**HOW TO (AND HOW NOT TO) EMAIL A PROFESSOR**

**SUBJECT**
Make sure you have an accurate and specific subject in your subject line. Something like “question about homework” or “time for a meeting?” Don’t write something vague or alarming like “PLEASE READ!” It looks like spam and doesn’t tell us much.

**GREETING**
Unless the professor has told you you can call them by their first name (as I have), it’s usually safest to address them formally. The best way to do this is to begin your email “Dear Professor” (the professor’s last name). Just calling them “professor” without a last name looks pretty strange and impersonal. Don’t call a person “Mr.” or “Miss” if their name is “Dr.” (your name becomes “Dr.” when you get a Ph.D. Not all of your professors have one.) It’s best to find out what their name is! It will be on the syllabus.

**BODY OF THE EMAIL**
You should make the body of your email as short, clear and straightforward as possible, while still remaining polite. If you don’t understand the homework assignment, begin with “I have a question about the homework assignment” and then describe your question. Make sure that you have tried to answer the question yourself first, that you’ve looked at the homework assignment on the syllabus or website, that you’ve asked a friend in class for example: “I have a question about the homework. The website says it should be 200 words long, but in class, you said it should be 500.” Don’t ask what is the homework for tomorrow? Without checking the website, syllabus, or consulting with a friend.

**SIGNING OFF**
Just write “Thank you” or “Thank you for your time!” “Sincerely” or “Yours Truly” sound too formal for an email. Don’t write “Please get back to me as soon as possible” or anything like that. It just sounds demanding.

**FOLLOWING UP**
Some professors are great about returning emails. Others aren’t. Please have mercy on us—keep in mind some professors might get more than 50 student emails a day. Emails can get lost in the shuffle. Give your professor a little time to respond (you can’t expect us to email you back on evenings or weekends) but also, if you haven’t heard from the professor in a timely manner (usually 3 days) it’s okay to send them a friendly reminder message that includes everything you said in your first email. For example: Dr. Hall, I sent you an email last Wednesday asking a question about Tuesday’s class and I was wondering if you’d had a chance to look at it. Basically, I was wondering... (and then repeat what you said in the previous email.)

**MY EMAIL IS:** CHALL@CITYTECH.CUNY.EDU