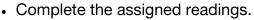# Note-taking in Class

Taking effective notes is one of the most important skills you can develop to stay engaged in classes, enhance your learning, encourage deeper understanding of the material, and prepare you for lifelong learning.

Go to Class Prepared

- Have all your notetaking materials with you. *(laptop, charger, pens, pencils, notebooks, etc.)*
- Complete the assigned readings.
- Are you centered and mentally present?
- Minimize distractions (put nonessential devices away, use app or browser blockers, choose your seat wisely).

Listen Actively

- Listen with the aim of **understanding** and **interpreting**.
- Process, and reflect on the information.
- **Pause** and **paraphrase** information.
- Ask yourself **questions** about the material. Voice these questions to clarify your understanding, if needed.
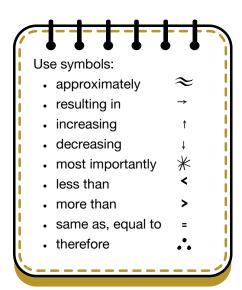
> **!**
> Play close attention to verbal cues of importance or emphasis:
>
> - "in summary"
> - "moving on"
> - "key question"
> - "this will appear in an exam"

Shorthand Notes

- Using "shorthand" helps you take notes faster by shortening common words or phrases so you can keep up and focus on the main ideas.

Abbreviate terms:

education	educ
psychology	Ψ
students	sts
especially	esp
with	w/
without	w/o
which	wh/
for example	e.g.

Use symbols:

approximately	$\approx$
resulting in	$\rightarrow$
increasing	$\uparrow$
decreasing	$\downarrow$
most importantly	$\ast$
less than	$<$
more than	$>$
same as, equal to	$=$
therefore	$\therefore$

The **Academic Success Centre** provides free content, study skills and writing tutoring for UNBC students.

To learn more, **scan the QR code**, or visit the **ASC**, located in the Library Learning Commons (5-139G).

Prioritize Structure and Relationships of Ideas

1 Your notes should reflect **how the information is structured**. This is often indicated in PowerPoint slides or through transitional phrases.

> Your notes should have similar headings, subheadings, main points, examples, and systems of organization (such as a numbered lists).

2 When the organization of ideas is clear, you are able to see how concepts related to each other and can **fill in missing gaps later if needed**.

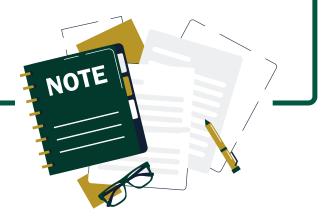**3** **Reflect on your understanding** of concepts. If it's unfamiliar, pay close attention! **Jot down your own related ideas** or questions as they arise in the margins.
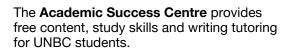
Review and Enhance Your Notes

- Store and organize your notes from lecture and other sources by topic and date.
- Aim to **review your notes within 24 hours of class.**
- Fill in any missing details from your textbook or by meeting your professor during their office hours. **Annotate** with summaries and your own thoughts and associations; highlight or underline important concepts to return to later.

Effective note-taking supports efficient reading of textbooks and other class materials. For more related strategies, checkout our other handouts:

- Cornell Note-Taking
- Preview Read Review (PRR)
- SQ4R Method