**Note Taking**

1. **What is note taking ?**

Note taking is the practice of writing down or recording key points of information. This practice helps the students concentrate and make decisions about what is worth taking down as notes. It can take place before, during and after class. However, as students, you might be concerned more in taking notes during the lessons.

**2. Tips for concentration and evaluating information**

During class, your instructor is the primary source of information. You are supposed to take notes from the lecture, but you are not supposed to write down everything that is mentioned. Here are some tips that may help you concentrate and decide if the information is of paramount importance:

* Listening attentively with concentration
* Recognizing main ideas and details
* Paralinguistic means and facial expressions: prosody/ intonation
* Linguistic means: repetition of key words/ signal words

**3. Techniques of Note Taking**

The following, briefly explained, techniques are very helpful if you are willing to take notes. You can use more than one as you can use some of them before, during or after class.

**3.1. Listing**

Listing is an extremely straight forward method of note taking. Listing is an appropriate form for taking notes in classes such as history, or classes that involve a lot of vocabulary terms and definitions.

**3.2. Outlining**

It is probably the most widely used method of note taking. It provides you with a well organized set of notes because it forces you to seek the main ideas , to recognize the supporting details and to eliminate unnecessary information and digressions.

**3.3. Patterning**

Sometimes, concepts are clearer and information is easier to remember when drawn rather that written. Notes of this sort take the form of charts, tables, diagrams, etc. in addition, when it is time to review, simple diagrams are likely to be easily understood.

**3.4. Highlighting**

Highlighters allow you to highlight (draw a line over) any key words or phrases you wish to know or emphasize. As a note taking technique, highlighting saves your writing time and focuses on key information to review as you study for a test. You will find it much easier to review as you study from a set of highlighted notes rather than from notes in which every word seems to be as important as the next one.

**3.5. Margin Notes**

When you use margin notes as your form of note taking, you write down key points in the margin of your copybook. As you read, margin notes are convenient providing you with a sufficient set of notes for reviewing.

**3.6. Mind Maps**

It is a visual diagram that lets you organize your notes in a two dimensional structure: you create a mind map by writing the subject or headline in the center of the page, then add your notes in the form of branches that radiate outward the center.

**3.7. Charting**

This technique allows you to break up information into categories like similarities and differences, dates and events, etc. It uses columns to organize the information. The page is divided into columns labeled by categories, then, the details of each category are filled out in the rows below.

**3.8. Streamlining**

Streamlining is when you take notes in the form of abbreviations and symbols. Abbreviations are incomplete words that involve writing the first letter(s) of words such as n. for noun, adj. for adjective. Symbols encompass a larger set.