**How to Be a Better Note Taker**

As you read the title of this month’s featured topic you might be thinking to yourself, “There’s a correct way to take notes?” Yes, there are specific ways that may work better than others when it comes to taking effective notes. How many times have you taken notes in class and then gone back to your residence hall to study your notes and found that you do not understand what you wrote down from the lecture? Another reason why this topic is so important is that most students do not know what to take notes on when their professor is lecturing. By the end of this article you will have some helpful tips about how you can improve your note taking skills.

College students will try many different note taking styles their first year before finding the one that is most comfortable and easiest to follow for them. Don’t be discouraged by this, because you can find the right fit for you. One way to take notes is to use the **Cornell method**, which is a simple way to keep up with questions that were raised in class and your lecture notes side-by-side. At the bottom of the page leave 4-5 lines for a summary of the notes above. This method is effective because you can go back and look at the questions that were raised in class, you can annotate terms that are important and finally you can cover up the notes section and quiz yourself on the content of your notes by answering the questions in the left column. For an example of the Cornell method see the illustration above.

Another effective way to take notes is to use the **outline method**. The relationship between different types of information is shown through indenting subtopics (specific information) underneath the main topics (general information) that the professor covers in lecture. When using the outline method you will place the main topic at the far left and then continue to add subtopics that are related to the main topic by indenting them underneath the main topic along with any brief notes that relate to the subtopics. For an example of the outline method see the illustration above.

Do you have trouble trying to figure out the most important information that your professor wants you to understand for your upcoming test? Here are a few simple clues to look for while your professor is lecturing:

- Anything that your professor writes on the board
- Some professors will give a short summary of the important information presented during lecture at the end of class
- Repetition of information is always a good sign of importance
- When emphasis is used during lecture

It may take a little time before you are able to pick up on all the important information that your professors want you to understand for your class. Remember, each professor has a different style of teaching; therefore, you may need to change the way you take notes. You may also have to learn the cues that your professor gives when communicating important information that is pertinent for your test. Good luck!

**Featured Topic: Effective Note Taking**
- Note Taking: Juli Osborne

**Other Topics:**
- Communicating with Family: Sara Lohr
- Making the Most of Your Time at Campbell: Jordyn Gum

**Home Sporting Events & Campus Activities**

**Reflections of a Peer Mentor: Communicating with Family**

By: Sara Lohr

When I went to college, I knew things were going to be different with my family. What I didn’t realize was that explaining things and talking to my family was going to be different. How do you deal with family who don’t understand where you’re coming from now that you are in college? You have to remember to be patient. There is a very good possibility that you will have to explain things to your family several times. Life in college is different for you, but it is also different for your parents. They are used to you being in school; therefore, they are used to your old schedule. It may be helpful to tell your family that your college schedule for classes, doing homework, etc. is much different than it was in high school. There are also things about college life that your family may just not understand. For example, my grandparents never went to college, and a meal plan is a completely foreign concept to them. I had to explain to them that they didn’t need to worry about me eating enough because I pay for my food as part of my tuition. Many times, all it takes is a little bit of patience and time to clarify your new life as a college student before your family understands your new schedule. It is important to remember that communication with your family may take some work, but it is worth the time and effort when you can share your experiences with your family.
REFLECTIONS OF A PEER MENTOR: EFFECTIVE NOTE TAKING
BY: JULI OSBORNE

My first and most important piece of advice to you is to put your cell phone away during class. You may think you can multitask and focus on what your teacher is saying while you check Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, etc., but in reality, you aren’t going to remember the information that is said. Not only are you not retaining the information, but it’s hard to write down key points if your fingers are scrolling on your phone and not on your pen or pencil. I guarantee if you make eye contact with your professor and actually focus on what he/she is saying, you will gain the respect of your teacher and do better in the class.

I find it helpful to print the PowerPoint slides off for lecture before class. That way I can write down whatever extra information the teacher says in class instead of focusing on copying down the slides. If this is not an option for your class, then try your best to listen as you copy the slides and make note as you hear important information.

Another method I find helpful when reviewing my notes is to use different colored pens and highlighters. For example, I write the slide information in blue ink but extra information in black in the margins. Sometimes I also highlight the titles or key terms through my notes, so I can quickly find it later. I hope this advice helps you in your studies! Study hard Camels!

REFLECTIONS OF A PEER MENTOR: MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR TIME
BY: JORDYN GUM

I like to say that Campbell is a small campus with a big campus feel–there are as many opportunities (academically, socially, and professionally) as bigger schools, but the campus is small enough so that every Campbell student can take advantage of them. As a Communication Studies major, networking is everything. I want to be a film director, and field experience is just as important as book knowledge. I will not be hired based solely on my GPA or whether or not I did well in a certain class. Though those are still important areas to do well in, it’s the job experience that will place me above my competitors.

At Campbell, I’ve been given so many professional opportunities, so I don’t have to wait until I graduate to build my portfolio. Nearly all of these connections have been made through my professors. Because of the smaller campus size, professors get to better know their students. They know their student’s interests and career goals; and so, when opportunities arise, they can delegate projects to the students they know could benefit well from them. Creating personal relationships with your professors is such an important part of your Campbell experience. They’ve been there, they have the experience and the knowledge needed in the career field, and they’re more than willing to share all they can with you so that you can be successful after you graduate.