

ACTIVE LISTENING STRATEGIES

To benefit from a lecture or seminar, you must actively LISTEN and become engaged. In general, all students should do the following:

LEAD, don't follow

- Do your readings ahead of time (at the very least preview your readings before class).
- Anticipate what will be discussed in class – recall key terms and theories from your readings.
- Identify question that might be answered during class. Use the question section from PQ4R to help you in this process
- Review your notes from the last lecture before the class begins.

Find the main IDEAS in the lecture / seminar

- Listen for the two or three main ideas your professor is trying to get across.
- Underline key words and star definitions.
- Look out for terms the professor repeats or explains in detail.

Watch for SIGNALS indicating important information

- Pay attention to verbal and non-verbal cues. Examples:
 - writing something on the board
 - repetition and pauses
 - hand gestures and tone of voice
 - verbal cues such as “most importantly”, “for example”, “remember that”
- Watch for other students writing and if everyone else in the class write the point down, you should too.

TAKE YOUR TIME deciding what is worth writing down

- Pause to question and evaluate information before you write it down.
- Consider what information flows or links together before you start writing.
- Use the lecture outline as a guide to what's important.

Practice EFFECTIVE LISTENING

- Do not just receive the information, but question it as well. Does it make sense?
- Make sure you sit where you can understand your professor and see any overheads.
- Don't be afraid to participate in class (if your professor is open to this). Ask questions, answer your professor's questions, and engage in group discussions.
- Stay away from other students who will distract you (those who talk in the back of the class, students with computers, friends who like to talk, people reading newspapers, etc).
- Write in questions, or star theories, concepts, etc. that need to be clarified later. Seek out this clarification by using your textbooks, talking to peers, or visiting your professor during his or her office hours.

Create clear, legible NOTES

- Clearly define sections of your notes with headings and subheadings.
- Underline and highlight key points and theories.
- Leave room to add in additional information later when you review your notes after the class.
- Review your notes after class and elaborate on any short hand that you might not recognize a few days or weeks from then. You will forget 50 to 80% of what you learn if you don't review within 24 hours.
- Review often and condense your notes.
- Re-write or type your notes if they are messy.
- Add in images and graphs that your professor provides during the lecture.