LAURIER WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY | Accessible Learning

# Notetaking & the Study Cycle

Lectures are a cornerstone of university learning, delivering key concepts in real time—no pause or rewind. To stay attentive and retain material, it's essential to use strategies *before*, *during*, and *after* lectures.

## Before the Lecture

- **Preview the material** by reading assigned chapters or working through problems to prime your understanding and link new ideas to prior knowledge
- **Check the syllabus or lecture outline** to understand the focus and goals for the session.
- **Quickly review previous notes** (5–10 minutes) to reinforce continuity across lectures.
- **Prepare questions** in advance—this creates a purposeful focus and engagement during class
- **Ready your tech** for online classes: test your connection and close distracting tabs.

## During the Lecture

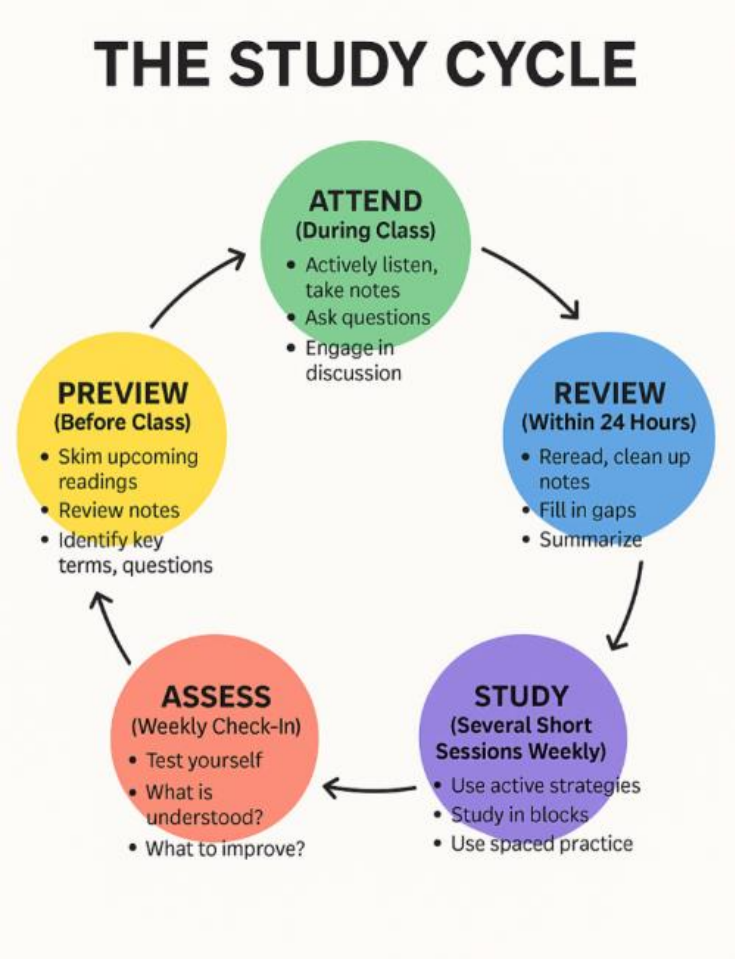
- **Choose a distraction-free spot:** Sit front and center in person or find a quiet space online away from your phone.
- **Take focused and organized notes:** Use bullet points, shorthand, and symbols (e.g., →, ≠, $, ~) to record crucial ideas.
- **Watch for verbal and visual cues** like emphasis, repetition, or board highlights—these often signal key insights.

## After the Lecture

- **Review notes within 24 hours:** Summarize in your own words, connect with pre-lecture materials, and clarify any gaps.
- **Turn notes into active study tools:** Generate self-test questions or flashcards to boost long-term memory through retrieval practice.
- **Build a study guide** by integrating lecture content with textbook readings, pulling out themes, terms, and concept maps. (Check out our "Studying for Exams" tab for information on study guides).

By systematically following these steps—**Preview → Engage → Review/Practice**—you're not just attending class; you're building a durable foundation for understanding, recall, and academic success.

Updated: 2025

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