Hints to improve your lecture notes:

To help you take more organized notes, listen for and record the following terms when used by your instructor or written in the textbook. You may want to star * these organizational indicators.

- **Introductory words**—give a basic outline of what the day’s lecture will cover.
  - "Today we will discuss…"
  - "During today’s lecture…"
  - "After today you should be able to…”

- **Qualifying words**—note exceptions to rules and clarify information.
  - "however…”
  - "nevertheless…”
  - "still…”

- **Cause and Effect words**—show relationships between ideas and events.
  - "therefore…”
  - "as a result…”
  - "if…then…”

- **Contrast words**—also show relationships between ideas and events.
  - "in contrast…”
  - "on the other hand…”
  - "by comparison…”

- **Repeat words**—rephrases and clarifies information.
  - "in essence…”
  - "in other words…”
  - "this simply means…”

- **Test clues**—alert you to possible test material.
  - "remember this…”
  - "this is important…”
  - "you’ll see this again…”

- **Summary words**
  - "in a nutshell…”
  - "to sum up…”
  - "in conclusion…”

- **Example words**—explains and clarifies information.
  - "to illustrate…”
  - "for example…”
  - "for instance…”

**Take notes which encourage careful thought and further inquiry, and not just memorization.**

- Write down all of the questions that are asked in class, including your own and those asked by the instructor. Many instructors give emphasis to a topic by asking questions to check their students' understanding. Leave room in your notes to answer these questions later if you are unable to record them in class.

- Share and compare your notes with other students. Be prepared to learn from your classmates. Look for misunderstanding in your notes, and quiz each other as you study (i.e. be the teacher).

- Follow up with the instructor about missed or unclear information in your notes.