LECTURE NOTETAKING

BEFORE: the Preparation

- Do the reading for the lecture topic
- Glance over last class’s notes
- Choose a seat in class that will keep you awake, alert, and in touch
- Use looseleaf paper, writing on only one side of the paper
- Rule a 2” margin on the left for the recall column

DURING: the Body of the notes

Organization:
- Identify the date and lecture topic (and lecturer if someone new)
- Number the pages

Taking the notes:
- Follow the structure of the lecture as closely as possible
- Use indentation to show the relative importance of each idea
- Use a separate line for each new fact or idea
- Skip lines when the topics and subtopics change
- Use headings and subheadings (can be edited in later)

Content of the notes:
- Use “telegraphic,” condensed sentences rather than copying verbatim
- Make notes complete by including ALL main ideas
- Provide ENOUGH details and examples to support the main points
- Use abbreviations & symbols where possible and appropriate

Appearance:
- Make handwriting legible, at least to you
- Make notes neat: no doodling or scribbling out mistakes

AFTER: Editing

Organization:
- Make corrections (handwriting, spelling) and fill in gaps (from a student, the text, the professor)
- Underline headings and subheadings
- Number lists and topics

Recall Column:
- Keep cues brief & select: either memory triggers or predicted test questions
- Cue ALL major points
- Cue ONLY major ideas - not details, examples
- Create a set of columns which can become your lecture study guide