

9 Tips for meeting with – and impressing – your professors

You want these people to know who you are, so they can place a face next to the name – and the grade. On the other hand, they're busy, and they don't need to have their time wasted. Arrange to meet with them when you have something meaningful to talk about – such as questions about tests, concern about your overall ability in the subject area, or ideas for independent study for which you would like some guidance.

- **Don't just show up** during office hours. Make an appointment and be there on time.
- **Read up on the teacher** prior to the meeting. If she was recently recognized in some way, offer your congratulations; if he recently announced his retirement, let him know you're sorry he's leaving.
- **If the teacher has a Web site, visit it** before the meeting. You may find out that she prefers to meet with students during early morning hours only or that she never changes a grade.
- **Have a point** and state it early in the meeting. Let him know that you're there to clarify an issue, get a grade changed, or challenge test results.
- **Bring support materials.** If you're there to discuss a test grade, bring the test and your class notes as well. If you have questions about an assignment, bring the textbook with you. Don't assume that the teacher has copies of materials.
- **Know when to give up.** If you're losing the argument and it's clear he will not relent, don't take up more time by whining or complaining.
- **Don't make excuses.** If you've missed the last three assignments, no one will care about the reason.
- **Before the meeting ends, talk about the next step:** "Okay, I'll prepare another outline and submit it to you before I do further work"; or "I appreciate your willingness to review my grade; shall I e-mail you in a few days to find out what you've decided?"

- **Thank the professor for the time** she has taken to meet with you, no matter what the outcome.

Reference:

Choron, S., & Choron, H. (2004). *College in a Can*. New York (NY): Houghton Mifflin