HOW TO STUDY COLLEGE LECTURE NOTES

BEFORE THE LECTURE:

- Read all assigned material.
- Think about what you already know about the topic, and review notes from the previous lecture.

DURING THE LECTURE:

- Add as much detail as possible so you have a comprehensive record of the class.
- Continue to take notes during discussions, guest speakers, and films.
- Abbreviate and write in phrases rather than complete sentences. Write enough so you’ll understand the information later.
- Date your notes, and if you use loose-leaf paper number your pages.
- Pay special attention to:
  - the main point of the lecture, usually given in the first few minutes of class
  - terms, definitions, and examples
  - topics and lists
  - points emphasized or repeated
  - verbal explanations given when key ideas or terms are on the board or projection
  - times when the professor specifically mentions or corrects the text
- Add visuals or diagrams, where appropriate, to illustrate concepts.

THE SAME DAY AS THE LECTURE:

- Read over your notes soon after class, adding information from the reading.
- Highlight or circle key words and phrases in your notes.
- Organize your notes by re-copying them in a study notebook or typing them on the computer.
- Compare your notes with a classmate.
- Ask yourself, “What are the key ideas of this lecture?” Write an overview at the end of your notes.

EVALUATING AND STUDYING YOUR LECTURE NOTES:

- After each lecture, ask yourself:
  - What was the main point of the lecture? Write a brief summary at the end of your notes.
  - What were the key points, concepts, details, problems, or examples that supported the main point of the lecture? Write them in the margins of your notes or highlight them within your notes.
  - What important terms (or events or people) were included in this lecture? List them in the margins or highlight them within your notes. Consider how they relate to the main point of the lecture.
  - How does the information in this lecture relate to the assigned reading?
  - Do you have questions about the material in this lecture? How will you get the answers?
  - Based on this lecture, what test questions might the professor ask? Write possible test questions at the end of your notes.
  - How will you prepare for lectures and take notes differently as a result of what you’re learned?