

# Emailing Professors for Research Opportunities

## General Guidelines

Remember to treat an email to a professor like a job interview. Your message should be clear, concise and include two important paragraphs: 1) Why you want to work with their research; 2) Why they should work with you. You should then close your email with dates and times you are available to meet with them to further discuss any potential openings they may have for you.

Here are some etiquette tips to remember when sending an email:

1. Make each email personal. Do not copy and paste to send to multiple professors. You should use the Ohio State Libraries to look up their published research and comment on it.
2. Do not simply recite what they found in their past research. Make sure you add your own comments on why you found it to be interesting or important. Relate this back to your own interests. You can even mention elements of their research (such as a particular method they used) that you would like to learn more about.
3. Keep your email limited to 2-3 paragraphs and a closing. The first paragraph should introduce who you are and what interests you about their research. The second paragraph should highlight your skills and experience. This can include classes you've taken, any clubs you've participated in that showcase teamwork, or even relevant interests.
4. If you do not hear from a professor, you may follow up after one full week. "Reply all" to the original email and follow up with a short message.
  - a. Say something like, "Hello Professor \_\_\_\_, I know you might have a busy semester, but I would still appreciate meeting with you to discuss any research opportunities you may have." Then list new days and times that you're available.
5. Check your grammar. First impressions matter and you want to ensure that you're sending a professional email. If you need help editing before you send it to a professor, email [ugresearch@osu.edu](mailto:ugresearch@osu.edu)

## Email Example 1: Students Asking to Join Existing Lab or Project

Hello Professor \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am a (insert year and major) student at Ohio State. I am reaching out because I read your research (cite name of the article) and found \_\_\_\_\_ to be particularly (interesting/important/etc.) because (insert your own commentary. This is the most important part). I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to get experience in (insert field or interest) and was wondering if you had any current research projects that I could assist you with.

I've taken (insert relevant courses) and am involved in (insert any relevant extracurriculars, interests, or hobbies here). I am (insert skills such as adaptable, dependable, etc.) and am willing to start (insert date or Semester). I am available to spend \_\_\_\_ hours per week (working on the project or in the lab).

Please let me know if you have any opportunities for undergraduates. I would love to set up a meeting to learn more about (your lab/your projects). I am available (list dates and times and if you are available in-person or via Zoom).

I look forward to hearing back from you.

Best,  
(insert your name)

### **Email Example 2: Students Asking for Professor to Mentor Thesis**

Hello Professor \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am a (insert year and major) student at Ohio State. I am reaching out because I read your research (cite name of the article) and found \_\_\_\_\_ to be particularly (interesting/important/etc.) because (insert your own commentary. This is the most important part).

I'm reaching out because I was interested in pursuing a thesis on \_\_\_\_ and was wondering if were open to meeting with me about the possibility of being my faculty mentor. I believe that (talk about why their research interests align with yours). \*From here, propose a broad overview of what you would like to research. \*

I would love to discuss this proposal with you in more detail. Please let me know if you're interested in meeting with me. I'm available (insert days and times).

I look forward to hearing back from you.

Best,  
(insert your name)