



TALKING TO YOUR INSTRUCTOR

You don't have to be in trouble with a class before talking with your instructors. Whether it's briefly after class or during office hours, and whether you're struggling with the class or doing well, it can be beneficial to speak with your instructors. At the very least, it lets them know who you are and demonstrates an interest and commitment to the class. And if you are having trouble, it can mean the difference between passing and failing the class. But this can also seem a little intimidating, even in the best of circumstances. To make your conversation less stressful and more helpful, here are some important ideas to keep in mind.

Ten Good Reasons for Talking with Your Instructors

1. You're having trouble and need extra help (the sooner the better).
2. You have a special interest in the course material and would like to know more.
3. You're thinking of dropping the course.
4. You have a personal issue that *is* interfering or *may* interfere with your performance.
5. You have a disability that you feel would be important for the instructor to know about.
6. You would like to request an excused absence for a legitimate reason.
7. You don't understand course procedures (such as grading or materials needed).
8. You feel there's been a misunderstanding between you and the instructor that needs clearing up.
9. You need to make up a test or assignment.
10. You would like to thank them for their help, teaching style, or something they've done for you.

Tips for Talking with Your Instructor

- Remember that most instructors appreciate your coming to see them (whether they show it or not).
- Remember that it's okay - and common - to be a little nervous, but instructors are there to help.
- Remember that whatever the situation, you're not the first person or the last to be in it.
- Don't put things off if you're having trouble. (Sooner is better than later, but later is better than never.)
- Asking politely will almost always get you further than demanding.
- Think about what you would like to cover and say beforehand.
- If you're feeling very nervous (or if the issue is particularly sensitive), practice the conversation with a friend before meeting with the instructor.
- Be honest and respectful.
- Try to keep an open mind and see their position as well as your own.
- Dress neatly and appropriately.
- Thank them for their time.

Would you like to learn more?

Are you unsure about the best ways to approach your instructor? Would you like to talk through some ideas? Do you need help simply figuring out where to begin? A Counselor at CPCC can help. To schedule an appointment, call 704-330-6433.