where you feel you struggle the most with understanding	1. How could I be successful on "XYZ" assignment? 2. I really enjoyed reading _____. Could you recommend some other readings that I could look into to expand my knowledge? 3. I'm struggling to understand the concept of _____. Could you re-explain (insert content) portion of your lecture?
Homework Assignments or Test Questions	-Select 2-3 homework problems that you are struggling to solve -Review your test if it's made available to you and identify questions that you struggled to understand	1. Could you walk me through these problems? 2. Where is the best place to start when I'm solving "this type" of problems? 3. I struggled with this question on the test. Where did I go wrong?
Study Strategies for Success	-Review syllabus and jot down a few ways YOU think you could be successful in their course. Ask your professor for insight	1. After reviewing the syllabus, here's how I think I could be successful in the course (Share your thoughts). What strategies do you feel I could add or implement to ensure my success? 2. Is there a way you could connect me with other students in the class to form a study group? 3. What is the best way I can reach you if I need help? Do you prefer email or scheduling office hours?
Career/Internship/Research Opportunities	-Research your professor's projects/research endeavors -Reflect on your own career goals/internship goals to discuss	1. I'm interested in the research you conducted. Could you share with me other opportunities? 2. I'm interested in _____ career path. What would be your advice in pursuing this?

Tip #2: Schedule a day and time in advance.

- Reach out via email to your professor, always including your full name/class you are in.
- Include a brief description of what you are hoping to achieve from office hours.
- Request availability OR if they have regular weekly office hours, just confirm that it would be okay for you to attend.
- Here's a sample:

Dear Professor,

I hope this email finds you well. My name is_____ and I am currently enrolled in your _____ class. I had a few questions on the last lecture and exam and was hoping to get your help and clarification in office hours this week. Could I stop by on Thursday @ 2:30 PM, during your normally scheduled hours? If you already have other students, would you be available during another time to meet?

Thank you so much for your time and support in advance!

Sincerely,

_____

Tip #3: Aim to build a relationship with your professor. You can start by asking questions outside their course briefly. Always show appreciation and thank them for their time at the beginning and close of the conversation.

Sample Conversation Starters:

- How is your week/semester going? Thanks so much for making the time to meet with me, I appreciate it!

_____

Let's Practice! Prepare for Office Hours.

Step 1: Name a class that you feel you could benefit attending office hours from.

Step 2: Identify some topics/areas you could discuss. Jot down a few questions here:

Topic	Questions

Step 3: Draft an email to your professor to arrange/confirm a time for you to meet: