

Editing Lecture Notes

There are several good reasons for organizing and reviewing your notes as soon as possible after the lecture.

- While the lecture is still fresh in your mind, you can fill in from memory examples and facts which you did not have time to write down during the lecture.
- Also, you can recall what parts of the lecture were unclear to you so you can consult the lecturer, the graduate assistant, a classmate, your text, or additional readings for further information.
- Immediately reviewing results in better retention than review after a longer period of time.
 - Unless a student reviews material within 24 hours after the lecture or at least before the next lecture, retention will drop and s/he will be relearning rather than reviewing.
- A method of annotation is usually preferable to recopying notes. The following suggestions for annotating may be helpful.
 - Underline key statements or important concepts. ○ Use asterisks or other signal marks to indicate importance.
 - Use margins or blank pages for coordinating notes with the text. Consider indicating relevant pages of the text beside the corresponding information in the notes.
 - Use a key and a summary.
 - Use one of the margins to keep a key to important names, formulas, dates, concepts, etc. This forces you to anticipate questions of an objective nature and provides specific facts that you need to develop essays.
 - Use the other margin to write a short summary of the topics on the page, relating the contents of the page to the whole lecture or to the lecture of the day before.
Condensing the notes in this way not only helps you to learn them but also prepares you for the kind of thinking required on essay exams and many so-called “objective” exams.

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