Methods of Note-Taking and their Subject Application

TYPES OF NOTE-TAKING

Resources: https://open.lib.umn.edu/collegesuccess/chapter/4-4-got-notes/

* Cornell Notes
* FQR
* Slide print-outs
* Concept Maps/Graphic Organizers
* Outlining
* Listing (bad example; probably what most students are doing and also why they’re frustrated)

GOOD OPTIONS, OFFERS FLEXIBILITY WITH TECH:

* Concept Maps/Graphic Organizers
	+ KWL chart as a pre-post review
		- What do I already Know about this specific concept? Can include the emotional piece; perceived ease or difficulty with navigating said concept
		- What do I Want to know about this specific concept? Try to ask questions about how this new concept relates to previous concepts in the course, as well as understanding the why of a new concept
		- What did I Learn as a result of studying/reviewing this material/attending class? Was I able to answer my previous questions by completing the reading? What questions do I still have after having completed the lesson/the assignment?
* Can be done on an ipad with relative ease as things continue to grow and expand; especially helpful with biology and other science-based courses as numerous things relate to core concepts
	+ NURSING
* Will take practice in terms of identifying what the main ideas themselves are, especially if students are attempting to branch out from the listing method
* Focuses on sub-dividing the material; can be especially effective for students who already have a strong grasp on organization in other aspects of their lives and offers for greater flexibility than a linear note-taking plan
* Can be re-organized and revised during the review process to make several smaller maps, or one GIANT course map; correlates to studying for a test in a way that’s cooler than just flashcards
	+ Flash cards can still plug into this method, so long as the individual terms themselves are already known well enough to be interconnected into the broader concepts of the material being studied
		- i.e., in an anatomy class when studying for a test on the skeletal system, that can be sub-divided into the arms of the concept map itself
			* center says “parts of the skeletal system”; branch says “bones of the arm”; stems say “humerus”, “radius”, “ulna”, “carpals”; “metacarpals”; “phalanges”
				+ “carpals” can then be broken down even further into their specific individual names (yayyyyy concept mapping! We did it!)

FACT/QUESTION/RESPONSE (FQR)

* Best utilized as a note-taking method when completing the reading assignment for a course
	+ Potential barriers: requires students to…actually do their reading assignments instead of just skimming or flying blind into the assignments on Canvas
* Allows for interaction with terminology as it arises in the reading itself to help guide what is important; still lets students ask questions that they then can bring up in discussion or during office hours with their instructor/TA/professor
	+ More front-loading of the work in order to help themselves review in the long run; emphasis on helping out your future self instead of waiting until the last minute and crying and panicking
* Also lets students have the chance to show their personality/thought process in the response column—you’re way more likely to remember something if it actually sounds like you
	+ Also then helps bolster their writing skills in terms of developing a voice and a style instead of just mirroring other people
* Can be done on paper or very easily in a word doc/on an ipad
* Does require more re-organization of the material once they’ve been to class; doesn’t necessarily translate to lecture notes
	+ Highly customizable and can be adapted to have a color-coding system if that’s something that’s important to people

CORNELL NOTES

* Best utilized as a means of reviewing the material after taking notes in class
* Main column should be BRIEF entries about what is happening in the lecture, can also be done as a means to take notes while completing a reading assignment
	+ Can easily become a list of every single word that the professor is saying, and that is simply just what we do not want
* Use your own words and highlight terms/definitions as they arise during the lecture itself
* Keep entries to ~2 sentences at a maximum
* Left-hand column is to respond/reflect 🡪 this is where you actually get to interact with the material
	+ This is where the emotions come into play 🡪 react to what is being taught, and reflect on how it affects you
		- Can clarify pre-conceived notions, ask a question if confusion still remains, make a connection to something previously learned, or relate the concept to something entirely separate from the course (cross-curricular learning!)
* Most importantly: the summary box at the bottom
	+ If students are writing themselves a good summary at the bottom of the page, they are more likely to have a stronger sense of recall when they are reviewing and studying their notes prior to the assessment or paper that they have to write
		- Should be in their own words/in their own style—if it’s a regurgitation of the material presented by the professor that doesn’t actually help anything and does not likely mean that students will remember anything from the lecture itself
* Best used for the humanities in that the main box would not necessarily translate well to completing a math problem or chemical equation, but could be adapted if you really wanted it
	+ Left column could instead be “mistakes to avoid”, etc.
* Doable on a computer or on physical paper; only limiter would be that if you’re rocking with a pencil and paper the box itself might be too small and then that’s a whole separate frustration

OUTLINING

* Can be used for any subject and can be completed for both lecture notes and while doing the reading
* Requires a bit of advanced subject knowledge in order to highlight what the main ideas are
	+ Can be applicable to the slide titles themselves/can be the companion to the slide print-outs
* Subsequent sub-headings are reserved for the material that falls under the main title
	+ Looks a lot like bullet points but would have the Roman numerals or alphabetical letters to identify different subjects
* Needs to be brief—if each entry is a million lines long, that’s just listing everything that the professor is saying and requires little to no processing of the material, which is why we’re in the mess of having to be here to go through different note-taking and study strategies in the first place
* Best used in combination with a different means of reviewing the material while one studies 🡪 pairs well with a concept map for more of a visual explanation for how the concepts tie into one another