

ORGANIZING LECTURE NOTES - OUTLINE

Main idea: An organized approach to taking notes while listening is essential in college, valuable later on. Make an effort to master it.

I. DISCOVERING THE INSTRUCTOR'S ORGANIZATION: His or Her Abilities and Attitudes.

A. Typical lecture approaches

1. page-by-page review of text
2. use text as a base with information added from other sources
3. lecture on outside material; students read text on their own
4. combination of the above methods

B. Organization of lecture affects difficulty or note-taking

C. Reading assignments good preparation for lecture --ask questions

D. Texts on text, lectures, or both

II. ORGANIZING YOURSELF AND YOUR MATERIALS

A. Mental "set" -- active, alert, analytical interest necessary

B. Materials should be organized

1. 8 1/2" x 11" notebook with lots of paper
2. make separate section for each course
3. write only on one side of paper
4. use ballpoint pens to avoid smudging
5. double or triple space (room for changes, or comments)

III. ORGANIZING LECTURE NOTES

A. Keep purpose in mind--notes must be useful

B. You are interested in two things (as with textbook notes)

1. making sure of main ideas
2. relating supporting facts (details) to main ideas

C. Time limited when taking lecture notes

1. sift--take down essential items, cut out unimportant details
2. make notes brief, make sure they make sense

D. Organized notebook page needed for useful notes

1. basic principles of note-taking in any kind of lecture
 - a. record only worthwhile facts
 - b. use your words or instructor's, whichever is easiest
 - c. write in phrases, as short as possible
 - d. listen for introductory and summary remarks
 - e. listen for pointer-words, especially numbers
 - f. SIF--skip examples unless needed to understand idea
 - g. use every possible abbreviation
 - h. leave blank space if you miss something, ask later
 - i. write down formulas, dates, graphs, drawings, etc.
 - j. put your comments in brackets, separate from instructor's
 - k. don't doodle, etc.
 - l. do ask questions, if allowed and if helpful
2. Use with page-by-page lecturers
 - a. outline text, lecture on same page
 - b. headings help you refer back, gives a feeling of organization
 - c. data on page, less writing in class
 - d. have text notes set in advance
3. Use with instructor who uses text as base
 - a. tie in new ideas in "Lecture" column
 - b. may have to jump around to make notes fit
4. Use when instructor pays little attention to the organization of the text
 - a. no column for "text notes"
 - b. you should still outline chapter, review before lecture
5. Use when there is a combination of methods
 - a. use a temporary note-taking setup
 - b. use when you can't see overall plan or haven't outlined text
 - c. "outline preparation" worksheet
 - d. listen for pointer ideas, basic themes
 - e. organize and study notes after class

IV. POST LECTURE ORGANIZATION

A. Review right after class

1. "edit" your notes--correct, add information, underline, etc.
2. adjust entries in pointer column for easy reference
3. summarize briefly at bottom of sheet
4. if disorganized, rewrite notes

B. Follow up with test preparation and review schedule