

Signal Phrases for Class

By using these expressions as you teach, you will help your undergraduates follow what you are talking about. They really do make a difference!

To introduce a topic:

Today, we're going to look at/examine... Today, I'm going to explain...
In today's lab, we're going to... because...

To emphasize important information:

From this we learn... Note that... Notice that... Remember,...
The main thing to understand is...

To change a topic (while lecturing):

Moving on,... Next,... Okay, let's move on to...

To clarify:

That is to say,... This means... What this means is...
In other words,...

To check for comprehension:

Am I making myself clear? Are you following what I'm saying?
Is everyone following?

To seek clarification when not understanding a student's question or comment:

Let's see if I understood your question. *(Then repeat it as you understood it.)*
Can you repeat the (first, last) part of your question, please?

To interrupt:

Excuse me. Sorry to interrupt, but...

To get students' attention after group work:

Can I get your attention please? Alright, everyone.

To redirect students if they get off-topic:

Getting back to (topic X),... It sounds like you might be off topic.
Are you still discussion (topic X)? Do you have questions about (topic X)?

To check their understanding of your answer to a question:

Did I answer your question? Is that what you were asking for?
Does that help? Is that what you wanted to know?

To conclude:

To conclude,... To summarize,... So let me summarize what we have covered.

Bonus! How to change the topic in general conversation and maintain control:

That reminds me,... By the way,... Speaking of X,...