A GUIDE FOR ACADEMIC READING

BEFORE YOU READ

PREVIEW the selection.
- Notice text features like the title, the headings, sections, key words, graphics, chapter summary, and follow-up questions.
- Look at the length of the reading.

DEFINE your purpose for reading.

DESCRIBE the previous knowledge you have about this topic.

PREDICT questions the reading will answer.
- Change the headings and sub-headings into questions.
- Consider if the reading will provide definitions, examples, causes, effects, categories, processes, comparisons, contrasts, problems, and/or solutions.

WHILE YOU READ

TAKE NOTES in the margins or on separate paper as you read. (See other Writing Center handouts on how to take notes.)

FOCUS ON main ideas and supporting details.
- Make connections between ideas.
- Notice how information is organized.
- Interpret the information in graphics.

SEARCH for answers to your questions.

CIRCLE and DEFINE key terms and new vocabulary.

STOP every few paragraphs to check your understanding.
- Re-read difficult passages.
- Take breaks as needed to reflect on the information.

AFTER YOU READ

SUMMARIZE and ORGANIZE
- WRITE the overall idea of the reading. What is the main point the author wants to communicate about the topic? State the idea in a sentence.
- SUMMARIZE key ideas in your own words.
- LIST key terms.
- ANSWER the questions you listed prior to reading.
- ORGANIZE your notes into a summary, chart, diagram, outline, and/or note cards.

CONNECT: Relate information in the reading to ideas you’ve learned in this class, other classes, and/or in your life. How could this information be used?

REFLECT: Think about how your ideas about this topic developed or changed. What information was new, surprising, or interesting?

REVIEW: Study your notes. Create test questions. Quiz yourself and/or classmates.