

Some Scripts for Interacting with Professors

Asking questions after class:

- I'm not sure I understand _____. Does that mean _____?
- Could you clarify what _____ is?
- Today's lecture sounded similar to _____. Is there any relation?
- I was very interested by _____. Could we discuss it further?
- Can you recommend any further readings on the subject?

Approaching your professor in office hours:

- I am working on _____, and I would appreciate your input. Could we discuss it during your office hours?
- I'm having some difficulty with some of the material in this class. Could I discuss with you some of the points where I'm struggling?
- I really enjoyed the work I did for your class, and am thinking about publishing it. Could we discuss your feedback, so that I can revise my work before I submit it?
- I'm having some trouble focusing the direction of my research on _____. Could we discuss some of my ideas?

And, some special requests:

- I will be taking my exams next year. I would like one of my areas of specialization to be _____, which I think is relevant to your work in _____. Would you be willing to be part of my exam committee?
- I am planning to begin my dissertation research, which I anticipate will focus on _____. I think your expertise in _____ will be invaluable to my work. Would you be willing to serve on my dissertation committee?
- I am applying for _____, and the application must include letters of recommendation. Since I worked with you on _____, I think your recommendation would prove invaluable; would you be willing to write a letter for me?

Some Scripts for Interacting with Students

Answering requests from students:

- I would be happy to help you with _____. Why don't you come to my office hours to discuss it?
- I would be willing to write you a recommendation for _____. Please bring me any forms I need, along with any of your work you think it's particularly important for me to review.

(Politely) Refusing requests for things that aren't your responsibility

- I'm afraid that's not something I can help with. Professor _____ might be able to assist you.
- Are you familiar with the University's resources for _____?
- The person you'll want to talk to about this is _____.

Discussing student work

- Do you have any questions about the assignment?
- Where do you think you are having trouble?
- Why don't you show me how you approached _____?
- You have a solid understanding of _____, but your discussion of _____ is not as clear.
- Let's talk about some of the ways you can address the assignment.

Talking about class policies

- According to the syllabus, the policy on _____ is _____.
- We should clarify this with Professor _____.