**Note-Taking**

**Brought to you by the JHU Study Consulting Program**

---

**Before Class**

- Try different techniques and figure out which fits your style the best.
- Prepare for upcoming lectures by reviewing powerpoint slides and completing the assigned readings.
- Keep your notes very organized. This will save you a lot of time when you begin studying for exams.
- Write your notes in question format, such as "What does this specific process help accomplish?" This will be helpful when preparing for tests.

**During Class**

- Sit close enough to engage the reader.
- Keep your notes brief and utilize the notes that you took before class as a guide.
- Try to answer the questions that you wrote before class. If you’re not able to answer your question by the end of class, ask the professor!
- Actively listen for oral cues from the lecturer, such as "remember this" or "the main point is..."

**After Class**

- Focus on the bigger concepts and main ideas that bring the lecture together with a theme.
- Try to review your notes as soon as possible after class ends and fill in anything still on your mind.
- Clarify any part of your notes that do not make sense or could be reinforced by material from the textbook.

---

**What NOT to do:**

- **Trying to use every space on the page:** Avoid taking extremely dense and verbatim notes. Your notes could end up being just another textbook, and you will most likely not get the chance to go back and review all of it.
  - **Listening for facts only:** Always look for the “big picture” as to how the ideas relate to each other.
- **Writing out every single word spoken/written by the lecturer:** Avoid writing down concepts that you already feel comfortable with and develop a system of abbreviations and symbols you can use wherever possible.
  - **Only using words:** Find ways to add visual interest to your notes; utilize visual aids, diagrams, illustrations, color highlighters, etc. to help you emphasize what is most important to remember.

**Some More Advice:**

- Avoid planning to rewrite or type your notes later. This uses double the amount of time: once to take the original notes and twice to rewrite them. It’s simple: **DO IT RIGHT THE FIRST TIME!**
- Try handwriting your notes instead of typing or recording them. Studies show that writing your notes by hand is better able to reinforce the information being learned.

**Helpful Resources:**

- Your academic adviser is always available for advice on time management.
- Contact OAA to get in touch with a study consultant.
- **Helpful websites:**
  - [http://www.dartmouth.edu/~acs esto/ success/ notes.html](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~acs esto/ success/ notes.html)
  - [http://www.sas.calpoly.edu/asc/ssl/notetaking. systems.html](http://www.sas.calpoly.edu/asc/ssl/notetaking. systems.html)
  - [http://jerz.se tonhill.edu/writing/ academic/ notes- tips.htm](http://jerz.se tonhill.edu/writing/ academic/ notes- tips.htm)