

Grad Help: Reading and Note-Taking in Graduate School



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BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

It CAN be like this!



In this workshop you will learn how to...

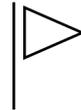
Identify goals for your readings



Ask appropriate questions



Annotate your readings



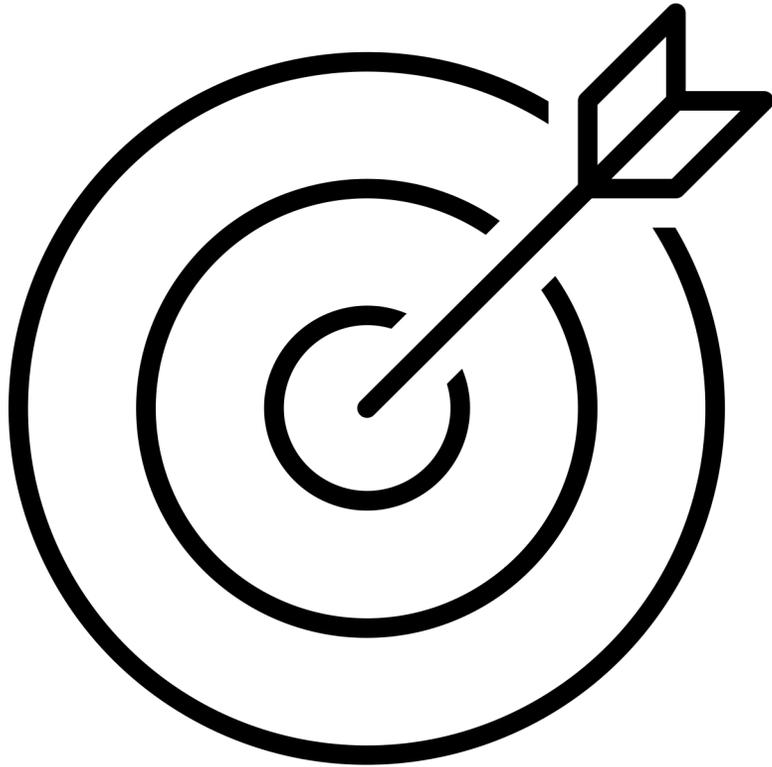
Guide your note-taking during seminars



Let's talk about your previous experiences with reading and note-taking



Identifying Reading Goals



- What are you preparing for with this material?
- Focus on what you actually need and reduce complexity
- Tip: take note of module/lecture/course objectives



Ask Appropriate Questions

- Reading goals change how we approach the material
- Helps us to zone-in on core elements to reduce complexity and avoid passive reading



Exercise

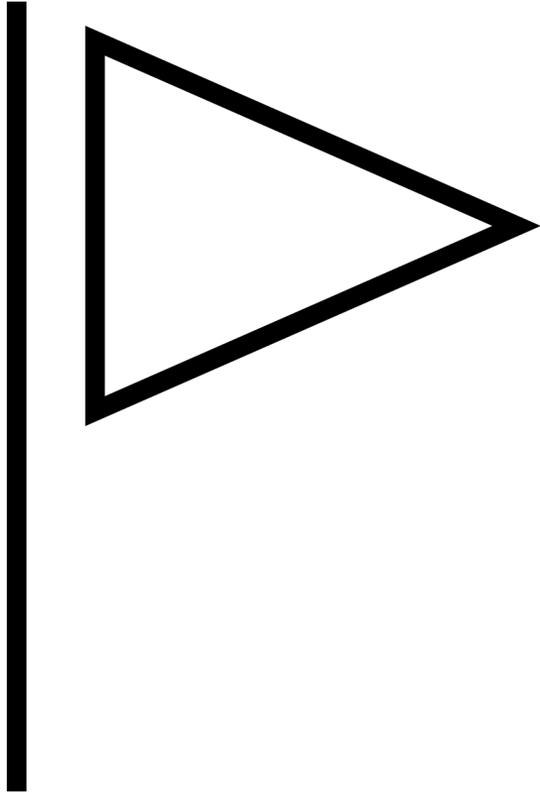
Reading for discussion?

- Do you notice themes that relate to the module objectives?
- Can you see how this reading connects to other material you have read?
- Can you relate these themes to anything outside academia?





Annotate your Readings

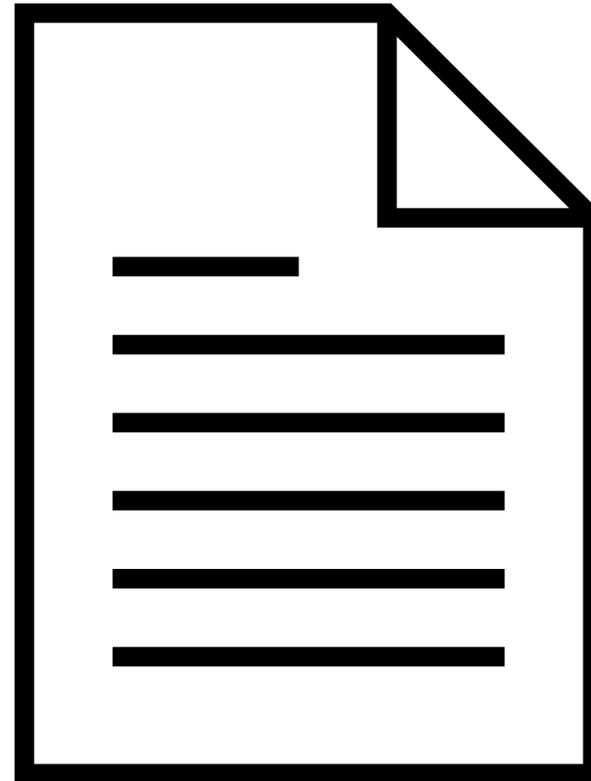


- Notes/comments/explanations in the margins or lines of your readings to review later (engagement)
- Techniques: highlighting, underlining, or using symbols via manual scribble or PDF reader



Guide Your Note-Taking

- Write questions that came up during your reading or points of reflection on a separate piece of paper to reduce complexity
- Ensures clarity on material as well as class engagement





SQ₃R

- Survey – provides an outline
- Question
- Read – active
- Recite – recall major points and answers
- Review – in your own words



Exercise

Suzie has just looked at her course outline and she must read **4 lengthy articles this week** for her graduate theory course.

The seminars are led by the professor with a **little bit of student discussion**. Suzie usually breezes through the readings, **not absorbing much**, and flounders her way through the discussion portion of the seminar, **scribbling down undecipherable notes** as the professor talks about the readings.

After all, she **doesn't need to think about the readings until her midterm and final exam**. Although, when it comes to exam time, she gets really stressed out because she feels like she must read **every paper in its entirety all over again!**

How can Suzie improve her reading and note-taking skills to maximize both her time and efforts?

How about you?

- Do you have any preferred techniques?
- Do you think your reading objectives and goals will stay consistent, or do you think you will have different goals and questions depending on the course/module?



You did the thing!

These techniques, while they may seem frivolous at first, will help you to compartmentalize your graduate school readings. This is important because the sheer volume of readings doesn't allow you to fully dive into every reading without a clear goal.

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