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## Student Resource: Note Taking, Study Tips, Test Taking

**Note Taking**

Taking notes is a great way of helping you identify important concepts in class and will help you succeed on tests and assignments. It is **NOT** about writing down everything that is said, but rather capturing the key ideas and making connections between concepts. There are various types of note taking - there is no one size fits all model for note taking.

***Things to Remember:***

* Focus on developing a system that works for you! If you’re unsure of how to take good notes, ask the faculty member or instructor how/what they would do.
* **Attending consistently and doing assigned readings/assignments is CRUCIAL!**
* **REMEMBER TO REVIEW your notes.** Simply taking notes is enough.
* Technology can be a double edged sword. Use your personal devices as a tool rather than a distraction.
* Social media applications/networks should be turned off while in lecture, as dividing attention and focus between lecture and social media can be difficult.
* Choose the note taking style that best suits your learning style. Ask your faculty member, instructor or peers for their suggestions on what works best.

**Study Tips**

Consistent and effective studying is a key component for success in college. It is essential to develop a study plan that best suits your lifestyle and learning needs. Cramming the night before is not necessarily the most effective method for studying. Test anxiety often comes from a lack of preparation so remember that studying is an integral part of the learning process.

***Things to Remember:***

* Studying begins the moment that the lecture starts. Don’t overlook the fact that attentive listening and active note-taking are the building blocks to effective studying.
* Just because lecture notes are posted online does not mean that you don’t have to attend class. Critical information is mentioned during class discussions which cannot be captured on a PowerPoint posted on Blackboard.
* Attend class, take notes, and ask questions. Be an **active learner** rather than a passive participant.

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* **Setting up an environment for studying**
* Make a visual study schedule with allotted breaks.
* Sorting information into groups can help to make study sessions more effective.   
  Be realistic—it is impossible to learn everything in one night—break it up and   
  spread out the studying over time.
* Eliminating distractions during studying is crucial.
* Staying hydrated and consuming healthy snacks will help you remain alert and engaged.
* **Strategies that work**
* Index cards (quick and portable), study notes, mnemonic devices (a mnemonic device to remember the order of the planets might be **M**y **V**ery **E**ducated **M**other **J**ust **S**erved **U**s **N**utella where the first letter of each word corresponds with each planet), join/start a study group, be the teacher.
* Actively using study notes is an important part of studying. Write on your notes, highlight/underline, and write in the margins. Studying is an **active process**, something which is often forgotten.

**Test Taking**

The word “test” often elicits extreme anxiety for students. Like note taking, there are many different strategies for test taking. It is important to prepare for tests/exams effectively so that you approach the test in a manner that will produce success.

***Things to Remember:***

* **Be prepared.**  Attend class and do all assigned readings/assignments.
* **Scan the test & mind dump.**  As soon as you get the test, write down any information/ideas/formulae that come to mind. After doing that, scan through the entire test so that you know what to expect. Do what you know first and pay attention to the marking scheme.
* **Read questions carefully.** The majority of errors do not come from lack of knowledge but from misreading the question. **Take your time** when reading the questions and **jot down** any information that comes to mind. Ask yourself, “What is this question asking me?”
* When you receive your marks, review the test carefully🡪 check that marks are added correctly (faculty make mistakes too!), ask questions, figure out where you went wrong.

Engage in the self-reflection process: What will you do next time? What might you change moving forward? What worked well this time around?

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