# Tips and Strategies for Online Note Taking

***Take Notes By Hand:***

If you’re taking an online class, odds are that you’ll be using your computer to view the lecture. So taking notes by hand can eliminate unnecessary compute steps (switching between your class and your notes). In addition, writing your notes by hand will make you a more active receiver of the material. In fact, a study published in the ***Lexia: Undergraduate Journal in Writing, Rhetoric, and Technical Communication*** found that students who wrote their notes by hand – although a slower process than typing – were forced to interpret the information and put it in their own words. Thus, those students were better able to understand content. For information on note-taking strategies, see our note-taking material.

**Take Notes While Reading:**

Many online courses primarily involve reading the material and watching lectures on your own. Experts suggest becoming an active reader in order to get the most out of the material and your notes. For example, take notes *while* reading the material, rather than reading or skimming through it and jotting down a few notes later. Mark what catches your eye as you read. Writing notes in the margins can let you know what you the concepts for which you will need more information.

**Create A System:**

There are many effective note taking systems available (see our section on note-taking). Find one that works for you. Find one that works for the course that your taking.

**Only Write The Main Ideas**

You don’t have to write down everything that you hear. If you focus to much on getting everything, you may miss the important points. Adopt abbreviations instead of writing down full sentences. Leave space to go back and add information later.

**Review Your Notes**

Review your notes as soon after the online course as you can. Filling in missing information, noting what doesn’t make sense, and listing questions that you have.

Spend some time every week reviewing all your notes. This will help you transfer information from short-term to long-term memory so you will be able to recall the information later on.