

# How do I get to know Faculty?

You may be wondering - why do I need to know faculty in the first place? At Stanford, this is a reasonable question, especially since faculty here may seem out of reach. Consider these reasons to make the effort:

- You may find faculty who are interested in the same issues and topics as you are.
- Research with faculty could open whole new vistas for you (grad school, lab research, internships, etc.).
- Faculty can be very helpful to you when thinking about career plans or grad school.
- A letter of rec from a faculty who knows you better than the A in his or her class can be very influential in your future.
- Though accomplished experts in their fields, faculty may not be as intimidating to approach as you think.

Yes, but...these faculty are too important to be bothered with me. What lame excuse am I going to use to get to know faculty?

You do not have to have a lame excuse, but it does help to have a game plan, some legitimate reason for striking up a conversation and getting to know a faculty member better than face and name. Some suggestions:

- Go to office hours with questions you have about the class material.
- Go to office hours to discuss an idea you have about a paper.
- Go to office hours to ask about assisting in some research you read about.

You get the idea. Office hours are a good place to start. Though extremely busy, faculty set aside times each week to meet with undergraduates. Take advantage of the time set for you. Other ideas:

- Give yourself a goal - meet one new faculty member outside of class each quarter, get to know one faculty member well each year, have one faculty member know you well enough to call you by name when they see you on campus.
- Join a freshman/sophomore seminar - the small size of these seminars is designed for better faculty/student interaction.
- Invite your favorite faculty to Faculty Night Dinners - meeting in an informal setting can do lots to break the ice.

Take the first step. You are on your way to becoming a full participant in the community of scholars.