Special Tips for Notetaking in the Sciences:

Before class:
- Printing out Powerpoint slides in advance is helpful when there are complex diagrams that are hard to recreate yourself.
- Be sure to do the textbook reading before lecture so you have a basic understanding.
- While pen and paper is preferred by most, typing notes is helpful if the professor lectures quickly.
- Bring along your textbook to refer to specific examples/diagrams that aren’t outlined in the slides.

During class:
- Student quote: “I have found it useful to take notes on what the professor is saying for each slide rather than rush to jot down the information on the slide”
- Student quote: “I draw pictures to help me remember complicated patterns or interactions”
- Translate technical jargon into your own words whenever possible.
- Student quote: “I leave an area for any confusion and questions I have for a specific topic”
- For quantitative problems: write down important equations and formulas as well as example problems with step by step instructions on how to solve them.
- Take note of examples that intrigue you, such as weird examples of phenomena.
- Pay attention to visual and auditory cues such as bolded words on slides, the amount of time the professor spends on a topic, and concepts they emphasize across multiple lectures.

After class:
- Recopy your notes to review content and reorganize according to a logical system.
- Follow up with your professor or TA in office hours or recitation about any confusing concepts, and fill in the blanks in your notes when you have gained further understanding.
- Supplement notes with outside videocasts and recorded transcripts of lectures.

“Advanced” Tips:
- Have a consistent system of how you label and structure your notes. Color coding can be helpful.
- Integrate professor lecture notes, powerpoint notes and textbook notes as a way to check your knowledge and find points of clarity and misunderstanding.
- If professors post personal lecture notes, review and incorporate them into your overall notes.
- Think big picture: review weekly themes that appear on your syllabus, in chapter titles, etc. and think about how your notes connect to the themes.
- When consolidating notes, have multiple powerpoints open to see what concepts recur and connect across chapters.
- Generate questions based on the key themes and concepts from your notes and test yourself!

This study resource was developed with the input of the following groups of academic student leaders associated with Academic Services: BUGS and Student Support Services Program tutors, Disabilities notetakers, Fellowship recipients, and Roosevelt Fellows. The student leaders surveyed represented all academic areas of discipline, and all class years. Many thanks to all who participated in our survey—we were glad to benefit from your expertise!

Adapted by Katie Julian, 2014