



What is the Email Template & Guide? Use the Email Templates in this Guide when writing to professors or administrators at your college. This Guide can serve as a jump-start for an effective email when advocating for changes to policies or accommodations.

1. Crafting an Email to Ask a Professor for a Change/Informal Accommodation.

Use the table below to help you think through what to say:

Item to Include		Example Email Content
A.	Start with a nice statement, such as:	"I hope you and yours are safe and healthy."
B.	Express your gratitude for their effort, such as:	"I appreciate the email that you sent out to us about how to finish up the class. I understand that you are probably receiving many emails from students. I realize this is a hard time for professors too, and I'm sure it has been difficult to transition to online instruction given the circumstances."
C.	Describe your barriers in a functional way (how it affects you), such as:	"I have been struggling with finishing the assignment on time because of limitations I have at home that would not have been an issue when on campus."
D.	Describe what you have done to overcome these barriers on your own, such as:	"I have tried to find times that are less chaotic in my house where I can focus on doing my coursework. Because of quarantining rules, finding a place where I can focus on my work outside of my house is impossible, as you know. I used to go to Starbucks on campus or the library when doing work at school, so I could focus on getting work done. I am trying to figure out all the ways that I can successfully finish your class under these conditions, but it is very hard."
E.	State the value of the class and what it means to you as a student, such as:	"I have learned a lot in your class and need this course to move on in my major."
F.	Make your request and state the reason for request, such as:	"I am wondering if you are considering providing students with extended time to finish the assignment or waiving the assignment? As you know, none of us wanted to leave campus and our work now may not demonstrate the best of our abilities given the new constraints on our lives due to the virus. Outside of trying to work from a new home, some of us are also worrying about our loved ones, feeling disconnected, are without campus resources that were critical to our success, and what will happen financially to us."
G.	Respectfully close your email, such as:	"I know everyone is trying their best. This is hard on everyone. I wanted to share my experiences with you in the event that it could be helpful."

H.	Offer to talk on the phone, such as:	“If it would be helpful to talk about this, please let me know and I can meet with you at your earliest convenience. I am just worried about successfully finishing the semester and being able to move on.”
I.	Sign off with appreciation, such as:	“I really appreciate your time and effort. Take care, XXX”

Example: Here’s what the Email to Ask a Professor for a Change/Accommodation could look

Dear Professor XXX,

I hope you and yours are safe and healthy.

I appreciate the email that you sent out to us about how to finish up the class. I understand that you are probably receiving many emails from students. I realize this is a hard time for professors too, and I’m sure it has been difficult to transition to online instruction given the circumstances.

I have been struggling with finishing the assignment on time because of limitations I have at home that would not have been an issue when on campus. I have tried to find times that are less chaotic in my house where I can focus on doing my coursework. Because of quarantining rules, finding a place where I can focus on my work outside of my house is impossible, as you know. I used to go to Starbucks on campus or the library when doing work at school, so I could focus on getting work done. I am trying to figure out all the ways that I can successfully finish your class under these conditions, but it is very hard.

I have learned a lot in your class and need this course to move on in my major. I am wondering if you are considering providing students with extended time to finish the assignment or waiving the assignment? As you know, none of us wanted to leave campus and our work now may not demonstrate the best of our abilities given the new constraints on our lives due to the virus. Outside of trying to work from a new home, some of us are also worrying about our loved ones, feeling disconnected, are without campus resources that were critical to our success, and what will happen financially to us.

I know everyone is trying their best. This is hard on everyone. I wanted to share my experiences with you in the event that it could be helpful. If it would be helpful to talk about this, please let me know and I can meet with you at your earliest convenience. I am just worried about successfully finishing the semester and being able to move on.”

I really appreciate your time and effort.

Take care,
Michelle

On the next pages, there are guides for how to respond if your request is denied, and how to approach the administration of your college to request consideration for a policy change.

2. Crafting an Email to a Professor if your Request is Denied.

Use the following to help craft an email to request reconsideration of a decision:

	Item to Include	Example Email Content
A.	Thank them for their response, such as:	“Thank you for responding to my email.”
B.	Ask for additional clarification, such as:	“You stated that students cannot have additional time because grades are due by the following week. I am curious if the school has provided any guidance to faculty about leniency during this time? I have heard that other colleges and universities are extending the deadline for grades because of these unprecedented times.”
C.	Provide another suggestion, such as:	<p>“I wonder if you would be willing to give students Incompletes if they need additional time for the remaining assignments. This would allow us to take the time we need and still be able to finish the class with a grade.”</p> <p>**Hint** Make sure you read your syllabus and student handbook about Incompletes before sending this note</p>
D.	Make the point, again, that students did not ask for this and your life has changed, such as:	“While I appreciate our school is trying to help us finish the semester during the pandemic, all students’ lives have been changed by this. And these changes, that no one asked for, has impacted us in ways that affect our personal and school lives. The additional flexibility to manage the rest of our coursework is really important to students like me. I don’t want to do poorly in this course because of things that are outside of my control.”
E.	Reaffirm value of professor and class, such as:	“I have continued to learn in your class and appreciate your commitment to students to finish up the semester. I am sure this has been hard on you too- to figure out how to manage the class and help your students.
F.	Ask who else you can talk to, such as:	“If you think it would be helpful for me to talk to someone else about this, please let me know. I am unsure of the constraints professors have, so if there is someone else who can help us, I can also reach out to them.”
G.	Respectfully close email, such as:	“I appreciate your time. I realize this is not easy on any of us. Please let me know your thoughts. Thank you for considering mine.”

On the next page, you will see how it would look all together:

Example: Here’s what an Email to a Professor if your Request is Denied could look like.

Dear Professor XXX:

Thank you for responding to my email.

You stated that students cannot have additional time because grades are due by the following week. I am curious if the school has provided any guidance to faculty about leniency during this time? I have heard that other colleges and universities are extending the deadline for grades because of these unprecedented times.

I wonder if you would be willing to give students Incompletes if they need additional time for the remaining assignments. This would allow us to take the time we need and still be able to finish the class with a grade. While I appreciate our school is trying to help us finish the semester during the pandemic, all students’ lives have been changed by this. And these changes, that no one asked for, has impacted us in ways that affect our personal and school lives. The additional flexibility to manage the rest of our coursework is really important to students like me. I don’t want to do poorly in this course because of things that are outside of my control.

I have continued to learn in your class and appreciate your commitment to students to finish up the semester. I am sure this has been hard on you too - to figure out how to manage the class and help your students. If you think it would be helpful for me to talk to someone else about this, please let me know. I am unsure of the constraints professors have, so if there is someone else who can help us, I can also reach out to them.

I appreciate your time. I realize this is not easy on any of us. Please let me know your thoughts. Thank you for considering mine.

Take care,
Michelle

3. Crafting an Email to the Administration to Advocate for a Change (e.g., Allowing for Pass/Fail).

Use the following to help craft an email to advocate for changes in policy at the institution:

	Item to Include	Example Email Content
A.	Start with a nice statement, such as:	“I hope you and yours are safe and healthy.”
B.	Express your gratitude for their effort, such as:	“I appreciate the updates you have been sending to the students and our families to update us all on the current situation. I know that this is a hard time for students, professors, and the administration, and I appreciate everything you have done to keep students up to date on all the changes happening across the campus.”
C.	Describe what you are doing	As a student in the [Insert name of college] class of [insert year], I

	to be successful, such as:	wanted to reach out on behalf of myself and my fellow students, who are working hard to maintain academic success amidst the current international Pandemic, COVID-19.
D.	Describe the challenge you are asking them to address, such as:	“One area of challenge I strongly urge our Administration to address is the ability for students to request a Pass/Fail grade in their current courses. Many universities and colleges across the nation have successfully modified their current policies to allow students to adjust to this new shift to a virtual school environment. As a student, I’ve been asked to adjust to all of my classes as they shift to remote instruction, transitioning off campus with little time, and losing my existing on-campus support network and the academic services available to me onsite.”
	State your idea for how they might address the challenge, such as:	“Modifying our current courses to allow for students to have an option for Pass/Fail would be a great way to recognize the challenging transition our students have undergone, while still maintaining the academic rigor our institution is proud to uphold.”
E.	State the value of the of your education at your institution, such as:	“I value my education at this school, and look forward to calling (your institution) my alma mater.”
F.	Offer to talk on the phone, such as:	“Please feel free to contact me. I would be happy to offer my perspective and assistance.”
G.	Respectfully close your email with appreciation, such as:	“Thank you for all you are doing to ensure that students are taken care of during this challenging time. With thanks,”

Example: Here’s what an Email to the Administration to Advocate for a Change could look like.

Dear Dean/Director/Administrator XXX,

I hope you and yours are safe and healthy. I appreciate the updates you have been sending to the students and our families to update us all on the current situation. I know that this is a hard time for students, professors, and the administration, and I appreciate everything you have done to keep students up to date on all the changes happening across the campus.

As a student in the [Insert name of college] class of [insert year], I wanted to reach out on behalf of myself and my fellow students, who are working hard to maintain academic success amidst the current international Pandemic, COVID-19.

One area of challenge I strongly urge our Administration to address is the ability for students to request a Pass/Fail grade in their current courses. Many universities and colleges across the nation have

successfully modified their current policies to allow students to adjust to this new shift to a virtual school environment. As a student, I've been asked to adjust to all of my classes as they shift to remote instruction, transitioning off campus with little time, and losing my existing on-campus support network and the academic services available to me onsite. Modifying our current courses to allow for students to have an option for Pass/Fail would be a great way to recognize the challenging transition our students have undergone, while still maintaining the academic rigor our institution is proud to uphold.

I value my education at this school, and look forward to calling (the institution) my alma mater. Please feel free to contact me. I would be happy to offer my perspective and assistance.

Thank you for all you are doing to ensure that students are taken care of during this challenging time.

With thanks,
Michelle

4. Crafting a Thank-You Email to People who have Supported You.

Use the following to help craft a thank you email to those who worked with you on creating solutions:

	Item to Include	Example Email Content
A.	State your intention for the email, such as:	"I am writing to express my appreciation for the help you offered to me and my fellow students."
B.	Express your gratitude for their efforts, such as:	"Working on schoolwork while juggling family responsibilities now that we're home, figuring out how to stay financially afloat, and just managing the distractions of doing work from home has been difficult. But your offer of help during the pandemic was a great support, and I wanted you to know how much I appreciate you."
G.	Close your email with appreciation, such as:	"Thank you for all you are doing to ensure that students are taken care of during this challenging time. With thanks,"

Example: Here's what Thank You Email to People who have Supported You could look like:

Dear Professor/Administrator XXX:

I am writing to express my appreciation for the help you offered to me and my fellow students.

Working on schoolwork while juggling family responsibilities now that we're home, figuring out how to stay financially afloat, and just managing the distractions of doing work from home has been difficult. But your offer of help during the pandemic was a great support, and I wanted you to know how much I appreciate you."

Thank you for all you are doing to ensure that students are taken care of during this challenging time.

With thanks, Michelle