

# **Faculty of Community Services**

## **Academic Support & Resource Centre**

### **Improving Your Memory and Understanding**

- 1. Be selective** by focusing on what is most important to learn
  - The topics in the course outline show you the main focus of the course
  - Learning objectives, headings & chapter summaries show you what is important in the text
  - The professor's verbal and nonverbal clues show you what is important in lectures
- 2. Prepare for class** so that you can more easily learn the new material.
  - Look at the outline to see what will be covered
  - Review notes from the previous class
  - Complete assigned readings
- 3. Work to understand new material**
  - Go to all classes, pay active attention in lectures, and take notes
  - Apply the material by doing all homework assignments and practice exercises
  - If you are having problems understanding the material, talk to your professor, classmates, or get a tutor
  - Organize ideas in ways that are meaningful to you: try to see patterns such as causes and effects or steps in a process; create acronyms or lists
  - Try to connect new material to previous knowledge
- 4. Reinforce learning through repetition**
  - Review notes as soon as possible after class and frequently thereafter
  - Write summaries of important information in your own words
  - Use cue/flash cards to review material you need to memorize
- 5. Use different senses when reviewing.**
  - See material by using pictures, diagrams, charts, and visualizations
  - Read notes out-loud from texts and listen to lectures; join a study group to discuss material
- 6. Distribute reviews over shorter study sessions.**
  - Your brain needs time to absorb information; for instance, four two-hour sessions spread over several days are more effective than one massive eight-hour session
  - Take short breaks between sessions; if the material is particularly difficult, you could study in 20 minute sessions with a short break between each
- 7. Quiz yourself**
  - Create a list of questions to test your comprehension of the material
  - Make up test questions and write a timed "mock exam"
- 8. Take care of yourself.** You can't learn or remember if you're not well!