

EFFECTIVE LISTENING IS YOUR SECRET FOR BETTER CLASS NOTES

(An outline format has been used to refresh your memory on outlining skills.)

I. GET ORGANIZED

- A. Use a spiral or 3-hole binder to keep your notes organized. Avoid loose leaf folders that allow your papers to flutter everywhere. Hint: Yellow paper may be easier on your eyes, so consider changing from white to yellow.
- B. Date each lecture and number all pages for that course in sequence.

II. SETUP YOUR FORMAT

- A. Study the example format on these two pages. Use it, or experiment with something similar until you have a format you like.
- B. Recall words or cues to main ideas should be written in the left margin of the right hand page. Fill in recall words when you first review your notes. Study questions should be written on the facing left hand page to assist you when you review.
- C. In your own words, summarize the main ideas at the bottom of the right hand page (or write questions you need to ask to your instructor).
- D. Use an outline similar to the one on this page rather than write full paragraphs.
 - 1. Indent secondary ideas, supporting documentation, or examples.
 - 2. Always leave room when a new point is being developed.
 - 3. Incomplete sentences or phrases will be necessary. Make sure you know the meaning of all your incomplete sentences.

III. TAKING LECTURE NOTES

- A. What should you take notes on?
 - 1. All definitions
 - 2. Lists
 - 3. Formulas or solutions
- B. Indenting is important to set off secondary ideas. Leave plenty of space so the notes are easier to study.
- C. Draw arrows to show connections between ideas.
- D. Whenever you are in doubt, write it down. In discussion classes, jot notes on important points-particularly conclusions reached during the discussion.
- E. Spell new words as well as you can by the sound. Look up correct spelling the first chance you get, or ask your instructor for help.
- F. Use symbols, diagrams, or drawing to simplify ideas.

IV. LISTENING

- A. Listen for the following signals from your instructor about what is important:
 - 1. Voice changes usually indicate important points- listen for increases in volume or dramatic pauses.
 - 2. Repetition is a clue that an important point is being made.
 - 3. Gestures may indicate a major point.
- B. Stay involved in all classroom discussions. Ask questions, especially when things are becoming unclear.

V. PARTICIPATE IN CLASS

- A. Think, react, reflect, and question to help your instructor keep the class alive.
- B. Become involved but don't be a clown. Do not grandstand or dominate the conversations.
- C. Your grade will often improve if you actively participate. If you are on the borderline between grades, most instructors will remember your desire to learn if you participate.