



Office Hours

Why go to office hours?

- It demonstrates commitment and effort.
- It can help you learn how to succeed in the course and learn the course material.
- It helps you get to know the professor. It helps the professor get to know you.
- It demonstrates your interest in the academic discipline or department.

How do office hours work?

Usually, professors list their office hours on the course syllabi. Put the times and locations in your calendar, and attend office hours as a part of your weekly routine. Some professors have open drop-in hours and some will ask that you schedule a specific 10- or 15-minute time slot. If you have class or another academic schedule conflict during the professor's office hours, then you can ask your professor about scheduling a meeting with them at a time other than office hours.

Bring a question to start the conversation

Course content: identify specific concepts that you struggle to understand

Course assignments:

- Problem sets: try a few problems before office hours and bring your questions
- Planning for long-term assignments (e.g. research papers):
 - Float a topic idea
 - Share your research plan

Feedback: ask for more detailed feedback on your performance in the course (papers, labs, exams, class participation) so that you can improve or be more strategic in the future

Bigger picture: ask for advice related to your overall interest in the discipline

- Planning a major
- Finding summer research or work opportunities
- Ask about a professor's current research. You can look it up online beforehand.

If you do not have reliable computer access or if you have internet access problems, email support@swarthmore.edu or call the ITS Help Desk at 610-328-8513.

This info sheet was developed collaboratively by professors and the [Office of Academic Success](#), including the [SAMs](#). Updated Fall 2020.