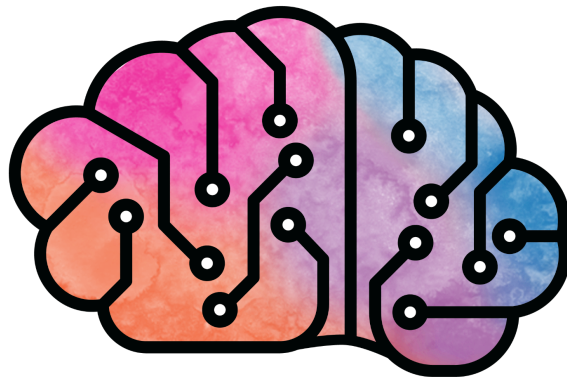


How to Utilize Glean: A Guide for Students by a Student

Created in Partnership with the
McBurney Disability Resource
Center and Software Training for
Students



McBurney Disability Resource Center
UW-Madison's Office for Students with Disabilities



**SOFTWARE TRAINING
FOR STUDENTS**

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Introduction:

Hello! Welcome to this guide, which will allow you to effectively use Glean to take notes in class, review material before exams, and gain more knowledge from each class. Glean supports your current notetaking strategies and may even help you find one that is a better fit for you! If you need help accessing Glean or have questions about whether this is the best accommodation for you, please contact your access consultant, who can be located through [McBurney Connect](#).

Glean is an online, web-based notetaking platform that can handle bouts of offline connectivity but functions best when connected to the internet. You can easily access Glean through a variety of devices and methods. The most common way to access the interface is through the website [Glean.co](#), which is what this guide will be using. There are also apps for Apple and Android devices that can be downloaded on tablets, which some students prefer to use to take notes in class. Whatever your notetaking strategy, Glean will provide resources to help you succeed in all of your classes, from in-person lectures to online discussions and even during studying crunch time. If you have any questions about Glean itself, you may schedule a free 1-on-1 appointment with STS through [this link](#), but if your question is more accommodation related, I encourage you to reach out to your access consultant.

A few notes before we begin:

- This guide is available in text and video format. The goal is to convey the same information in both formats, but please refer to both to get the complete story on Glean. The videos are focused on demonstration rather than background.
- The QR code at the top of the page provides a link to a Kaltura video that discusses the same concepts discussed in the write-up. These videos have captions as well. The playlist of videos can be found [here](#).
- Glean is not used by every student in the same way. Some may prefer to take all their notes through it, whereas others may only like using the audio recording feature. Play around with it during the first weeks of classes to see which style best benefits your learning and retention of the information.

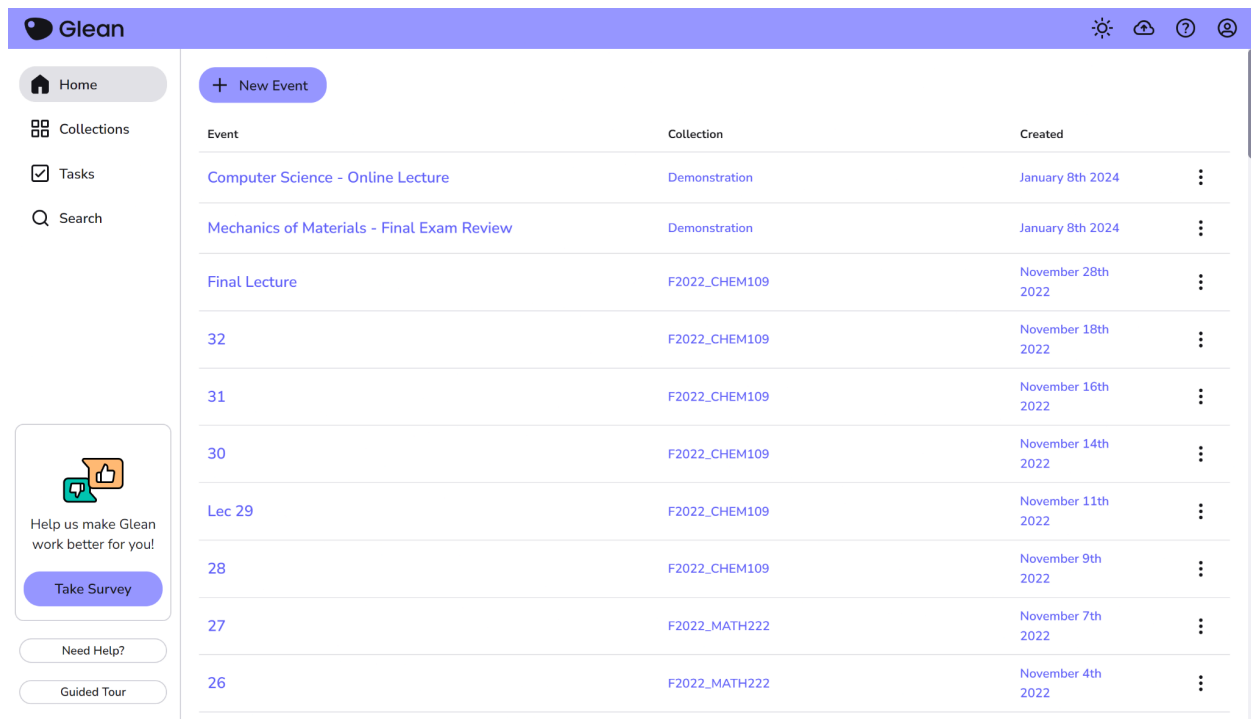
About the Author

My name is [Jack Sperling](#), and I am a Junior studying Biomedical Engineering and Computer Sciences. I work with an access consultant through the McBurney Center for various learning disabilities. I used Glean throughout my freshman year to help discover how I learn best in a lecture setting and found the experience formative for how I study now. At STS, I strive to support students utilizing accommodations while navigating new teaching methods that professors use in college. I am creating this guide to support fellow students who may not have a firm background in technology so that everyone can learn and succeed at UW-Madison.



Getting Started:

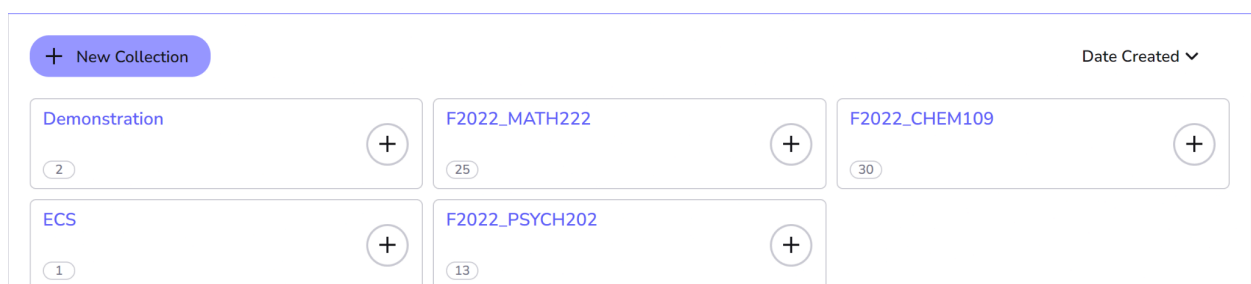
Getting started with Glean begins when you receive an email providing access to the software. After following the instructions in the email, you should now have access to the Glean app with your @wisc.edu email address and a password you just created. To start off, let's take a look around at the main menu.



The screenshot shows the Glean application interface. On the left is a navigation sidebar with options: Home, Collections, Tasks, and Search. Below the sidebar are buttons for 'Take Survey', 'Need Help?', and 'Guided Tour'. The main area displays a table of events with columns for Event, Collection, and Created. A '+ New Event' button is at the top of the table.

Event	Collection	Created
Computer Science - Online Lecture	Demonstration	January 8th 2024
Mechanics of Materials - Final Exam Review	Demonstration	January 8th 2024
Final Lecture	F2022_CHEM109	November 28th 2022
32	F2022_CHEM109	November 18th 2022
31	F2022_CHEM109	November 16th 2022
30	F2022_CHEM109	November 14th 2022
Lec 29	F2022_CHEM109	November 11th 2022
28	F2022_CHEM109	November 9th 2022
27	F2022_MATH222	November 7th 2022
26	F2022_MATH222	November 4th 2022

In the top left, you will see the four menu items you will interact with most often. Clicking “Home” shows you the most recently created events listed chronologically. Clicking on “Collections” shows folders where you can organize your events into different categories, such as classes, units, or even years of college.

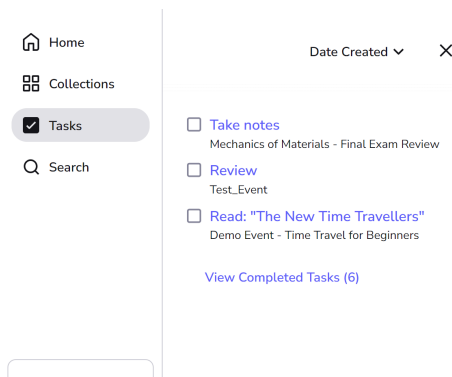


The screenshot shows the 'Collections' view in the Glean application. It features a '+ New Collection' button and a 'Date Created' dropdown menu. Below are five collection cards, each with a name, a count in a small circle, and a '+' button to add more items.

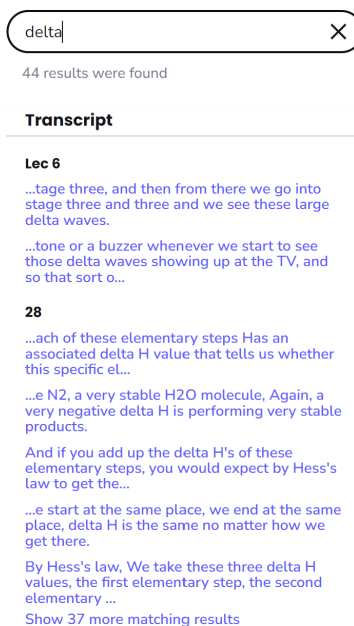
Collection Name	Count
Demonstration	2
F2022_MATH222	25
F2022_CHEM109	30
ECS	1
F2022_PSYCH202	13

“Tasks” allows you to see a global view of all tasks you have created inside your events. This screen shows you what tasks you have assigned for yourself and which event they originated from. Additionally, you can view all of your completed tasks by selecting “View

Completed Tasks,” which will show a similar view, identifying which tasks come from which events.



The “Search” option provides a powerful way to dive into notes to find more information on a particular topic. This field searches all transcribed audio and typed notes in every event you have created. For example, you can see that when I search “delta” for more information on delta H, 44 phrases match the search term. All I need to do is click on one of those instances, and it will lead me to the exact time and event where it occurred.



Now that you can navigate the menus of Glean, we can move forward to creating our first Event for our first in-person class. Feel free to jump around this document and only watch or read the sections that interest you. Also, note that there are more ways to utilize Glean that haven't been included. Finding the best way to take notes based on how you learn is crucial to success, and playing around with how you take notes and remember information will provide more insight into how your brain processes that information. You can always return to the [Table of Contents](#) for an overview of topics that will be covered, or you can return to the [Introduction section](#) for a link to the entire playlist of videos that will be introduced further down in the document.

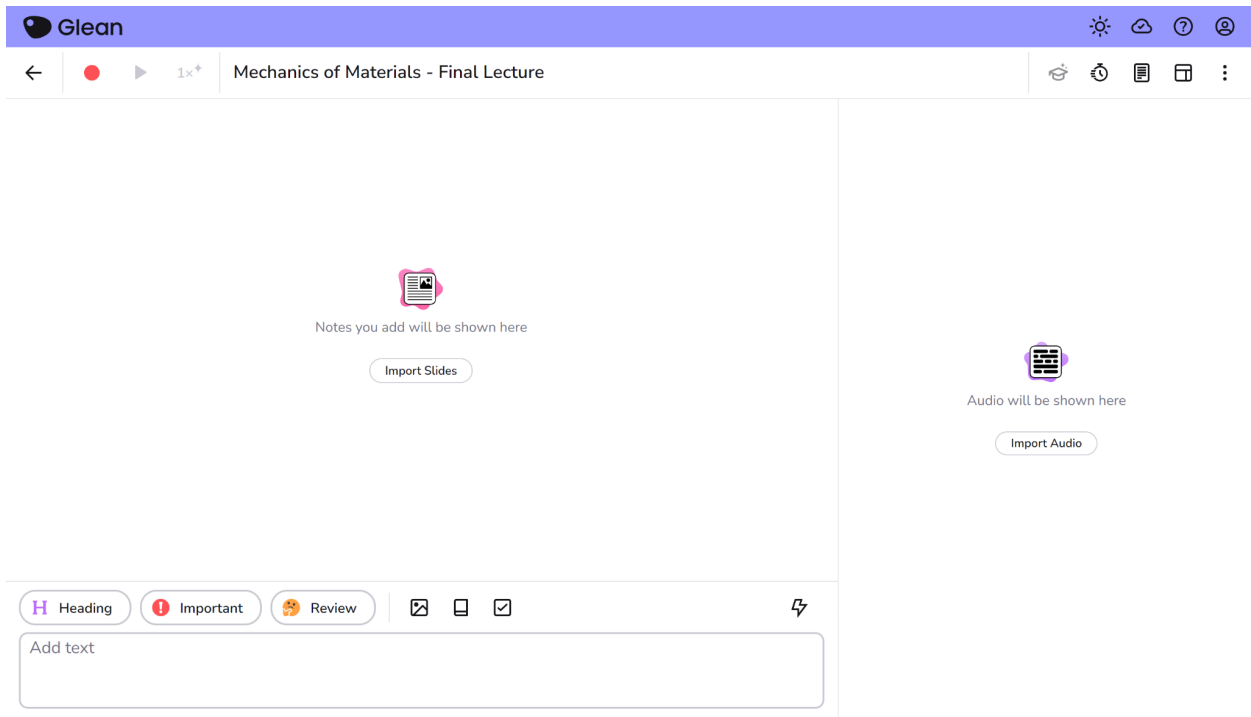
First In-Person Class:

You've already logged into Glean, set up your first Collection, and created your first Event – now what... Depending on your class, professor, and instruction style, your notetaking style may look different before you started using Glean. Let's break this down into two different scenarios:



Lecture Slides with Typed Notes

Perhaps this is an introductory class or one with lots of dense information, but no matter what the class name is, the lecturer has decided to use lecture slides, which they do not write on, and you best learn the information by taking additional typed notes to supplement the information already on the slides. Luckily, Glean can import PowerPoint or PDF style slides directly into your event to sync up your typed notes, the recorded audio, and the slides so that all your information is easy to find and remember later on. Let's say that in my Mechanics of Materials class, we are reviewing for the final exam. When I create my event, I can upload slides on the left side of my screen.



When I do this, I can click through the slides or pages of the uploaded PDF. The real magic happens when I am listening to the lecture! As I record audio, I can take notes that are associated with a specific slide. All I need to do is click "Post next slide" and a new heading will be created and change where your notes will appear. Glean will also put icons on your audio to

the right corresponding to the colors of the tags you added. A black dot is when text was added, and red, for example, shows when text was tagged with the “important” flag.

The screenshot displays the Glean application interface. The main window shows a slide titled "Module 9 | Stress Transformations" with a course outline and learning objectives. Below it is a "REVIEW | Mohr's Circle - 3D" slide with a diagram and instructions. The right sidebar shows a "Transcribe Audio" button and a list of slides with progress indicators. The bottom of the interface includes a toolbar with icons for heading, important, and other tags, and a text input field labeled "Add text".

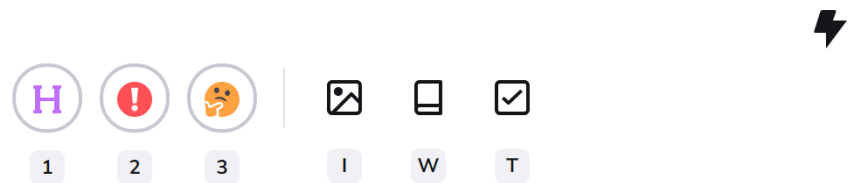
You can continue to add notes throughout the lecture, tagging them with “heading,” “important,” or “review” to make them stand out during your review. When you finish the lecture, press the “Transcribe audio” button on the top right corner. We'll discuss this further in the “[First Study Session](#)” section, but it will save you time clicking on it now. A few other points to note include the ability to add “Tasks” by clicking on the checkbox, the ability to enter into “Lightning Mode,” which allows you to tag audio with specific attributes and removes the ability to type text (this mode is most useful on a small phone or tablet where typing at speed is tricky), and importing images with the image icon near the checkbox to add a diagram or picture to aid in the comprehension of your notes.

Lecture Slides with Handwritten Notes

Maybe this is an organic chemistry class or one in which it is difficult to type out what is being presented, but the teacher prepares slides beforehand. You can combine Glean with handwritten notes on a tablet or pen and paper. In this scenario, you have three main options: use Glean as the section above shows, take typed notes to supplement your handwritten notes, or utilize Glean strictly as an audio recording, tagging, and transcribing software. Let’s dive into how we can use Glean to turn our laptops into a smarter way of recording the lecturer's audio.

As we briefly mentioned above, “Lightning Mode” lets you turn off the Glean text feature and allows quick and easy audio annotation. To access this screen, select the lightning bolt

option at the bottom right of the event screen. This transforms the text box into a new type of input box.



You can see that instead of typing text, there are labeled shortcuts for you to tag audio that represents a new section (by pressing 1), important details (2), or thought provoking, complex material that you need to review (3). Additionally, you can easily add tasks as you think of them mid-lecture (T), add class specific definitions for words that are unique (W), and insert images from Canvas or the web to help with your studying (i).

By turning Glean into this simpler, more efficient form, you can focus on taking your handwritten notes but still utilize the audio tagging features and the “post next slide” feature to sync up the audio with the presented slides. When you’ve finished your class, make sure to click the “Transcribe Audio” button in the top right corner—it will save you time later.

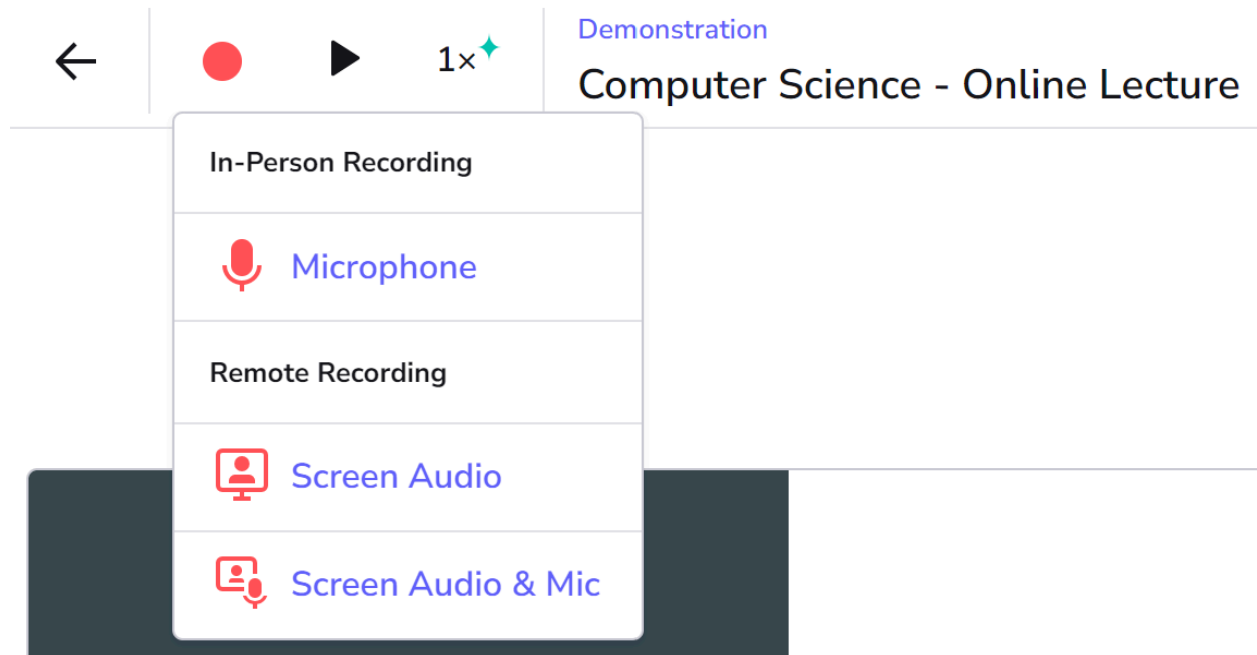
As with all notetaking situations, try mixing it up during the first couple days of class to see what works best for you. Maybe you can put Glean on your tablet with lightning mode or take handwritten notes on your tablet with Glean on your computer—find whatever works best for you!

Some of you may think about Glean’s role when teachers post lecture slides and recordings after class. Some students prefer not to attend lectures if they know the professor will post the recording afterwards as they like to watch the lectures all at once or do better not learning in a lecture hall. If that is you, check out the next section about [using Glean with online classes or recorded lectures](#).

Let’s return to the void Glean fills even if there is a lecture recording: the ability to quickly identify the information and the time when that information was communicated where you began to stop understanding. Most of us, myself included, can easily sit in a lecture hall nodding along with what is being said but not comprehending any of it. When we leave, we often have a foggy memory of what we’ve learned but nothing concrete or cohesive. This makes retrieving that information in the future very difficult. Glean helps us note when we stop understanding what is being presented, have a question that hasn’t been answered, or (for whatever reason) just cannot keep focusing. Glean allows us to pinpoint this moment to allow for more efficient studying and review of concepts to ensure we understand the collection of information the professor presented, along with the nuances that were articulated in class but not on the slides. Glean can serve as a helping hand for our future self when it comes to our daily review of content or even the final crunch before the exam.

First Online Class:

No matter if your in-person class was canceled for one day or it was designated as a virtual class, Glean can still support you in your virtual learning journey. As we discussed [above](#), Glean is able to record the ambient sound in a lecture hall, but it also can record the sound played from your web browser.



For this use case, we'll want to select the "Remote Recording" option. If this is a class where you'll be interacting with others, like a discussion group, you'll want to select "Screen Audio & Mic." If you are only listening to the lecturer, "Screen Audio" is the best choice.

Zoom, Teams, WebEx, etc...

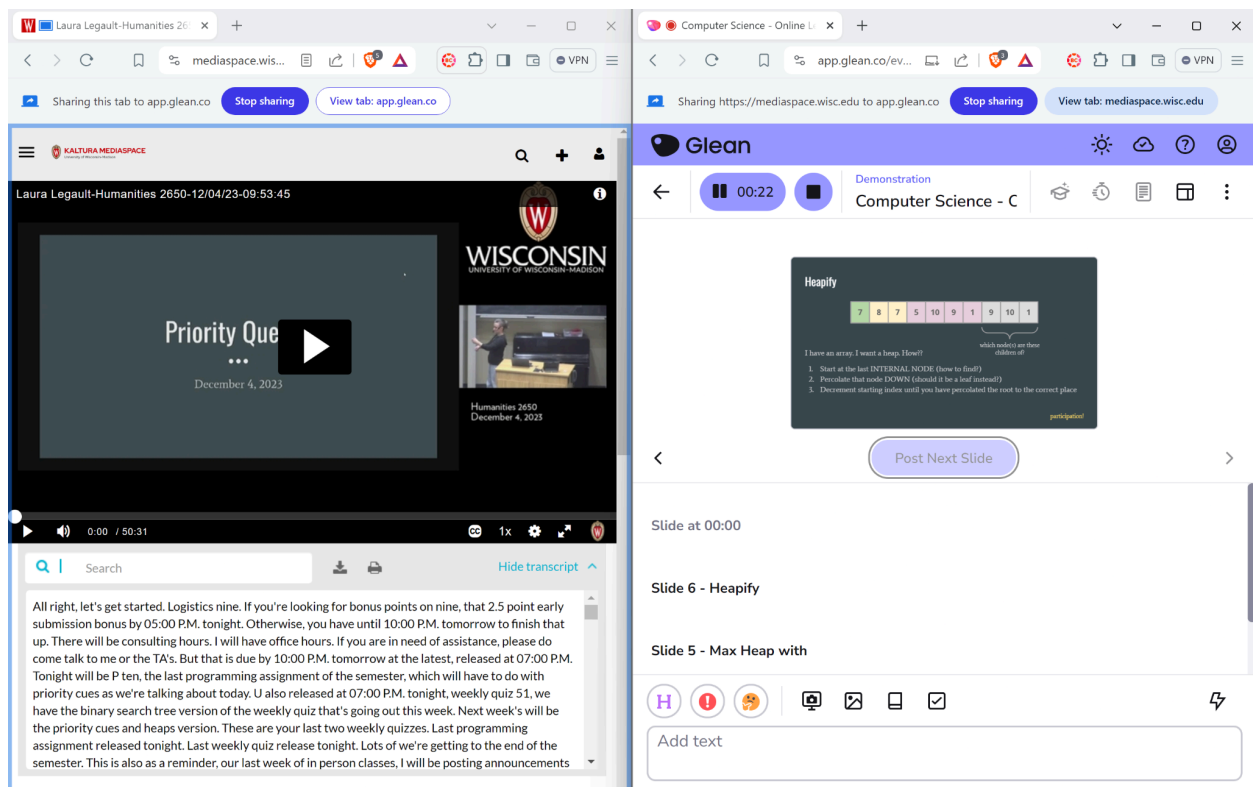
Please note: If you are using Zoom, Teams, or WebEx and would like the audio recorded, join the meeting from a web browser. Instructions can be found here to do this: <https://go.wisc.edu/m9u8e2>

Most synchronous meetings and classes inside the UW system utilize Zoom or Microsoft Teams. Occasionally, WebEx will come up, but it is rare. To effectively use Glean during these classes, make sure to follow the note above! The Zoom app, along with the Teams for Work and School app, are buggy when utilized with Glean, so the safest bet is to join the meeting through

your web browser (i.e., have the meeting open in a tab of Chrome, Firefox, Safari, etc.) and have Glean open as well. Split screening is also a great option, having your notes on one side of your screen, whereas the lecturer is in a tab on the other. This allows you to see all the material being presented, take notes, and follow along with any additional visual information your lecturer presents during class. If you want a visual example, see the screenshot below. This picture shows Kaltura Media Gallery, but you can replace that tab with a Zoom or Teams meeting, and the same method will work.

Kaltura Media Gallery

It is now very common for professors to record their lectures so that students who are not able to attend can still have the same information presented and so that they provide a very simple and easy comprehensive study resource for students. For some students, Glean may not be as helpful in this situation due to the content being always available throughout the semester. In these situations, I still used Glean to take notes so that all my notes were cohesive. For example, below is a picture of how I used Glean during my CS300 class when I missed a lecture.



On the left, I have the Kaltura video playing, and on the right is Glean, where I can post slides, record the audio if I want, and take notes as normal. You can continue to customize this setup for whatever situation best suits you to learn in a remote format.

In summary, similar to an in-person class, you can download the lecture slides beforehand (if available) and import them into Glean to track along with the lecture material being presented. The online recording functionality of Glean remains the same as the in-person functionality, as the only difference is the audio source Glean is using. One helpful tip to note between the online recording functionality and the in person lecture recording is the ability to screenshot the tab which you are sharing the audio from! Check out the [video](#) for this section for a demonstration!

You should continue to use whatever notetaking strategy you found most helpful for in-person classes during online classes. This will allow you to continue integrating Glean into your studying habits and making the most of this accommodation.

If you are struggling to learn effectively in a remote class, contact [GUTS](#) or your Access Consultant for additional support, resources, and assistance with the material.

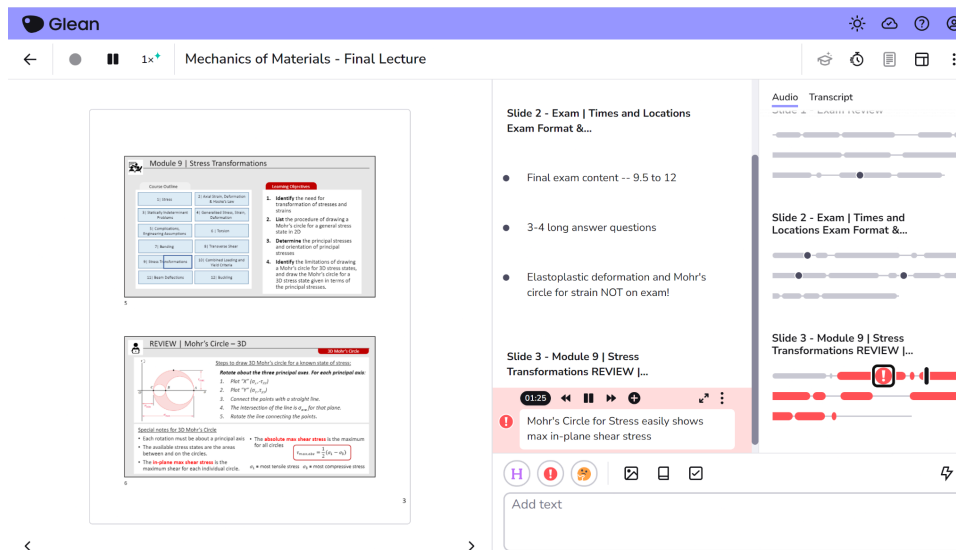
First Study Session:

As you've been taking more notes, recording more lectures, and tagging those notes with images, tasks, and headings, you've been creating a mountain of data to review when it comes time to prepare for an exam or brush up on some content for a quick quiz. Luckily, Glean makes it easy to retrieve all of that information in many different ways so that you can choose which method works best for you!



Keep it Simple

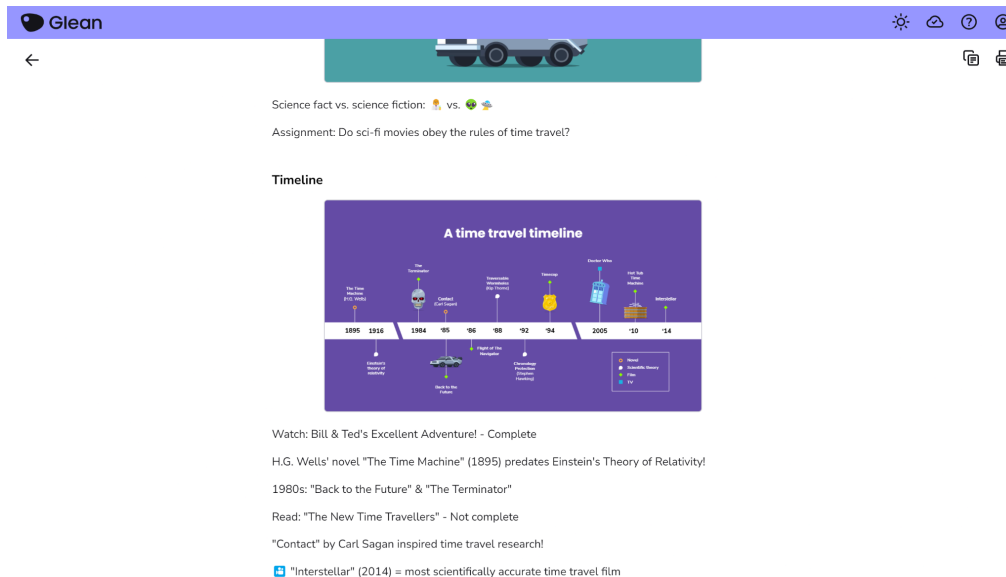
Sometimes, the easiest way to refer back to the material we learned is to not alter it. Some students prefer to create study guides, but if the best way to recall information is to review your notes exactly how you took them, Glean provides an incredibly simple way to do that! First, open up the Event you would like to review. It will look identical to the layout which allows you to take those notes and record the lecture. The annotations, such as red "Important" flags placed on bits of audio, can be located easily. If you click on them, they will play a section of audio that corresponds to the tag, find the text notes that were taken, and move to the correct slide so that all of the information presented combined with your notes is easily locatable, all in one place.



Additionally, when you have the audio transcribed, you can click on the text being spoken, and it will jump to the correct slide and any notes taken during that ~10-second interval. Buttons that allow you to jump forward and backward through the audio, text notes, and change the speed of the playback allow you to customize your reviewing to your preference.

Keep it Pretty

As great as the Glean interface is, sometimes there are better methods to study. Luckily, we can easily export our notes to a PDF form that creates a study guide that compiles our text notes alongside any inserted images organized with the associated slides. As an example, see the image below for the “Reading View” of one of the sample events that Glean provides.



The screenshot shows the Glean application interface. At the top, there is a purple header with the Glean logo on the left and icons for settings, search, help, and profile on the right. Below the header is a navigation bar with a back arrow on the left and a share/print icon on the right. The main content area displays the following information:

- Event title: Science fact vs. science fiction: vs. 🌟 🌟 🌟
- Assignment: Do sci-fi movies obey the rules of time travel?
- Section: Timeline
- Image: A time travel timeline diagram showing key events from 1895 to 2014. The timeline includes: 1895 (The Time Machine by H.G. Wells), 1916 (The Time Machine by H.G. Wells), 1984 (Contact by Carl Sagan), 1985 (The Time Machine by H.G. Wells), 1986 (The Time Machine by H.G. Wells), 1988 (The Time Machine by H.G. Wells), 1992 (The Time Machine by H.G. Wells), 1994 (The Time Machine by H.G. Wells), 2005 (The Time Machine by H.G. Wells), 2010 (The Time Machine by H.G. Wells), and 2014 (Interstellar).
- Watch: Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure! - Complete
- H.G. Wells' novel "The Time Machine" (1895) predates Einstein's Theory of Relativity!
- 1980s: "Back to the Future" & "The Terminator"
- Read: "The New Time Travellers" - Not complete
- "Contact" by Carl Sagan inspired time travel research!
- 📺 "Interstellar" (2014) = most scientifically accurate time travel film

For students who like to write down more detailed information in their typed notes, this view of the content may provide a very efficient way to prepare study guides. This can be accessed from the event's top bar.



- The graduation cap button is an AI quiz bot that can review your text based notes and compile that information with the recorded audio to intelligently quiz you on the concepts you learned.
- The stopwatch allows you to set a timer to help keep you focused for short periods of time.
- The page with lines across it transforms the notes into the “Reading View” above.
- To the right, the layout button allows you to show or hide different parts of the application to make studying more efficient.
- Finally, the three vertical dots contain some helpful shortcuts. These include copying all text-based notes, replacing the slides, and changing which collection this event belongs to.

Conclusion:

Because learning is such a personalized endeavor, finding the best method to succeed inside the classroom, grounded in strong notetaking skills, is crucial. I sincerely hope this guide has provided you with a foundation to succeed with your new notetaking accommodation. Glean is a fantastic piece of software, and although it is not a perfect match for everyone, I encourage you to integrate it into your studying to see how it can benefit you.

If you find that Glean is not meeting your needs or you are looking for additional support, please reach out to your access consultant. They are amazing and skilled educators who have your best intentions at heart. If you have technical difficulties with Glean regarding access issues or licensing, please contact [Cody Sorlie Theis](#). If you would like additional support relating to the use of Glean and its features or are facing technical difficulties with using it in your classroom situation, please feel free to reach out to Software Training for Students. You can easily schedule a 1-on-1 with me (Jack) or any available trainer through [this link](#).

Prefer a video?

Scan here!



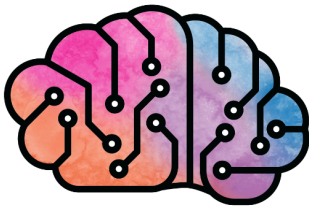
Acknowledgements:

This project would not have been possible without the gracious support of many individuals.

Through STS, Naty Aguirre Villalobos and Pete Valeo have provided constant encouragement, feedback, and enthusiasm for this project since its inception.

Cody Sorlie This provided constant communication between myself and other McBurney Staff regarding the project's goal, accessibility, and necessary information that the end users of this guide (you!) require to fully utilize their accommodations and succeed.

Thank you!



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