**Note Taking in Class**

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**Why take good notes?**

Effective note taking helps you pay attention and learn more in class. Taking notes help you organize and remember information and identify where you have questions or are unclear on a concept. Thinking about what works for you and developing your own system can help you do well in school and at work.

**Goal of this workshop:**

Improving your note taking skills takes time and practice. One workshop won’t change your life or make you into an expert, but *we hope you’ll find just one or two new strategies that you will use in the future* to help you learn better.

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| **How do you take notes now? Check the sentences that best describe what you do. Discuss your results with a partner.** |  |
| 1. | I only take notes if the instructor tells us to write it down. |  |
| 2. | I have a consistent system to label and organize my notes.  |  |
| 3. | I keep all my notes from different classes mixed together. |  |
| 4. | I skim over the syllabus, textbook and previous class notes before class. |  |
| 5. | My mind often wanders when I’m in class  |  |
| 6. | I leave a lot of white space on the page to separate ideas and fill in questions and missing information later. |  |
| 7. | I only look at my notes when I have to study for a test or do a homework assignment. |  |
| 8. | I make my notes visually appealing, with clear organization (bullet lists, arrows, circles, underline, etc.)  |  |
| 9. | I write down everything I hear so I don’t miss anything. |  |
| 10. | I review my notes after class and fill in missing information. |  |

**Taking notes is a PROCESS.**

**BEFORE**

* Organize your materials—paper, pen, laptop, tablet—whatever works for you.
* Have separate section or file for each class.
* Label clearly with class, date and topic.
* Prepare your brain to understand new material by warming up, “activating your schema” and making connections with what you already know.
* Predict what information will be covered in that class session.
* Think about what you want or need to learn—write questions you want to be able to answer by the end of class.
* Preparing for even a few minutes before class can help you learn more.
* *What are some things you will do to help you prepare yourself for class?*

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**DURING**

* Help yourself stay focused: think about what you are hearing and write it in your own words.
* Use abbreviations, symbols, and visual markers to show main ideas and the details and examples related to the main ideas.
* Listen for clues that information is important.
* Use white space to separate topics.
* Leave wide margins and space at the bottom of the page to process and add information later (see the Cornell method.)
* During discussion, write relevant questions, answers and opinions in your own words.
* *What are some things you will do stay focused in class?*

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**AFTER**

* Look over your notes right after class.
* Try to summarize what you learned.
* Connect what you learned to your own life, or what you already know.
* Explain what you learned to someone else if possible.
* Mark possible test questions or concepts you need to study more.
* Write question marks where you might be confused or need more information.
* Fill in gaps later by talking to classmates, talking to the instructor, or searching your text or online.
* *What are some things you will do to review your notes and check you understanding?*

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**Here are some abbreviations that can increase your writing speed.**

**What can you add this list?**

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| eg or ex= for example\* = most importantlyQ = questionw/ = withw/o = without🡪 = resulting in🡨 = as a result of& = and+ = positive- = negative# or no. = numberi.e. = that isetc. = and so forthng = no good | c/o = care oflb = pound2 = two or tooinfo = informationassoc = associationb/4 = before< = less than> = more than= = equalsv. or vs. = versus or against@ = atp. or pg. = page% = percent |

**Mapping/Clustering Examples**

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| **Screen Shot 2013-10-23 at 10** | **Screen Shot 2013-10-23 at 10** |
| **Screen Shot 2013-10-23 at 10** | **Screen Shot 2013-10-23 at 10** |

**Cornell notes**

The Cornell Method was created by Professor Walter Pauk (*How to Study in College*). His method enables you to get involved with the information you are learning, so you will learn it more effectively!

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| Reduce | RecordRecite |
| Review Recap |

1. **Record**: Record as much information as you can in the large column. Do not worry about grammar at this point. Learn to leave out unnecessary words and using only key words.
2. **Reduce** (or question): The next step is to reduce your notes into key words/phrases and questions. Write these in the narrow column on the left. This creates memory cues so that you can review them and recall the information.
3. **Recite**: Recitation is a tool that helps you retain information. Reciting means you say aloud and in your own words information you are trying to learn. When you recite, try covering up the notes in the large column, only looking at the key words and questions you wrote on the left.
4. **Review**: Review your notes often. Remember to recite, not just reread. Plan for short review sessions throughout the quarter to help you retain the information. This is more effective and less stressful than cramming the night before an exam.
5. **Recap**: Summarize your notes at the bottom of the page. This summary should be in your own words and highlight the key points you want to remember.