

# Explaining Office hours

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Joey Stanley  
Linguistics

## Office Hours

basics

My office hours are 2:00–4:00 Wednesday and Thursday. I am happy to meet in-person at 4059 JFSB or via Zoom at <https://byu.zoom.us/my/joeystan>. For in-person meetings, you are more than welcome to drop by without making an appointment. If my door is closed, please don't hesitate to knock. For Zoom, I'm supposed to get an email if you follow that link and join the room, though I don't always trust this, so it may be helpful to shoot me a quick email at least a few minutes beforehand to let me to expect you.

emphasis on  
the student

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what to  
talk about

You may think that office hours are only for help with homework or if you didn't understand the lecture. Not true! I mean, if you'd like to meet for those reasons, that's certainly fine. But, you can come into office hours to talk about whatever—other things related to the class, other linguistics classes, some fun project idea you're thinking about, guidance on picking a research topic, talking about graduate programs, shooting the breeze about breadmaking, etc, etc, etc. This is your chance to have dedicated one-on-one time with me to talk shop, regardless of whether it has to do with the class (or any class). I love it when students come by and you should definitely feel comfortable doing so, for whatever reason. (Plus, I try to have food...)

letters of  
recommendation

They're also good ways for me to get to know you. If you end up applying to graduate/law/med school and need letters of recommendations, I can't really write a good one if you were "just" another student in my class. But if you've come into office hours and given me a chance to get to know you a little bit better, I can definitely write a better letter for you, if needed.

## Overview

- Typography
- Office Hours section is a full page
- Four paragraphs
- Syllabus quiz forces them to read it.

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# Basics

- Days, time, place, Zoom link.
- Things I wish I knew as a student
  - No appointment necessary
  - Knock if the door is closed

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## Student Emphasis

- It's not an inconvenience
- You're not wasting my time
- Drop by whenever you want
- Get comfortable and stay a while

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# Why Come by?

- Things I experienced as a student
  - The most memorable learning happened in office hours
  - Get a "second opinion" about another class
  - Validation and feedback about project ideas
  - Learning at the feet of a master
  - How to apply to graduate school, jobs, etc.
  - Learn that my teachers were real humans

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# Letters of Rec

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- Heads up for them
  - Straight-A students sometimes never come in; how can I write a good letter for them?
- Insurance for me
  - I don't want to write letters for people I don't know.

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## Atypical Elements

- Food in my office
- A hobby
- “Warm” language
  - **contractions**
  - **informal language**
  - Write it as if it's a lengthy email to your one favorite student.

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## Results

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- Usually several students a week
- Conversations often 30+ minutes
- Usually not class related (typography, succulents, grad school, projects, study habits, etc.)
- Letters of recommendation are easier



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## Summary

- Draw attention to it.
- Explicitly teach them what office hours are.
- Write to one person.
- What are Office Hours? by Andrew Ishak on Vimeo

