Note-taking Strategies Workshop
Survey

First, please complete this brief survey regarding your current note-taking experience:

https://forms.office.com/r/AavhMVILv8

Please use your NU account when completing the survey
Purpose of Workshop

- Provide an overview of a variety of note-taking styles/methods
- Discuss strategies on how to prepare to take notes before class and review notes after class
- Practice activities to engage with new strategies
- An academic skill development opportunity
Action steps before, during and after class
What to do before class

1. Be sure to **complete assignments and readings**
   - Note taking is easier when you have previewed the material

2. If available, **print out the professor’s slides** ahead of time so that you can take notes on the slides

3. **Choose a note-taking strategy** that works for you and the course you are taking

4. **Set up your notes** on a new page and be sure to include the date
What to do during class

Pay attention to cues that signal important/ key information

- **Repetition**—tune into points that the instructor repeats
- **Pace**—tune into when the instructor slows down to make points clear
- **Volume**—tune into when the instructor’s speaking volume increases and/or when the instructor speaks emphatically about a topic

Write down *examples* the professor shares

Use *symbols or abbreviations* to establish meanings and terms

If you do not understand a concept or if you miss information, make note of it. Ask a classmate after class or *attend the professor’s office hours to get clarification*
What to do after class

**Review your notes**: underline or highlight key points, content to review, or questions

- **Highlight**
  - Use one color for questions
  - Use one color for main ideas

**Review professor's slides or course readings** to add more detail to your notes

**Compare your notes** with another classmate’s and revise as needed

- Be sure to **review the material** in your notes before the next class
Note-taking Strategies/Methods
T-Method

Start by dividing the page in half.

Write equations, formulas, or problems on the left side.

Write steps, reminders, or notes on the right side of the page.

Works best with math, economics, or statistics courses
T-Method

Example

1. First must find standard form of equation
2. Then should try and factor— if it is not possible, then use the quad formula
3. Determine values for a, b, c and substitute into formula:
   \[ x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a} \]
4. The solutions of any quadratic equation can be found by using the quad formula (ALWAYS!)

Example:
Solve \(5x^2 - 8x + 3 = 0\)

\[ a = 5, \ b = -8, \ c = 3 \]

Using quad form:
\[
\begin{align*}
   x &= \frac{-(-8) \pm \sqrt{(-8)^2 - 4(5)(3)}}{2(5)} \\
   &= \frac{8 \pm \sqrt{64 - 60}}{10} \\
   &= \frac{8 \pm \sqrt{4}}{10} \\
   &= \frac{8 \pm 2}{10}
\end{align*}
\]

So,
\[
   x = \frac{8 - 2}{10} \quad \text{or} \quad x = \frac{8 + 2}{10}
\]
\[
   x = \frac{6}{10} \quad \text{or} \quad x = \frac{10}{10}
\]

So,
\[
   x = \frac{3}{5} \quad \text{or} \quad x = 1
\]

Thus, the solutions are 3/5 & 1
Concept Mapping Method

Mapping is a graphic representation of the content covered during a lecture.

Use this strategy when there is a lot of content and it is presented organized.

This is a beneficial strategy when there is a guest lecturer and the content might be presented in multiple ways.

Are you a visual learner? This might be a great strategy for you to try.
Concept Map Example
The Rough Outline Method:

1. Create a rough outline of the lecture using bullet points. Try to use indentations or smaller bullet points for sub-points.

2. Leave enough room to go back and add details for additional information.

3. Leaving space is the easiest way to condense and synthesize your notes.
Main Topic
  • Subtopic #1
    Key Point #1
    Key Point #2
  • Subtopic #2
    Key Point #1
    Key Point #2

Main Topic #2
  • Subtopic #1
    Key Point #1
    Key Point #2
  • Subtopic #2
    Key Point #1
    Key Point #2

Rough
Outline
Method
Example
Cornell Method

Method to organize your notes, making reviewing easier and more effective.

Divide your page in two columns:

The left-hand column will be labeled "Keywords" - which you can review and condense, after the lecture. Keywords can include key concepts, questions, or main points.

The right-hand column "Notes" to write in during lecture

The bottom of the page can labeled as "Summary" which can be used as a study guide.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cues</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. During Class</td>
<td>Main points and details from class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. After Class</td>
<td>Main ideas, prompts &amp; questions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary**

3. After Class | Summary of the lesson, highlighting |
Practice Activity: The Cornell Method

Use this URL or continue the presentation to watch a short (5 min) lesson:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FsMWbVrjucg

As you watch, take notes using the Cornell Method
See "Resources and Links" for templates and apps you can use—or feel free to take handwritten notes on a sheet of paper.

Please send your practice notes to DRC@northeastern.edu
Email subject: “Practice Notes for Note-Taking Workshop”

It's okay if they're not perfect!
Practice Activity: The Cornell Method

As a reminder, please send your practice notes to DRC@northeastern.edu

Email subject: “Practice Notes for Note-Taking Workshop”
Practice Activity Continued: Sample Notes

Compare your practice notes with the sample notes included on our resources page.

Your notes will not look exactly like the sample, and that's okay!

The value in using the Cornell Method:

• Opportunity to engage with the course content and take an active (rather than passive) approach to note-taking
  • Prompts the note-taker to identify and summarize key points after lecture

• Notes help to visually organize the main points of a lecture/reading

• Notes can serve as a study guide to help prepare for an exam
Additional Tips/ Resources

Purchase notebooks that have the note-taking strategy built into the pages, such as the Cornell Method.

Create a Word Document Template with the page set up of the note taking strategy you like to use for a specific class.
Summary

Completed a note taking survey

Reviewed the purpose of this training

Received new strategies and approaches to note taking

Practiced utilizing the Cornell Method

Reviewed additional tips and resources to develop note taking skills