

## Potential email template for prospective graduate students

Created by my lab member students in 2020: Thurner, Trochta, Allen Akselrud, Dias, and lightly edited by Branch.

### General tips:

- Email lots of faculty members, you never know which ones might have funding and be looking for a student, or who would identify you as a good match for their lab.
- This is not an undergraduate application, it's an inquiry.
- Don't copy and paste the same email to every potential adviser you are interested in. Instead, tailor your email to be specific to each adviser.
- If you have heard nothing for a few weeks, you can send follow up emails. Faculty get many emails and a lack of response is not necessarily a rejection.
- Consider emailing prospective advisers about a paper they were a lead author on, and express interest in their research or ask questions to begin a dialogue.
- If advisers receive many emails from interested students, they generally won't have time to talk to all of them, at least until they have seen all applications and decided which students are the best fit. So, don't be discouraged if they prefer a series of emails.

Subject line: be specific without saying too much.

*Prospective graduate student seeking to combine mathematical modelling and biological field work*

Email opening: use the correct prefix (usually Prof. or Dr.).

*Dear Dr. \_\_\_\_\_,*

First paragraph: introduce yourself! Briefly discuss where you are graduating from, your major, your GPA, and any prior research experience you have. Discuss your research goals—why do you want to pursue a graduate degree?

*I am a student at \_\_\_\_\_ and I will be graduating next May with a (insert degree). I have a \_\_\_\_\_ GPA, and during my degree I have conducted research on \_\_\_\_\_ under the supervision of Dr. \_\_\_\_\_. I have been awarded (scholarships and fellowships). I plan to attend graduate school next fall, with the ultimate goal of pursuing a (masters or PhD). I hope to be able to combine my love of marine life with my mathematical skills. Broadly speaking, my research interests include \_\_\_\_\_.*

### Second paragraph:

State what you have attached to the email (make sure you meet any requirements listed on the faculty's website). If you have a connection to this potential adviser-- share!

*Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ suggested you would be a good fit since you were an expert in (scientific field), so I came running in your direction. I have attached my current CV, GRE scores, my most recent unofficial transcripts, and (writing sample/other materials listed on adviser's website for prospective students).*

### Third paragraph:

Expand on your career goals, what interests you, and why you think you are a fit to this lab. Show that you have thought about this!

*To tell you a little bit more about my career goals, I hope to examine what is happening to fish populations, the characteristics of human impacts, and better forms of management. During my graduate studies, the problems that I am most interested in researching are those relating to fisheries management. Ultimately, I would like to be able to combine field work and modelling to better understand how commercially viable fish populations respond*

*to fishing, environmental changes, protected areas, and other factors. Such work would be beneficial in guiding research and management policy towards protecting species and supporting fisheries. Specific areas that interest me include new analytical techniques to estimate fish productivity, assessing the status of populations inside and outside of marine protected areas, and expanding the understanding of the environmental drivers of geographic variation in life histories. Ultimately, I hope to be able to connect quantitative ecology with practical and applicable solutions to marine fisheries issues.*

**Final paragraph**

Conclude by asking if they plan to accept graduate students and if they are willing to talk to you more.

*Are you currently accepting graduate students for the fall semester? I would love to talk more about my previous experiences, my future career goals, and potential opportunities at (school you are applying to), if you think I am a good fit for your lab.*

*Thank you very much.*

*Sincerely,*

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