Communicating with your Advisor, or one of your professors, other OU contacts, and professionals in the workplace, requires using some very basic e-mail protocol.

Communicating with your advisor, professors, and other Ohio University officials is a necessary activity connected to your success as a student. Developing your communication effectiveness is an important skill set for you to work on during college and a necessary preparation for required communication in the workplace. The following outline should provide some guidelines for effective e-mail communication between you and your advisor. Note that most of these guidelines and tips can be used with professors, other OU officials, and workplace communication including internships. These guidelines also benefit the recipient of your communication, allowing for more efficient work, including helping you with questions.

I. General e-mail professional protocol applies to all e-mail communication

1. **Use your OU account not your personal account.**
   a. OU’s e-mail system may filter out your e-mail and it won’t be received
   b. Your personal e-mail system may filter out OU messages from your advisor
   c. Your personal e-mail address may not be appropriate for professional communication

2. **Subject**
   a. your name
   b. phrase that represents the intent of the message (“advising question” or class #, or assignment name)

3. **Salutation**
   a. simple greeting such as Dear ____, Hello _____, Hi _____, Greetings_____
   b. Always use a title such as Professor, or Dr. , Director, Dean, Ms./Mr., etc. depending on the individual you are addressing
   c. Never use a first name if you have not been introduced or the recipient has requested that you use their first name.
d. Pay attention to how the recipient of your e-mail closes their e-mails or is referred to on Ohio University documents (web site, syllabus, etc.). If they close their e-mails with a title use that title

4. The message

a. After starting e-mail correspondence with a salutation your message should address;
   - Why you are writing that includes any background or context (we have discussed this previously... , I am a junior BSAM major... , I am in MGT 2000..., I am a part time student..., etc.
   - Clearly state your content – your question, information, etc.
   - Identify or announce any attachments that you are sending
   - Don’t “waste” the e-mail contact with vague questions, statements, or information (“I need information on fall semester”) that requires clarification (what specific information do you need?) and another e-mail contact.

b. Make sure you spell check and edit your message for gross grammar and spelling errors.

c. Do not use “texting language” and then a closing with your name...this is standard business writing protocol...get used to it. If you and I are having a "running conversation" then certain liberties are acceptable ("OK"..."got it", "thank you", or finishing a conversation already in full progress, etc.).

5. Closing

a. close with next steps
   - Closing remarks
   - Questions that need to be addressed so the issue can move forward
   - Activities that you will be taking to move the issue forward

b. close with appropriate sign off ("regards", etc.), name, P# if appropriate, any other contact information that might be needed

6. Post response

a. After a response to your email acknowledge receipt with thanks, a message that you understand the response, actions that you will now execute, etc.

b. respond promptly – if you initiated the e-mail correspondence then you have responsibility to maintain the correspondence or to finish it (“thank you”, etc.) as soon as possible especially if you have additional questions. Not responding is similar to having a phone conversation and not acknowledging the call before hanging up or turning around without a good bye in a f2f situation

c. if you respond promptly with another question you can continue the conversation...a delay will require you to re-establish the context, original question, etc.

II. Specific advising e-mail correspondence

1. All of the general e-mail correspondence applies
2. In the message...first identify your major and class rank (freshmen, sophomore, etc.)
3. Provide general context for your contact (i.e. scheduling for fall semester)
4. Provide more specific context (i.e. part time student, have 3 courses already scheduled, etc.)
5. Mention what you have looked for, what information you do have, options you think you have, who else you may have spoken to about your question, etc.
6. What is your desired resolution and timing for the resolution?
7. Now...ask a specific question (I don’t know what to take is not a question...What do I take is not specific enough for anyone to help

III. Information on OU-L website (OU-L website, academic link, then program web pages)
1. There is quite a bit of information on the BMT and BSAM web pages site...make sure you review that information before you send an e-mail.
2. Review the program requirements, scheduling worksheets, and any other documents that may pertain to your question area.
3. The website will be updated with new information including advising documents, tutorials, etc.
4. OU main and OU-L websites are being improved to include more information for students to plan and execute their academic experience....check the web site before you contact any office/person so your question can be very specific

IV. Advising e-mails to majors
1. Advising e-mails are sent regularly before registration and include any program information you need to know as well as scheduling information for the upcoming term.
2. You should keep advising e-mails in a folder to be retrieved when you are getting ready to schedule classes or ask questions.

V. Your degree, your program, your experience
1. Take ownership of your academic experience
2. Scheduling, including using your DARS, is just like planning in the workplace...good practice for future managers.