Note-Taking Tips

- **Be prepared prior to class.** Complete assignments and review last week's notes and the assigned textbook chapter prior to class. Being familiar with the material enables you to understand the lecture better.

- **Be in class.** Class attendance and participation enhances your ability to take good notes and understand the material. Listen actively for the main points and ask questions if you don't understand the lecture material.

- **Keep a separate notebook for each class.** Also, date your notes and start a new lectures for each class on a separate page.

- **Take notes in outline form.** Use your own system to distinguish major and minor points. This system could involve underlining or capitalizing important points or using highlighters and different colors to emphasize key ideas. Use abbreviations that you understand to save time. Keep in mind that information written on the board, on overhead, or on powerpoint slides is most likely important.

- **Leave space in your notes.** Leaving space as you move from one point to another allows you to fill in additional points later if necessary.

- **Listen carefully for important points.** The speaker us usually making an important point if he/she:
    - Pauses before or after an idea
    - Uses repetition to emphasize a point
    - Uses introductory phrases to precede an important idea (i.e. "the 5 main reasons are...")
    - Writes an idea on the board

- **Review and edit notes soon after class.** We forget up to 80% of information within 24 hours after initial learning. Reviewing notes soon after class helps move this information to our long term memories. Editing and reviewing notes can also help you retain and remember the information. Reviewing notes soon after class can also alert you to main points you may have missed or material you don't understand.

- **Share note with other students.** Sharing notes and ideas can help you understand lecture material better and alert you to important information that you may have missed.