



TAKING CLASS NOTES

You're in the classroom, and the class and instructor are actively conversing about a new topic. Hands are raised, a PowerPoint is on the screen, and you're scrambling to take effective notes.

With all the distractions, taking notes is not an easy task. In fact, it demands focus and skill. Here's a quick checklist for taking meaningful notes:

- ◆ **Be prepared to take notes**, either with your laptop or notebook. (Although laptops are more visible in classrooms, you should still check with your instructor about using one.)
- ◆ **Organize for success:** put the date and topic at the top of the page.
- ◆ **Create a strategy for categorizing your notes.** You might have boxes titled "new ideas," questions, definitions, or page numbers of referenced reading.
- ◆ **Take notes in your own words:** summarize ideas from the presentation or class discussion. If you don't know a term or concept, write the word in the question box.
- ◆ **Make new learning the goal.** Include a space for your personal "take-away" or final review/reflection about the learning. And don't leave the classroom until you've given yourself this valuable time for reflection. If needed, stay after class and clarify with your instructor or classmates.



Here's a sample of what your notebook page might look like:

Date:		Topic:	
Questions:		New Ideas:	
References (in class text or another reference with page numbers cited):			
Take-Away or Reflection:			

*By Anne Maxham, Ph.D.
Director of Writing, Antioch University*