Instructor Availability can positively influence student behavior in the following ways:

- Improving relationships between students and professors.
- Increasing student motivation due to the additional emotional support received for educational pursuits.
- Encouraging students to share ideas and problems with instructors.
- Improving academic performance and understanding of course content.
- Increasing student confidence in career-related decisions.
- Reinforcing academic persistence.

"Before exams, she sends out emails to let students know when her extended office hours will be. Furthermore, to help more students, she usually has an extremely brief lunch in her office in between classes while answering students’ questions... as long as students have questions, she is always more than willing to have a little talk after class in the classroom or in her office."

— from a “Thank-a-Teacher” note to Tatiana Rudchenko, Scheller College of Business

Why is availability important?

Students identify interaction with their instructors outside of their class meeting time as an important characteristic of good teaching, expressing gratitude and appreciation for this access.

Instructor availability is an important way to build rapport and relationships with students who benefit from opportunities to learn outside of class meetings.

http://learningenvironment.ctl.gatech.edu
“Thank you for dedicating so much of your time to making sure that students understand the material. I really appreciated the day long office hours to help us with the project.”

— from a “Thank-a-Teacher” note to Adam Vitalis, Scheller College of Business

**Strategies for Enhancing Instructor Availability**

- Help students understand the purpose and value of office hours.
- Communicate your availability to students frequently and through multiple channels.
- Respond to emails in a timely and understanding fashion.
- Set students at ease and communicate tolerance, empathy, and professionalism.
- Consider student schedules, preferences, and learning needs when scheduling office hours.

**REFERENCES**

Brooks, C. F., and Young, S. L. (2016). Exploring communication and course format: Conversation frequency and duration, student motives, and perceived student approachability for out-of-class contact. *The international review of research in open and distributed learning, 17*(5).


http://learningenvironment.ctl.gatech.edu