

Student Success Program

South Campus

Notetaking Skills

Rationale

Notetaking is important even if you understand clearly everything a lecturer says. How many notes you take depends on how you spot main points and how fast you write. Don't try to record everything; however, if you can't spot the main points, it's better to write too little, and then organize later. Remember the lecture purpose:

1. To present important material not otherwise easily available.
2. To explain important points that might cause difficulty or that warrant elaboration.

I. Preparation

A. Before the lecture

1. Read the textbook before class
2. Know the specific vocabulary
3. Familiarize yourself with the lecture topic – outside reading, review of previous notes, discussions, etc.

B. During the lecture

1. Sit near the front of the room
2. Use a loose-leaf notebook and 8½ x 11 paper
3. Have pen or pencil ready
4. Concentrate on what is being said
5. Think ahead if possible
6. Don't try to write everything

II. Organization of Lecture

A. Only a few main points are covered in a lecture

B. Isolate core ideas and summarize each in a brief note by watching for lecturer's cues:

1. Topic sentences and summary statements
2. Listing important subpoints: "the three parts," "the five results," etc.
3. Vocal emphasis
4. Repetition, pauses
5. Saying, "The next point is important," "Note this," etc.

III. Organization of Notes

A. During lecture

1. Label major topics
2. Indent subpoints and details

3. Note anything seeming ridiculous or conflicting with your present beliefs
4. Jot down in the margin any questions you think of
5. Invent abbreviations
6. Don't panic over missed points – check later

B. After lecture

1. Rewrite illegible parts
2. Fill in gaps
3. Add points you remember but didn't record
4. Answer questions in margin
5. Find examples of facts and principles presented

IV. The Five R's of Notetaking

- A. Record – see part III above
- B. Reduce – summarize, pick out key terms
- C. Recite – using reduced notes, recite points you remember from recorded notes
- D. Reflect – write down ideas that come while you are reciting
- E. Review – repeat step C

For further information, please contact:

Student Success Coordinator

7200 Pines Blvd.

Building 68, Room 209

FL 33024

Phone: 954-201-8994/ 954-201-8875