



Steps to **SUCCESS**

Note Taking Tips

The mission of the Student Success Center (SSC) is to support the college's learning environment and promote student success through graduation and beyond. Your future is our vision. We have a variety of student services and open computer labs to help you reach your goals.

Various locations are open throughout the campus, and SSC Specialists and/or peer tutors are available to support students in different disciplines, including:

- Math
- Writing
- Reading
- Study skills
- Speech

Students are seen by appointment or on a first-come, first-served, walk-in basis, depending upon tutor availability.

Please call (618) 468-4SSC (4772) or visit www.lc.edu/ssc for locations and availability.

Note Taking Tips



Taking effective lecture and textbook notes requires practice, but with some helpful hints and your own determination and dedication to the course, you can ensure that your notetaking time is well spent.

How to Take Lecture Notes:

1. For each class you take, you should designate a folder and a notebook (or section of a notebook) to that class.
2. Review any assigned readings before the class period. Taking lecture notes can be far more difficult if you failed to read what the instructor assigned for that day's class.
3. If the instructor is speaking and/or writing information on the board, you should be taking notes.
4. Remove distractions from your work area. Put your cell phone away and on "mute" so that you aren't tempted by its vibrating.
5. Put the date at the top of your notes.
6. If the instructor says that he/she will be discussing a specific concept that day, write it at the top of the page, like a title for that day's entry. If you're unsure, you can always wait until the lecture is over to look back over what you've written to help you determine the appropriate title.
7. Write neatly. Remember that you'll need to be able to refer back to these notes!
8. Give yourself plenty of room to write. Skip lines if needed, and when writing numbers, be sure to leave plenty of space between each number. If you write "114" in your notes, for instance, but squish the number ones together, it could look like the number "14" rather than the intended "114."
9. Abbreviate when possible. Make up your own set of symbols and shortened versions of words that you'll remember so that you can record your notes quickly.
10. If you don't understand something, put a question mark next to it. If possible, ask for clarification right away. Some instructors, however, do not like to be interrupted during a lecture. Visit them during office hours or see them after class with your notes in hand to discuss anything you didn't understand.
11. If you have trouble hearing, move up front. And if the instructor mumbles something, just say, "Will you please repeat that?"
12. Withhold judgement of the instructor, and put aside any concerns or doubts you may have. Your focus needs to be squarely on the task of notetaking.
13. Use the "buddy system." If you are ever absent, you should get your notes from a peer in your class. The instructor will most likely not want to present the entire lecture to you during their office hours.



What to Do After Class

1. Give yourself a little time away from your notes. You should, however, return to them within 24 hours while the material is still relatively fresh in your mind.
2. Review your notes, and revise if necessary. You should add in any additional information or hints to help you remember something if needed. Do not simply re-copy your notes.
3. Summarize the contents of your notes. This will help ensure that you *learned* the material, as opposed to just *memorizing* the material.
4. Make note cards to help you remember important vocabulary terms or particular concepts.
5. Read your notes aloud.
6. Review your notes before the next class period.

Most Common Problems Students Have with Instructors

Problem	Solution
The teacher mumbles.	Sit up front.
The teacher goes off track.	Ask a question that will prompt the teacher to get back on track.
The teacher seems disorganized.	Leave plenty of space throughout your notes so that if the teacher returns to a previous point, you can add on to it. Reorganize your notes after class if needed.
The teacher talks too fast.	Create a study group so that you can compare notes with your peers. Ask the teacher if you can record their lectures. Ask the teacher to slow down.
You just don't like the teacher.	Remember that this class is temporary. And also remember that you will encounter plenty more people throughout your life that you don't like or that you disagree with, and it's important to learn the value of coping as opposed to giving up.

How to Take Notes from a Textbook



1. Preview the material.
 - a. Are you familiar with anything you're about to read, like the author(s) or any of the content? Write down what you know.
 - b. Do you see any words you don't know? Look them up.
 - c. How is the reading organized? Are there lots of headings? Just a single title? Looking ahead can help you determine how best to organize your notes.
 - d. What are you reading? Is it a chapter from a textbook? A novel chapter? An essay? A short story? A poem? Know what *medium* you are reading.
2. After previewing, read through the material. Do not take notes yet. You're first reading is about getting familiar with the content.
3. Begin your second read.
 - a. Put the date and a heading at the top of the page indicating what your notes are about.
 - b. If what you're reading is organized in sections with headings, include those headings in your notes.
 - c. Summarize the content of specific sections. This could be several paragraphs that you condense to just a few sentences. If you're reading something like a poem, a section could be a stanza or a few lines that you have designated as a "section."
 - d. Make note of any bolded terms.
 - e. Pay attention to sidebars and annotations. Oftentimes, they provide examples and/or offer more clarity.
 - f. Mark anything that confuses you, and create questions that you can then ask your instructor and/or your peers.
4. Once you finish, take a break. Return to your notes within 24 hours.
5. Read what you wrote aloud.
 - a. Does everything make sense? Fill in any blanks by going back over certain sections.
6. Summarize your notes in a few sentences.
7. Review your notes before the next class period, and remind yourself of any questions you may have.