

Note-Taking Strategies

Make listening an active process. Being an active listener means being a critical and discriminating listener. Students should practice thinking and questioning along with the speaker. In a typical lecture, probably five or six major ideas related to the central topic are presented. Students should make headings in their notes that reflect these themes.

Become familiar with the instructor's mannerisms. The sooner students become familiar with their instructors' unique methods for emphasizing important points, the easier it will be for them to decide what to write down. Many instructors summarize important concepts at the close of each lecture. Students should take the time to check notes for accuracy.

Relate the material to what you already know about the subject. Material presented in a lecture is often related to reading assignments. Keeping up to date with reading will enable students to mark related ideas from the text in their notes. Listen carefully during discussion and update lecture notes. Many times the questions asked during a class discussion help clarify points made during a lecture. Encourage students to go back to their lecture notes to add information.

TAKE THE SURVIVOR CHALLENGE AND DEVELOP THE SKILL TO TAKE MORE ACCURATE, COMPLETE AND ORGANIZED NOTES!

(M.Jackson, Tomás Rivera Center for Student Success, University of Texas at San Antonio, fall 2006)

BEFORE CLASS

- 📖 Complete the assigned readings *before* going to class.
- 📖 Make a brief list of major headings and key terms in the readings to use as a guideline for taking notes in class.
- 📖 Generate a list of questions from the readings to ask the professor in class.
- 📖 Read over notes from the previous lecture and identify the main points. Write down any questions to ask the professor in class.

DURING CLASS

- 📖 Attend *all of every* lecture. If you miss a class, borrow notes from at least two other students. Use multiple sets of notes to generate your own copy for the missed class.
- 📖 Sit near the front of the room in order to listen carefully and remain focused during the lecture.
- 📖 Include a date and title for each lecture and record information as legibly as possible.
- 📖 Leave blank spaces between topics so that you may add comments later.
- 📖 If you miss something during a lecture, see the professor after class. Take advantage of study groups and/or Supplemental Instruction as an opportunity to fill in any gaps of information in your notes.

AFTER CLASS

- 👑 Read and revise your notes within 24 hours of the class.
- 👑 Compare your notes with information from the text and with fellow students. Clear up all misunderstandings by consulting the professor or other students.
- 👑 Reflect on the information in your notes by really thinking about what you have learned. Think about how the information relates to your other courses or to something familiar in your own life. Ask yourself: What is the significance of these facts? What principle are they based on? How can I apply them? How do they fit in with what I already know?