

# UNST 124g winter 2012

## *take note*

### **1 introduction**

Learning to take effective notes is essential for success in many university courses. Notes may be used in a variety of ways, to outline your own ideas for a paper or presentation, to record the content of a reading or lecture, and as a tool for reviewing material. Note-taking is always about the organization of information but the style in which you take notes may be different when you are writing from a text source and when you are recording the main points from a lecture. Whatever style you adopt, try to be consistent in its application. This will help you when you return to your notes for review. Academic note-taking guides all make a similar set of recommendations for taking notes in class:

- Come to class prepared. If there is a reading assignment for the day, complete it before class; take notes and identify questions you have about the reading.
- Do not try to write what the speaker is saying, word for word. Instead, your goal should be to capture the main points and the essence of supporting material.
- Organize your notes around key words. Identify key words using clues from the speaker: intonation, repetition, material written on the board or on slides.
- Leave space for easy review and addition of details later (during the lecture and after class).
- Sketch diagrams that are discussed in detail and note the source so that they can be found later.
- Keep handouts and integrate their content into your notes after class.
- Reviewing your notes is key to retaining the information.
  - Review your notes as soon as possible after class in order to fill in gaps, expand on key ideas, and identify ambiguities. Follow up with the instructor (at the end of class, during office hours, or during the next class meeting) to clarify ambiguities.
  - Review the notes again about a week after the lecture. Are they still clear and meaningful? Can you reproduce the main points without referring to your notes? If not, review the notes again and seek clarification where you need it.
  - If you are using the notes to study for an exam or write a paper, begin your review with enough time to seek clarification where you need it.

### **2 assignment**

We will listen to and take notes on a short talk and review our work as a group in class.