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Audio Essay Script

[Subtle upbeat intro music]

Jeff: The presence of laptop computers and comparable devices such as tablets is more prominent than ever on college campuses today. Students can use technology to take notes, follow along with a lecture, conduct research, or engage in a litany of other academic activities. However, technology in the classroom also has the potential to be abused. Students have access to social media, games and entertainment on their devices, and the temptation can be hard for some to resist during class. There are some obvious advantages to using technology in class. Take this student for example:

[Insert clip of student] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WeLhXhi_8zo

Student: I always use my laptop in class because its easier and quicker for me when I'm trying to listen to the teacher and take notes.

Jeff: Clearly, some students prefer to use a computer in class to take notes, often citing the ability to take notes more quickly as the main benefit. However, some research shows that taking notes on a computer may not be as beneficial as writing them down by hand. Studies show that typing notes leads to copying what is said during a lecture verbatim, which is not great for retaining the information. So what is so great about handwriting notes?

[Insert clip explaining benefits of hand-written notes] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pu0PSZ_EwII

Video speaker: When you're writing out notes, although you're writing fewer words than typing verbatim, your brain is actively summarizing lecture material. You're encoding messages onto paper. Then when you re-read the handwritten material, that's called "enhanced encoding," meaning you're both encoding and storing the knowledge externally. This is considered a "superior" method for concepts.

Jeff: Basically, when your brain is presented with new information, it sees two things: the syntax, or the literal words being said, as well as the concepts and meanings behind them. When you summarize the information and write it down, your brain focuses on the concepts. So what happens when you take notes on a computer?

[insert clip explaining computer notes] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gsb-U8bZpig>

Video speaker 2: Now when you're recording your notes on the computer it can be really easy to just slip into the mindset of recording every single thing that was said. When you do this, you're only paying attention to the syntax which means that, later on you have to go back and relearn the concepts.

Jeff: Overall, technology has tons to offer and can be used effectively in the classroom. However, when it comes to taking notes and learning new information, the old-fashioned method of writing things down by hand is still the best method.

[upbeat outro music]