

3 THINGS TO DO BEFORE OFFICE HOURS

Professors can be busy people, but they are always willing to help students. Preparing for your meeting in advance, however, will save time and ensure you get what you need. Having a plan also shows an instructor that you care and have an interest in understanding the material. Do these three things before you go and you will be set for a productive meeting.

1. Decide “**WHY**”

1. **Understanding exactly what you need help with will allow for a successful and efficient meeting.**
2. **Professors can better judge how much time to allot for a meeting and how to prepare if they know the topic ahead of time.**

Some reasons to meet with a professor may include,

- ✓ You would like to clarify an assignment.
- ✓ You did not understand a topic in class.
- ✓ You performed poorly on a quiz or test.
- ✓ You need help creating a schedule.
- ✓ You are interested in a professor’s area of expertise.
- ✓ You need career advice.
- ✓ You need help studying.

2. Decide “**WHEN**”

1. **Once you know your purpose, e-mail or approach your professor about a meeting. All professors have office hours, but many are willing to schedule an appointment outside of those times.**
2. **Approach your professor professionally.** Explain why you would like to meet and ask when the best time would be.
 - ✓ “Dr. Brown, I would like to meet with you to talk about careers with the Environmental Protection Agency. I understand you have worked in the field, and I am looking for some advice. When are you available to meet?”

3. Decide “**HOW**”

1. **Organize your talk before you get to his or her office. Having a plan prevents wasting time.**
2. **Write down all of your questions** to prevent forgetting one.
3. **Bring paper and a pen—you might need to take notes!**
4. If you are asking a question about class material, **bring your book and class notes** to reference.

Adapted from:

<https://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/How-to-Approach-a-Professor-for-Help.aspx>

<http://www.cnu.edu/studentsuccess/pdf/3ThingstodoBeforeYouMeetwithYourProfessor.pdf>