

# **Faculty of Community Services**

## **Academic Support & Resource Centre**

### **How to Take Notes from Textbooks**

#### ***Why Take Notes From the Textbook?***

- Many professors will take exam material from the textbook (and you can ask ahead of time!)
- Many professors will rely on the textbook to either reinforce what they have taught, or to teach you topics they do not have time to cover in class
- It reinforces your knowledge of what you have learned in class
- The textbook may explain concepts in an easier way than in class

#### ***You Will Need...***

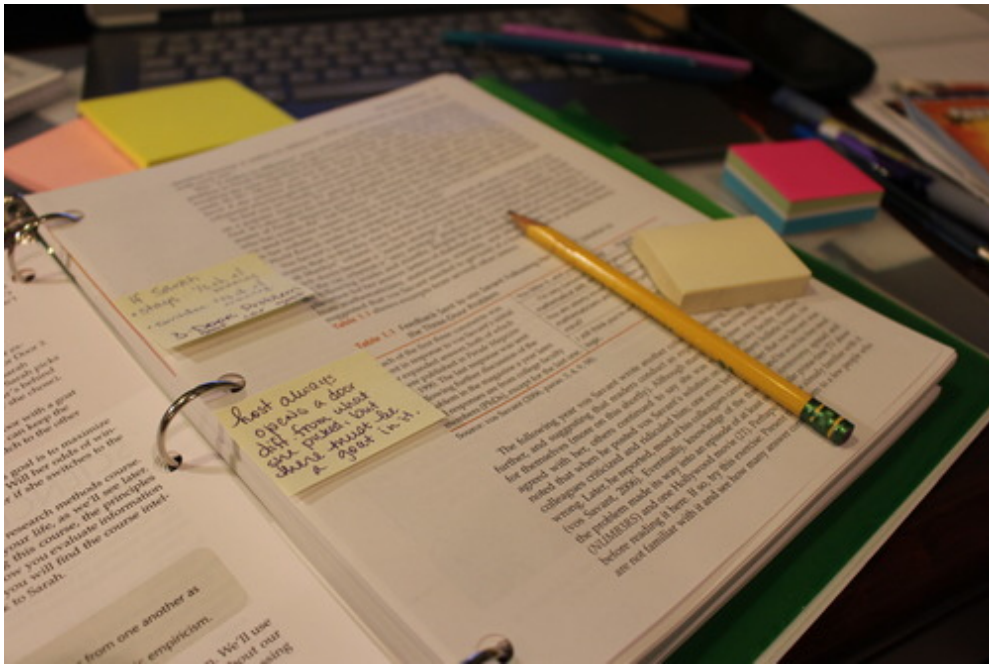
- Your textbook (and be willing to highlight it, or make photocopies and use those)
- Highlighters
- Pens/pencils
- Sticky note flags

#### ***Let's Get Started!***

- Colour coordination:
  - Use **purple** for titles and important keywords
  - Use **orange** for any definitions
  - Use **green** for practical examples that explain the material
  - Use **yellow** for important information
- Always reference the chapter number and pages of what you are studying at the top of the page; you may choose to create a fancier title using decorations!
- Go through the textbook chapter and find each of the titles. These will be your headings for your notes; highlight these in **purple**
- As you are doing this, use the sticky note flags to mark titles that seem confusing or are new information for you
- Mark any summary charts, tables, diagrams or graphs with sticky flags
- As you are going along, make sure to write down page numbers in your class notes for cross-referencing
  - For example, if you are studying the cycles of sleep and you come across a diagram that clearly explains these cycles in your textbook, write down the page number in your class notes for later reference when studying
- Make sure your notes follow a logical order – for example, study the sections from the chapter in order, or study the chapters from the textbook in the same order as the material is being taught in class

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- Avoid writing word for word from the textbook – try reading a full page before you write your own notes (in your own words)! You often will remember the most important information from that passage
- Highlight only major, key points; summarize these concepts with bullet points
- Use symbols to make sentences stand out, such as an exclamation point
- Summarize paragraphs on sticky notes, and place them in your textbook; this way, when you return to study, the information is already summarized
- Don't write information twice – if you already have it in your lecture notes, don't waste time taking it down from the textbook
- Usually, the end of your textbook will have chapter summaries and maybe some practice/study questions – incorporate these into your studies so that you can test your understanding
- It may be beneficial to start a given study session with the material that you find most difficult to understand (and, ideally, right after the class in which this information was taught)



Picture 1: (TheOrganizedCoyote, 2014)

***Happy studying!***