

## **GOOD STUDY HABITS REQUIRES EFFICIENT NOTE-TAKING METHODS**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION:**

One of the important parts of studying concerns taking and keeping notes. It has been proven by research that we remember the things we actively do much better than those we merely hear about. This is why recitation is so valuable. In fact, taking notes is like reciting. **Instead of saying, you are writing.**

Jesus actively used His knowledge, speaking the Word frequently. When we speak a word or words, this places words into our long-term memory. Mark 6:2 tell us: "...He began to teach in the synagogue; and the many listeners were astonished, saying, "Where did this man get these things, and what is this wisdom given to Him?"

In addition, taking notes makes reviewing much easier. When reading an assignment, if you carefully annotate a chapter consisting of twenty to thirty pages, you can usually condense it to three or four pages.

Now what you have is called the meat without the extra fat. If our annotations are accurate, our review is a simple matter. And, since you have written it, you probably do know the material or can quickly re-learn it!!

### **Proper Note Taking:**

A loose-leaf notebook, with three rings which permits pages to be quickly added or subtracted, is a must. Set up your notebook with dividers, one for each subject, and write the subject name on each divider. At the end of the book, keep a good supply of unused paper. Make your notebook a constant companion during class and study hours.

### **Label Each Set of Notes:**

All notes are labeled in the top right corner of the page. However, lecture notes are labeled with the topic and the date; whereas, textbook notes are labeled with the chapter and page number. A glance at the top of the page will tell you what the notes are about.

### **TEXTBOOK NOTES:**

Developing the habit of marking your textbook is a necessity in school/college. Marking the text not only emphasizes the important ideas but is particularly helpful in reviewing for examinations. A well-marked page maybe reviewed in less than half the time it would take to reread or take detailed reading notes. It is an efficient use of time to take notes on large portions of the text when the text can be easily marked.

### **Brackets [ ] or { }:**

Use brackets to encompass complete sections of material that develop complete thought or ideas. Use only if you are sure you want to re-read the entire section enclosed by the brackets during later review.

**Parenthesis ( ):**

Used to encompass phrases and incomplete parts of sentences that should be emphasized, words and phrases that, if you were writing the book, you might have put in italics.

**Circle O:**

The process of encircling should be confined to new vocabulary words, to be looked up and defined.

**Circled numbers:**

When an author develops major points on a particular idea, the beginning of each point can be identified by circled number.

**LECTURE NOTES:**

BEFORE CLASS:	DURING CLASS:	AFTER CLASS:
Read	Listen	Organize Reduce
Review notes Come prepared	Think Write	Rehearse Reflect Recite Review

Class lectures may touch on information given in a text; however, most instructors use lectures to supply additional information and to further explain topics in the text. The note-taking method here will become a valuable tool for reviewing and studying.

**Before the lecture:**

1. Read your text.
  - Reading gives you general information.
  - Reading allows you to ask questions on material that you do not understand.
2. Review previous class notes.
  - Read your notes BEFORE class.
  - Reading tells you what information is coming.
  - Reviewing notes refreshes your memory.
3. Arrive on TIME and get a good seat.
  - If you arrive on time, you will not miss any vital information.

-Sitting in the front has two advantages:

--Sitting in the front keeps you focused on the lecture.

--Those who sit in front tend to ask more questions

--Students who may be on the border of two grades may receive the higher grade by showing interest and enthusiasm (sitting in the front).

4. Be prepared

-Use a three-ring binder.

-Divide your paper so that you have a two-inch margin on the left. Use the right side for lecturer's facts, details, and ideas. After class, go back and read your notes and write main ideas (one or two words) in the left column.

-Date notes, and number pages.

**During the lecture:**

1. Refer to the Cornell method of note taking. Take notes on the right hand side of the paper. Do not cramp your notes, skip a line to show where one idea ends and another begins. Take notes in short paragraph form.

-Stress general ideas.

-Phrase notes in your own words.

-LISTEN - THINK - WRITE.

-Remain alert and ask questions.

**After the lecture:**

1. Review.

-The best time to review is immediately after hearing a lecture. The sooner the better, you will be able to clarify your notes right away.

-Organize and reduce.

-Rehearse. Go over information, discuss, and recite.

-Reflect. Think about what you have written.

-Review. Review your notes **DAILY!**

## **NOTE TAKING: THE CORNELL SYSTEM**

In using the Cornell system of note taking, rule your sheets so that you have a 2 1/2-inch margin on the left-hand side of the paper. The right hand side should be about six inches.

Write down all meaningful information (lecturer's facts, details, and ideas) on the right-hand section of your paper.

After the lecture, use the left-hand side to write in cue words (see figure 1-1) that will prompt you to remember the details that you have listed in the right-hand corner.

A variation of this method is to use the left-hand side of the paper to formulate your own questions (see figure 1-2) that covers the details on the right-hand side of the paper.

Both techniques are effective. Some people like to recite from direct cues, while others are more comfortable answering the questions. Incidentally, those favoring the question technique report that often they find the same or similar questions on the exams.

Write your cues or questions as soon after class as possible. At the latest, fill in the cue/question column during study time that evening.

The sooner you review your notes the better. A prompt review cuts down on the rate of forgetting. The Ebbinghaus experiment showed that people who did not review forgot 47% of the information twenty minutes after it was presented and 62% of the information after one day. Those who did review retained facts and details at an 80% remembering level over periods as long as two weeks. With frequent periodic reviews a student can keep the retention level close to 100%.

Make certain you keep your notes up to date. Do not expect to do a semester's worth of note review in a single week. It does not work. That is like trying to take a week's worth of food at a single sitting. Both food and study need to be spaced out.