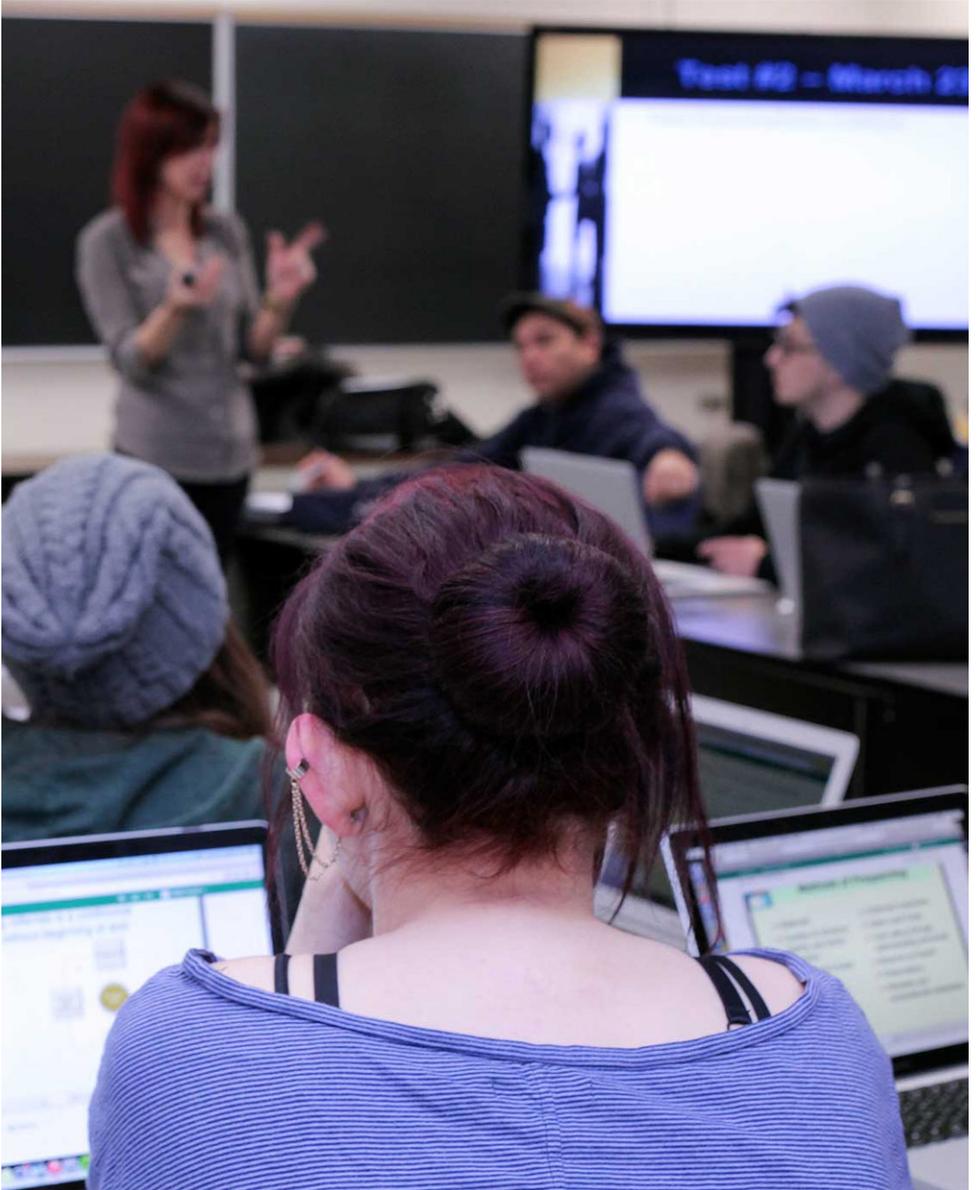


Top tips for PowerPoint lectures



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BEFORE THE LECTURE

Be proactive

If you have access to the PowerPoint slides before class, download them onto your laptop/tablet/USB so you can take notes directly on your device during the lecture. If you prefer to print the slides, have lines for taking notes next to each one by selecting *file > print setting > slides per page > three slides per page*.

Preview the slides before class

Once you download or print the slides, skim them before class so it is easier to follow along during the lecture. Review headings, subheadings, diagrams, graphs and other items of significance to get a sense of the material. Refer to your course outline, read the corresponding chapter in the course textbook and note how the PowerPoint relates to the material.

DURING THE LECTURE

Remember that PowerPoints don't include everything

It is important to remember that PowerPoints are designed to guide instructors during their lecture. Content on PowerPoint slides is typically organized in brief, bulleted points that outline the main ideas, but do not provide detailed explanations. Use your active listening skills and make notes of the examples and explanations provided by your instructor. Also, be sure to capture key ideas from classroom discussions and questions asked by your peers.

Use the slides to guide your notetaking

By taking notes alongside the PowerPoint slides you will remember and better understand the material. The act of writing also keeps your mind focused on the lecture. Don't forget to find a note-taking strategy that works for you by visiting the note-taking module in the SALS ONLINE – Writing, Peer Tutoring, Learning Skills unit on DC Connect.

Use the 'Notes' feature in PowerPoint

If you choose to take notes on an electronic version of the PowerPoint presentation, use the 'Notes' section at the bottom of each slide. Once you have completed all of your notes, you can print them by selecting *file > print > print layout > notes page or outline*.

AFTER THE LECTURE

Clean up your PowerPoint slides

Make the slides work for you. Once you have downloaded the files onto your computer, delete the unnecessary slides and reorganize the content slides in a meaningful way. Professors sometimes use multiple slides or images to explain a topic. Try summarizing the concept into one slide and select an image if it helps you understand the content. This will reduce the number of slides you have to print and study before a test.

Make study notes

Use the information from your professor's PowerPoint slides to make study notes. Put the content into your own words to increase your understanding.

Review on your own

Review the PowerPoints and your notes within 24 hours and on a regular basis thereafter. Reviewing soon after the lecture might trigger ideas that you can add to your notes. Regular review gives you the best chance of remembering the content for the test by helping to put the information into long-term memory.

Review with a peer

Did you catch everything during the lecture? Meet with a friend or form a study group to compare notes and quiz each other on content. Some students learn best by teaching the content to a peer. If you were absent for the lecture, make sure you catch up and borrow someone else's notes. Don't forget to write their notes in your own words.

Conduct your own lecture

Since your notes contain the main idea of each slide, cover up your notes and try to recite the main ideas aloud. The goal of this exercise is for you to highlight the key ideas associated with each slide. If you miss any ideas, mark them and make a note that you need to spend more time learning them.