Cornell Notes

*[How To Do Them]*

Divide the paper into three sections.

\*Draw a dark horizontal line about 5 or 6 lines from the bottom. Use a heavy

magic marker or pen so that it is clear.

\*Draw a dark vertical line about 3 inches from the left side of the paper from

the top to the first horizontal line you made.

Document

\*Write course name, date, and topic at the top of each page

1

Write Notes

\*The large rectangular box **to the right** is for writing notes.

\*Skip a line between ideas and/or topics

\*Don't use complete sentences.

\*Use abbreviations whenever possible.

\*Develop a shorthand of your own, such as using “+” for the word “and.”

2

Review and Clarify

\*Review finished notes as soon as possible after class (or in class if time).

\*Pull out main ideas and key points, and write them **in the left column**.

\*Or, pull out main ideas, and key points, and create pictures or symbols to

represent the main ideas, key points, etc.. Draw those **in the left column**.

\*Or, pull out main ideas, and key points, and then write a

metaphor/simile/analogy that connects main ideas, key points, etc. to

something that helps you grasp them better.

3

Summarize

\*Write a summary of the main ideas **in the bottom section**.

4

Study your notes

\*Reread your notes in the right column.

\*Spend most of your time studying the ideas in the left column and the

summary at the bottom. These are the most important ideas and will

probably include most of the information that will be tested.

This strategy is based on a strategy presented in Pauk, W. (1997), How to Study in College (6th ed.), Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

**Note: This is the most widely used note-taking strategy in American universities and colleges.**