Note-Taking Tips & Tricks

**Observation**
- Read the assignment before class.
- Review your notes before class.
- Sit in the front of the room.
- Participate in class discussions.
- Ask questions.
- Watch for clues:
  - Repetition of information.
  - Interest level of instructor in material.

**Record**
- Find a note taking method that works for you.
  - Cornell Method—Draw a vertical line 1½ inches from the left edge of the paper. Write your notes to the right of the line. Use the left side to write down key words and sample questions.
  - Mind maps—Write the main concept of the lecture in the middle of the paper. Draw lines from the main concept outward and use key words to indicate related concepts.
  - Outline—Use a Roman numeral outline or a free-form outline to organize notes.
  - Paragraphs—Write material out in brief, paragraph form. Focus more on key words and less on complete sentences.
- Label, number, and date all notes.
- Write down material written on the board.
- Note points that have introductory, concluding, or transitional words or phrases in them.
- Write on one side of the paper.
- Place notes in a three-ring binder.
- Use 3×5 cards—one card per new concept.
- Create a symbol to indicate when you missed part of a lecture or are confused about something.
- Leave plenty of blank space in notes.
- Record the lecture for review (instructor permission should be obtained before recording).
- Take notes in different colors or highlight later.
- Use flash cards throughout the semester for formulae, definitions, theories, key words, dates, foreign language phrases, hypotheses, and sample problems.

**Review**
- Review notes within 24 hours to retain more information.
- Edit notes for clarification during first review.
- Write key words along margins.
- Spend an hour per subject per week reviewing lecture and lab notes.

Questions? For more information, tips, or to make an appointment, visit our website at [www.uidaho.edu/tcs](http://www.uidaho.edu/tcs) or email us at [tutoring@uidaho.edu](mailto:tutoring@uidaho.edu).