Lecture Basics  
Center for Teaching Excellence  
SUNY Plattsburgh

As much as we emphasize student activity in learning, the lecture is still a very effective way to clarify, analyze, synthesize and integrate what you want your students to learn. In fact, a well-delivered lecture is actually preferred by students over many classroom “activities.” Why? Because our students value our expertise, creativity and our care for them – and all of these blossom in the classroom relationship. Here are some guidelines and tips for becoming a master lecturer.

Before class: Take ten minutes to relax and review your main idea.

In class - greet them:
⇒ Establish tone and tempo for energy and class direction.

Review previous class allow yourself and your students time for reflection
Ask for questions and digression (but keep track)

1. Presentation
   a. Move
   b. Use the board.
   c. Don’t over-rely on Power Point presentations – they sap your energy and drain the class.
   d. Speak clearly.
   e. Change your tone.
   f. Stand tall.

2. Interaction
   a. Maintain eye contact.
   b. Be aware of your audience (signaling lack of understanding, boredom, etc).
   c. A great lecture is not all lecturing. Let the students speak.
   d. Don’t interrupt your students.
   e. Use signaling tricks (four fingers – they understand, three they somewhat, understand, two – not much, one – not at all).
   f. Ten minute chunks of lecturing – then ask for repeat back.
   g. Use strategies for eliciting student engagement in a consistent fashion.
   h. Use humor (http://www.davesdaily.com/; National Enquirer;  
http://www.veryweirdnews.com/;  
3. Organization
   a. Settle with yourself beforehand the one main idea you want them to come away with.
   b. Do prepare notes: outline, review, and plot time to spend on certain concepts.
   c. Don’t stick to notes like glue.
   d. Don’t rush to get through the material – they won’t learn any faster.
   e. Use examples that are real to the students.
   f. Tell stories – be personal enough to create a relationship.
   g. Invite their stories.
   h. Don’t tell them your medical history.
   i. Be clear with them what your main idea is for that class.