

# **Faculty of Community Services**

## **Academic Support & Resource Centre**

### **Learning from Readings**

*An essential part of studying and doing well on papers and exams is completing your readings. However, in order to get the most out of your readings, you need to know how to read efficiently.*

#### **Before You Start...**

- Make sure you are well rested so your brain can absorb the maximum amount of information and strive for understanding
- Make sure you have all relevant materials (i.e. your readings, highlighters, a notebook, pen/pencil) needed to complete your readings (and take notes!)
- Make sure you are in your optimal study environment (i.e. this can be a quiet, well-lit space if that is what works for you)

#### **Now That You are Ready...**

- Organize your readings: make sure you know which readings are essential. These may be the readings that are required for an online discussion board or reading response assignment. These readings should always take priority.
  - The rest of your readings should be prioritized according to amount of time need to complete them, level of difficulty, and relevance to future assignments or exams.
- Learn the lingo: complete a brief scan of the reading to see if there are any new words or phrases you do not understand, and make a list of them. Look up the definitions before you start so that you will have them handy.

#### **General Tips for Effective Reading...**

- Scanning → scanning the reading to find relevant information is an important tool, because it prevents you from spending a lot of time reading the entire article when all you need may be a small section. Scanning allows you to find information faster.
- Skimming → skimming the reading to get a general sense of what the article is about allows you to gain a basic understanding in a short amount of time. Skimming is useful for low-priority readings for in-class discussion.
- Goals → while reading, it is always a good idea to have goals, whether they are related to the amount of reading you want to complete in a certain time period, or are more focused on simply getting them done in the first place. Goals give you focus.
- Analyze → while reading, make notes based on your understanding. Write summaries, ask questions, and keep in mind key points. This will help you when it comes time for exams.