

## Note Taking Strategies

Many of us find it difficult to listen to information while we are trying to take it down and that is why lectures can be so difficult. It is hard to maintain your concentration, not get lost in the content, identify what is important, try and keep pace all the writing notes that will make sense.

The following handout is designed to give you some strategies that you can try and implement before, during and after each of your classes.

### **Before Class...**

Complete assigned readings before the lecture. At the very least try and scan the chapters that are going to be covered in class so that you have a framework for the lecture

Review notes from the previous lectures so that you can try and make connections between what has been covered and what will be getting covered

Read through any notes the professor has made available online and then bring them with you to class so they are available during lecture when you can fit in additional details

### **During Class...**

Listen actively

Focus – if bringing your laptop to class brings too many temptations with it, try handwriting instead

Sit at the front of the room if you are bothered by background noise and conversation

If your professor writes something down, changes his or her tone for emphasis, repeats or continually draws attention to particular topic or concept by saying things like “This will be important” – take note!

Indicate things that you are hearing in lecture that you also recall reading in the textbook

Use abbreviations and if you fall behind try and leave blanks space on your page

### **After Class...**

Discern the important from the unimportant for example:

Multiple choice tests require detail

Short answer tests need more definitions and examples

Essays require understanding of main concepts and themes and how they compare and contrast

Review the lecture notes within twenty four hours so you can recall where you needed to fill in information

Cleaning up where notes may have gotten messy

Identify areas that may require the Professor or TA clarify

Make supplementary notes for exam preparation for example :

Lists of terminology and definitions

Lists of possible exam questions

Notes of how lecture concepts fit into reading material

Use comparison charts or mind maps (visit [www.mindtools.com](http://www.mindtools.com) for ideas) to put all the information together

Develop flash cards

Review lecture notes on a weekly basis