

Taking Notes During A Lecture – CRACKING THEIR CODE!

When the lecturer...	The lecturer means...
Slows down or speaks more loudly	This is important! Try to record speaker's exact words.
Lists or numbers points ("There are five causes...", "Six solutions are..." etc.	Each of the points is equally important
Makes a direct announcement ("One important fact...", "Be sure to remember...")	This is information you should learn. It may appear on an exam.
Uses nonverbal clues (pointing, pounding the desk, walking toward the audience, etc.)	They feel strongly about the idea or wants to emphasize its importance.
Write on the whiteboard	They want you to pay attention and copy the writing in your notes.
Uses PowerPoint slides	The information presented on the slides has been selected as particularly important.
Asks questions (either verbally or projected on a screen)	They are emphasizing the question's importance and may use this technique to provoke critical thinking (possible essay exam questions)
Distributes or posts online an outline of or note-taking guide for the lecture	The material is complex or they are aware that students may need help grasping the lecturer's organization.

Problem	Solution
“My mind wanders and I get bored.”	Sit in the front of the room. Be certain to preview assignments. Think about questions you expect to be answered in the lecture.
“The instructor talks too fast.”	Develop a shorthand system; use abbreviations. Leave blanks and fill them in later
“The lecturer rambles.”	Preview correlating text assignments to determine organizing principles. Reorganize your notes after the lecture.
“Some ideas don’t seem to fit anywhere.”	Record them in the margin or in parentheses within your notes, and think about them later during editing.
“Everything seems important.”; “Nothing seems important.”	You have not identified key concepts and may lack necessary background knowledge-you do not understand the topic. Preview related text assignments
“The instructor uses terms without defining them.”	Write them phonetically, the way they sound. Fill in correct spellings during editing.
“The instructor uses terms without defining them.”	Write the terms as they are used; leave space to record definitions later, when you can consult the text glossary or a dictionary.

Taking Notes During A Lecture – Troubleshooting!