**SCORE Guide on cold e-mails for research**

Updated February 21st, 2021

For suggestions please use the feedback survey link on the SCORE homepage

**On cold e-mails:**

Researchers want med students in their labs. Med students want to be in researchers’ labs. As both parties want the same outcome, the only thing getting in the way is a starting point; enter the cold e-mail. Cold e-mails are a great way to quickly and easily introduce yourself, display your interests, and solicit a research opportunity.

**Before e-mailing ask yourself:**

* Why am I interested in this lab?
* Why am I interested in their work?
* Why would I be a good fit for this lab? What do I hope to gain and what can I give? Do I have any relevant experiences?

Answering these questions thoroughly before emailing a researcher should give you all of the background information you need to write a good cold e-mail / to prepare for having a productive conversation with them when discussing research opportunities.

**What to include in a cold e-mail:**

* Introduction (name, year, school, and a brief explanation of your research/specialty interests)
* Express interest in their work
* List what you can bring to the table (e.g. previous experience with chart review, wet lab work, etc.) and/or what you hope to gain (e.g. a specific skill, more bench work experience, insight into a certain specialty, etc.)—the latter is useful if you don’t have much research experience.
* Schedule a meeting with them to talk more about their research / what opportunities for you they have

**Tips for cold e-mailing:**

* Being concise (3-4 sentences) will greatly increase the odds the e-mail is read and responded to
* Attach a CV
* Be polite and professional
* Thank them for their time
* It’s ok to send a follow up email after a while with no response; sometimes things slip between the cracks, esp. for people who receive dozens and dozens of emails a day.
* Include the timing of the research opportunity (e.g. summer, fall semester, etc.).
* Including times you’re free can reduce the amount of back and forth emailing for scheduling.
* If someone else introduced you to the researcher’s work, it may be beneficial to mention them.

**Example cold e-mails:**

Dear Dr. X,

I’m Uwe, a first-year medical student at UTHSC interested in surgery and was wondering if you have any research opportunities in your lab this upcoming summer. I have experience in big data analysis from an undergraduate lab and found your work in single cell RNA-sequencing of tumor biopsies particularly interesting. I would love to have a meeting with you sometime to discuss potential research options. I am generally free Monday and Wednesday mornings and Thursday afternoons if those times work for you.

Sincerely,

Uwe Timm

UTHSC CoM Class of 2024

Dear Dr. Y,

My name is Herta Mueller, and I am currently a first-year medical student at UTHSC. I had a discussion with Dr. X the other day about my interests in emergency medicine, and he described your research in rapid infection diagnostic methods. I was wondering if you have any potential research opportunities for first year medical students this summer, especially those that would allow for time in the emergency department. I have attached a CV highlighting some of my past experiences and thank you for your time.

Best regards,

Herta Mueller

UTHSC CoM Class of 2024

Dear Dr. Z,

I am a first-year medical student at UTHSC and am interested in pulmonary/critical care medicine. I think my background and interests are a strong match for your research on idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, and my CV highlighting my experience in wet lab work, mouse models of disease, and analysis of large genomic datasets is attached. If you have any openings in your lab for medical students this semester, I would appreciate your consideration.

Thank you for your time,

Heinrich Boell

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