

Notetaking Checklist



Checklist: In-class Strategies

In order to understand the main points of a course and to study for exams, it is important that you take well-organized, easy to read, and useful notes on class lectures and discussions.

Below is a checklist you can use to help you take good notes during your classes.

Taking Notes on Lectures and Class Discussions

■ **Are your notes well-organized?**

Organizing your notes will help you identify patterns in your professor's lectures, study for exams, and prepare for subsequent classes. Here are some suggestions for taking clear and well-organized notes:

- Underline main points
- Indent details
- Note examples
- Number Reasons

■ **Do your notes distinguish main points from details?**

Lectures often include both main points and details. The main points might be reasons, characteristics, or theories. Details include information that supports or explains the main points. Write your notes in such a way that it is easy to decipher the main points from the details. This will help you gain a clear understanding of the major concepts of the class and will help you study for exams.

■ **Do your notes include examples?**

Examples not only help clarify points, they also tend to show up on exams. Be sure to write down every example your professor uses to support a main point.

■ **Do your notes paraphrase your instructor?**

If your instructor speaks quickly and you are unable to write down as much of his/her lecture as you would like, paraphrase the lecturer's points instead of writing the material word-for-word. Paraphrasing, in this sense, means writing down the key concepts in your own words and then filling in the details after class with information from the textbook.

■ **Do you record the material that your instructor writes on the board?**

If your instructor takes the time to write key terms or an outline on the board, it is usually important. Be sure to also take the time to write such information in your notes as well.

■ **Do you date your notes?**

For easy reference, be sure to date your notes. Suppose your instructor mentions that all material after a certain date will be on the exam. If you didn't date your notes, you wouldn't know where to begin to study.