Classroom Clues for Listening

Instructors have been observed to use the following techniques to:

- Make and emphasize a point
- Make learning memorable
- Gain student attention

Be alert to those techniques each of your instructors uses--each has his or her own style--you can make notes on the essential and important ideas emphasized.

In order of most-commonly used techniques:

- **Voice inflection varied:** from silence to whisper to very loud and booming!

- **Chalkboard:** used for key terms or phrases; major ideas, clarifying details; outlines; diagrams; illustrations; problems.

- **Repetition:** varied from exact repetition to restatement with variations; repetition of key ideas; summaries at end of lecture; summary review at beginning of next class meeting.

- **Direct statement:** class alerted to important points with the following comments: "This is very important...Now get this...You may have trouble with this...Hear this...Please understand this...Pay special attention to this...This may come up on a test...It's imperative that...Remember this...Don't forget...I want you to fully understand this...Are you with me?...Takes notes on this."

- **Questions:** used initially to launch the lesson; to stimulate discussion to clarify, to check understanding, to alert class.

- **Examples:** may be given or asked for; idea may be personalized or related to everyday experiences.

- **Demonstrations:** slides, movies, film strips, maps, overhead projection, illustrations of scientific principles, math problems, speech and visual aids, drama techniques, physical activities.
• **Gestures and variety of hand, finger and arm movements:** pointing, movements clasping, waving of arms, tapping something, any change from the usual movement can be significant: rises from chair; sits down; sits back in chair; leans over desk or podium; removes glasses; suddenly stops pacing.

• **Pauses:** dramatic or suspenseful pauses before or after making an important point; tempo of speech varied from very slow to fast; long, suspenseful wait for full attention.

• **Humor:** presents humorous events related to lesson; exaggerates; tells jokes to recapture attention or to emphasize and idea.

• **Expressions:** varied--fact lights up; smiles; looks serious; concentrates intently; studies student faces intently; establishes eye contact and then speaks directly to student.

• **Time:** length of time devoted to discussion of a subject indicates relative importance.

• **Handouts:** usually relate significantly to lesson.