

NOTE TAKING

Note taking in a 3 step process:

Observe more carefully
Record more accurately
Review efficiently

1. Observe – to improve observation skills:
 - a) Set the stage – complete outside assignments, bring the right materials, sit up front, conduct a short pre-class review, participate, ask questions, and relate class material to your goals.
 - b) Watch for clues – ideas on how to catch possible test items:
 - Repetition – may be a signal that the instructor feels this material is important.
 - Words that reveal the structure of lecture – “The following 3 factors,” “The most important consideration,” “On the other hand,” “In conclusion.” Such phrases signal important relationships, definition, and cause and effect can help structure and organize your notes.
 - Watch the board – if the instructor puts something on the board, consider the material important.
 - Watch the instructor’s interest level – if the instructor sounds excited or animated about something, that is a generally good indication that the material is important.
 - Don’t ignore the obvious – if the instructor tells you it is important, *it is important!*
2. Recording
 - a) Use a 3-ring binder – Pages can easily be removed and spread out for review.
 - b) Write on only one side of the page.
 - c) Leave lots of white space – notes are easier to read. It’s also easier to go back and revise, clarify, and correct if need be.
 - d) Label, number and date all notes.
 - e) Create a standard system of abbreviations.
3. Review
 - a) Within 24 hours – short-term memory decays rapidly. You will lose approximately 80% of what you learned if do not review within an appropriate period of time.

University Counseling Services

818-677-2366

TTY: 818-677-7834