

*The bottom line is that faculty members have different opinions and have their own expectations of students. The general consensus is that faculty:*

1. Want to be contacted individually, so they know that you are really interested in their research and working with them. Do not send a general mass email to several different faculty members. Look at departments' websites and what specific faculty members are researching, mention what you have found in your email.
2. Prefer to be contacted via email with enough information about the student so they can follow up with a personal meeting.
3. Expect students to keep their appointments, show up on time for work, ask questions, show initiative, be responsible, etc.
4. Requirements vary. Some faculty members prefer freshman and sophomores who can work in their lab for a long time; others prefer more advance students with a sufficient knowledge base to do the work. Some faculty members prefer that a student volunteer for a semester before getting credit; others do not want volunteers, because there is no incentive to take the work seriously.