

NOTE TAKING: THE CORNELL SYSTEM

- Cornell System Adapted from Walter Pauk How to Study in College Houghton Mifflin, 2001
 - Designed to save time yet be highly efficient
 - No rewriting or retyping
 - It is a "DO IT RIGHT IN THE FIRST PLACE" system
 - **First Step – PREPARATION**
 - Use a large, loose-leaf notebook
 - Use only one side of the paper
 - You then can lay your notes out to see direction of lecture
 - Draw a vertical line 2 1/2 inches left side of paper
 - This is recall column.
 - Notes will be taken to right of margin.
 - Key words/phrases written later in recall column.
 - **Second Step - DURING THE LECTURE**
 - Record notes in paragraph form
 - Capture general ideas, not illustrative ideas
 - Facts not opinions or examples
 - Skip lines to show end of ideas or thoughts.
 - Use abbr = save time
 - Write legibly
 - **Third Step - AFTER THE LECTURE**
 - Read notes; make more legible
 - Use recall recolumn
 - Jot down ideas/key words which give you idea of lecture
 - REDUCE
 - Reread lecturer's ideas; reflect in your own words
 - Cover up right-hand portion of notes; recite general ideas/concepts of lecture
 - Overlap notes showing only recall columns
 - This will give you your review.
 - **EDITING LECTURE NOTES**
 - Reasons for organizing/reviewing your notes ASAP:
 - While lecture is still fresh mind, you can fill in from memory examples/facts which you did not have time to write down during lecture
 - You can recall what parts of lecture were unclear so that you can consult the lecturer, classmate, your text, or additional readings for further information
 - Immediate review = better retention
 - Unless reviewed within 24 hours after the lecture, retention will drop and you will have to relearn rather than review
 - **Method of annotation usually preferable to recopying**
 - Some suggestions for annotating:
 - Underline key statements or important concepts
 - Use asterisks or other signal marks to indicate importance
 - Use margins or blank pages for coordinating notes with text
 - Indicate relevant pages of text beside corresponding info in notes
 - Use a key & a summary
 - Use one of the margins to keep a key to important names, formulas, dates, concepts, and the like
 - Forces you to anticipate questions of an objective nature & provides specific facts that you need to develop essays
 - Use other margin to write a short summary of topics on page, relating contents of page to whole lecture

- Condensing notes not only helps you to learn them but also prepares you for kind of thinking required on essay & "objective" exams
- **Good notes doesn't guarantee "A's"; but it makes getting "A's" easier**