

## succeeding in class

What is your goal when you attend your philosophy class? Staying awake? Sure. But let's talk about strategy. There are three things to keep in mind.

1. **Take notes.** You must take notes in order to do well on exams, to help you write your philosophy papers, and for absorbing the content of the course. There is a middle ground between writing a few key words, and trying to transcribe everything the professor says. As a general rule, it's a good idea to write down everything that appears on the board. In addition, you should take notes on anything that helps you understand or connect the items on the board to one another. Most students do not take enough notes, and are subsequently unable to study well for philosophy exams.
2. **Ask questions.** When something interests you or you do not understand something, ask. Professors admire students who ask questions, and it will get you interested in the subject when you listen to your own melodious voice speak philosophically.
3. **Participate.** Philosophy professors enjoy asking strange questions for you to think about. This is the time to stop your note taking for a moment and consider the question. Carefully listen to what other students are saying, and see if you agree or disagree. Speak up. If you participate in class, your grade will improve. If you sullenly sit silently at the back of the room thinking that all of your classmates are dolts, your grade will suffer.