

STUDY GUIDE FOR LECTURE /NOTETAKING SKILLS

Most entering college students arrive on campus with weak note-taking skills. Perhaps the major difference between students who fail out and students who are successful in college is that the latter group acquires good note-taking skills within their first year of college.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To understand the principles of effective lecture notetaking.
2. To apply those principles to your study behaviors.

DIRECTIONS:

To achieve these objectives, read the specified pages in the primary sources listed below and, if necessary, in the secondary sources. Then complete at least two of the exercises.

A. PRIMARY SOURCES (required):

1. Bogue, Carole. Studying in the Content Areas: The Social Sciences. Second Edition. Clearwater, Florida: H & H Publishing Co., Inc., 1993. Pp. 157-63

or

Bogue, Carole. Studying in the Content Areas: The Sciences. Second Edition. Clearwater, Florida: H & H Publishing Co., Inc., 1993. Pp. 159-165.

2. Langan, John. Reading and Study Skills. Fifth Edition. St. Louis: McGraw Hill, 1992. pp. 39-66.

B. SECONDARY SOURCES (optional):

1. Ellis, David B. Becoming a Master Student. Rapid City: College Survival Inc. Second Edition. Pp. 122-35.
2. Video Tape Series --"College Lectures for Notetaking Practice"

C. EXERCISES (complete at least two):

1. Choose one course in which you take class notes. Using the suggestions in the study materials, analyze the strengths and weaknesses of your current notetaking system. Xerox two pages of those notes and rework them using some of the suggestions from the above sources. Write down which, if any, changes would help you learn and study that class material better.

2. Choose any unit from the Video Tape Series; listen and take notes. Then compare your notes with the instructor's notes on that lecture which are on file.
3. Choose any unit from the audio tapes which accompany Carole Bogue's books. Listen and take notes. Then read your notes while listening to the taped lecture a second time. Can you anticipate from your notes what the next topic or point will be? How well do your notes do your notes allow you to make this anticipation?

A SYSTEM FOR EFFECTIVE LISTENING & NOTETAKING

You can think about 4 times faster than a lecturer can speak. Effective LISTENING requires the expenditures of energy; to compensate for the rate of presentation, you have to actively intend to listen. NOTETAKING is one way to enhance listening, and using a systematic approach to taking and reviewing you notes can add immeasurably to your understanding and remembering lecture content.

BEFORE CLASS:

- Develop a mind-set geared toward listening.
- Test yourself over the previous lecture while waiting for the next one to begin.
- Pre-read relevant reading assignments to acquaint yourself with main ideas, new technical terms, etc.
- Do what you can to improve physical and mental alertness. Fatigue, hunger, time of day, and where you sit in the classroom can all affect motivation.
- Choose notebooks that will enhance your systematic notetaking: loose-leaf note paper or separate 8 1/2 X 11 spiral notebooks are recommended for each course.

DURING CLASS:

- The beginning of a lecture is important: an instructor usually indicates the theme or topic of the lecture. Don't be late for class.
- Listen for the structure or major topics of the lecture and distinguish them from the supporting details.
- Be consistent in your use of abbreviations and form (outline, etc), etc.
- Pay attention to the speaker for verbal, postural, and visual clues to what's important. Learn the instructor's lecture style and organization.
- If the instructor writes it on the board, then write it in your notes.
- Label important points or organizational clues with symbols.
- Mark things you don't understand, and ask questions.
- Listen carefully to information given toward the end of class--summary statements and indication of possible test items are frequently suggested as rap-up comments.

AFTER CLASS:

- Clear up any questions raised by the lecture by asking either the teacher or your classmates.
- Fill in missing points or misunderstood terms from the text, a friend's notes, etc.
- Edit your notes as soon as possible after class, labeling main points, adding recall clues and questions to be answered.
- Work on math and foreign language assignments as soon as possible after class while they are still fresh in your mind.

PERIODICALLY:

- Review your notes: glance at recall clues to see how much you remember BEFORE rereading the notes.
- Look for the emergence of themes, main concepts, methods of presentation over the course of several lectures. (Look for the forest as well as the trees.)
- Make up and answer possible test questions.