

If you buy into the stereotype of girls chatting away on their cell phones, you should think again. One of the major wireless companies surveyed 1021 cell phone owners for a period of five years and—surprise!—reported that guys talk on cell phones more than girls do. In fact, guys were way ahead of girls, using an average of 571 minutes a month compared to 424 for girls. That's 35% more time on the phone! The survey also asked about conversations on land lines, and while girls still beat the field, the guys are catching up.

9f Communicating in an academic setting

As a member of an academic community, you will not only write papers and projects but also write directly to instructors, classmates, and other people at your school via e-mail, course-management systems such as *Blackboard* and *Canvas*, and other electronic media. Your written communication with instructors and classmates will rarely be as formal as assigned writing, but it will also rarely be as informal as a text to a friend, a tweet, or a comment on *Facebook*. Even in a short e-mail, your message will receive a better hearing if you present yourself well and show respect for your reader(s). The following message illustrates an appropriate mix of formality and informality when addressing an instructor.

E-mail message

Subject: Research paper planning conference

To: cmwhite@cms.edu

Dear Professor White:

I am in your 8:10 English 111 class, and I'm writing to schedule a planning conference to discuss possible subjects for my research paper. I recently read an article about smoking in movies, and I'm interested in pursuing the topic for my research paper. However, I know I'll have to narrow the topic, and I'm not sure how to do that. Would you be available to meet sometime between 11:00 and 1:00 next Tuesday or Thursday?

Sincerely,

Rachel Rogers
292-8954

Here are guidelines for such communication.

- Use the medium your instructor prefers. Don't text, tweet, or use a social-networking site unless you're invited to do so.
- Use names. In the body of your message, address your reader(s) by name if possible. Unless your teachers instruct otherwise, always address them formally, using *Professor*, *Dr.*, *Ms.*, or *Mr.*.