

Tips for Taking Notes during the Lecture
HIST 2020: US since 1877
Dr. Potter

Taking Notes in Class

- I will always post an outline of the week's lecture (which includes all of the information on the slides) before our first lecture of the week.
- Print the lecture outline before class and fill in important information during the lecture (prior to printing, add hard returns between items to give you space to hand write your own notes). If you are using a laptop or tablet, simply type into the outline during class. Or, if you forget to print the outline before class, you can still download it later. In the meantime, you can just write down the outline heading (such as "I.A.1") in your notes, and refer back to the outline later for the information that was on the slide next to heading I.A.1.
- Listen actively to make sure you understand what I'm saying and why it is important
 - Writing down what you think are the most important points will help you stay actively engaged in the lecture
 - I will give you important dates, details, etc., in the outline or on the powerpoint. You need this information. However, my lectures focus on explaining why these things matter and how they connect to one another, and I expect you to understand and retain these explanations. In other words, you will probably need to write down more than what is on the slides in order to do well on the exams.
 - Ask questions if you do not understand something or missed a point you think is important.
- Develop a system of taking notes that helps *you* retain the information
 - Use shorthand if that helps you – but be sure you can understand it when you review it later
 - Sum up (and write down) the main points of the lecture as soon as you can after class is over

Cornell Method of Note Taking

- Divide your note paper into three sections:
 - notes in the right column
 - key words, reflections, and questions in the left column
 - summarize at the bottom of the page
- See attached "Cornell Method of Note Taking Handout" from Dartmouth for more details

Useful resources online about taking lecture notes:

- <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/success/notes.html>
- <http://www.clemson.edu/collegeskills/SEC3PG1.HTM> (be sure to review all of the sections in this unit – they are quite useful)

The Cornell Note Taking System

Recall Column

-----2 1/2"-----	-----6"-----
<p>Reduce ideas and facts to concise jottings and summaries as cues for Reciting, Reviewing, and Reflecting.</p>	<p>Record the lecture as fully and as meaningfully as possible.</p>
<p>The format provides the perfect opportunity for following through with the 5 R's of note-taking. Here they are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Record. During the lecture, record in the main column as many meaningful facts and ideas as you can. Write legibly.2. Reduce. As soon after as possible, summarize these ideas and facts concisely in the Recall Column. Summarizing clarifies meanings and relationships, reinforces continuity, and strengthens memory. Also, it is a way of preparing for examinations gradually and well ahead of time.3. Recite. Now cover the column, using only your jottings in the Recall Column as cues or "flags" to help you recall, say over facts and ideas of the lecture as fully as you can, not mechanically, but in your own words and with as much appreciation of the meaning as you can. Then, uncovering your notes, verify what you have said. This procedure helps to transfer the facts and ideas of your long term memory.4. Reflect. Reflective students distill their opinions from their notes. They make such opinions the starting point for their own musings upon the subjects they are studying. Such musings aid them in making sense out of their courses and academic experiences by finding relationships among them. Reflective students continually label and index their experiences and ideas, put them into structures, outlines, summaries, and frames of reference. They rearrange and file them. Best of all, they have an eye for the vital-for the essential. Unless ideas are placed in categories, unless they are taken up from time to time for re-examination, they will become inert and soon forgotten.5. Review. If you will spend 10 minutes every week or so in a quick review of these notes, you will retain most of what you have learned, and you will be able to use your knowledge currently to greater and greater effectiveness.	
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