Freshmen 101

Workshops:

Effective Communication with Professors

Academic Advising Office
6 October 2015
Communicating in Person

During class

- Interact with professor by answering questions
- Prepare before lecture, ask questions aloud since others may have a similar question
- Listen attentively when professor answers
- Do not chat, sleep or play with phones

Complex questions

- Find out if professor has preferred communication channels or time allocated to see students
- Request to meet professor in office hours, email first with suggested timeslots and key questions
- Be patient. Resend in about 5 days if no reply
- Be considerate and keep to arranged meeting time
- Be punctual and notify if late/unable to attend meeting
Prepare Well for Each Contact

- Prepare before contacting your professor
  - Purpose, background, information, request

- Be clear and well supported for your enquiry
  - State your questions (e.g. list out 1, 2, 3)
  - Provide explanations, rationales or justifications

- Questions about study materials
  - State clearly what you know vs do not know so professor’s time will not be wasted
  - Bring paper and pen to take down important points
Requesting for a Reference Letter

- Student should provide
  - his/her CV, academic information and other relevant experience
  - information of the Programme/Activity for which the reference is needed e.g. the nature and deadline of the application

- Plan ahead and allow enough time for professor to write the letter (e.g. 4 – 6 weeks)

- Maintain regular contact with professors to build up relationship
Writing a Proper Email

- In an email you should have
  - Subject
  - Salutation
  - Message
  - Closing
  - Sign-off

- Address your professor accurately
  - Identify yourself and class
  - Write a clear “subject” which describes the purpose of your email

- Anticipate, think ahead and include all your questions in one email
  - Be brief and precise
  - Be respectful and polite
  - Avoid slangs, texting language or casual abbreviations
  - Complete sentences, correct grammar and punctuation
  - Acknowledge receipt of reply from professor
  - Thank you email to inform professors of outcome and show appreciation
Build Relationship with your Professors

• Interact with Professors in class and be ready to answer/ask questions on the topic under study
• Smile and greet them when you see them
• Meet and talk to them outside classroom (e.g. faculty events, seminars)
• Behave professionally
• Be polite, considerate and respect others
Communicating well with Professor is important for your study process as well as a learning in itself

Simply being polite goes a long way!