

March 4, 2005

Teaching Tip

Note Taking Revisited

Recently, I discussed the topic of note taking and how such practice can lead to better learning for students in particular situations. I received several emails after the last tip on note taking from faculty asking for some different methods for showing students how to take notes properly and strategies/techniques for note taking that might be most effective. On the one hand, each class has its own goals (learning outcomes) and its own strategies for achieving and measuring those outcomes. Consequently, methods for note taking are adjusted for each class. On the other hand, there are some methods and strategies that have proven effective within and across disciplines in higher education.

One example that fits very well with notions of Active Learning is a method of note taking used at Dartmouth College. The Dartmouth method is basically a method based on dialogic principals espoused by many theorists, including Anne Berthoff (Rhetoric/Composition) in the 1980s. I have seen this dialogic method applied in curriculums of the life sciences, English, and business from many different universities, but Dartmouth has helped perpetuate this method by developing a mini tutorial for faculty and students that explains the how to's and why's of the "split page" or dialogic method. In essence, students draw a line down the middle of an 8 ½ x 11 inch page and write their notes on the left side of the page, and on the other side...check out the following video for a clear description.

Here is a link at that will allow you to access this clear and short video:

<<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/success/videos.html>> You'll need QuickTime player to view this video. Enjoy it!