

EFFECTIVE NOTE-TAKING EXTRA CREDIT ASSIGNMENT

WHAT?

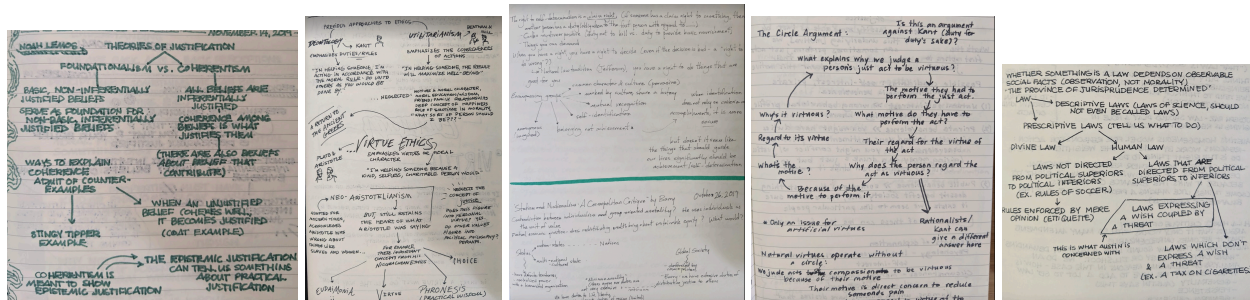
“Effective note-taking” is a term I invented for a research-driven approach to taking notes in this class (or any class!). The basic idea is: if you’re going to spend a whole semester in this class, you may as well take notes thoughtfully, in a way that will increase your chances of succeeding in the course.

WHY?

The main reason I suggest taking effective notes is for your own benefit. There is an [abundance of research](#) about the benefits of taking physical notes and the downsides of distracting laptop screens for other students. Basically, researchers have found that students who type their notes on computers tend to copy down phrases verbatim (or as close to verbatim as they can manage). If you can type fast enough to do this, you don’t need to think very much about the *content* of what you’re writing. On the other hand, if you take notes by hand, the slower pace of physical writing forces you to process the content – after all, if you’re not paying attention to what’s being said, you won’t know how to shorten it to get the basic gist. This extra step of *processing* and *shortening* the content leads to a much deeper understanding of the material.

[Researchers also find](#) that attempts to “multitask” by switching between note-taking/paying attention and say, browsing social media, are detrimental to academic performance. (Even if you *feel* like you’re good at multitasking, your performance may still be suffering! We are famously bad at introspecting about this sort of thing.) Plus, seeing you multitask in this way is very detrimental to other students sitting near you. On a personal note, I can tell you that it’s absolutely maddening to be leading a class discussion while students are very clearly distracted by browsers on their computers. Believe me, your instructors can tell when you’re checked out even if we don’t always say so. By using an anti-distraction software, you’re ensuring that you’re not distracting other students, driving your instructor crazy, or wasting your own time.

Finally, modern students suffer when they accept the “default” of taking notes on a device, because this discourages them from exploring other methods of retaining information – ones that might work better for their learning styles. Many students are visual learners and would learn better by writing notes in unconventional ways (including unusual shapes/diagrams/drawings/color-coding), but they might never know they if they never try physical note-taking. As a visual learner, I’ve found that taking physical notes allows to organize my thoughts in more creative ways (lots of arrows and little doodles). Once I started studying for tests by making study guides like this, I found it *much* easier to retain information, and did better on tests and papers.



In short, you may give effective note-taking a try because you might get something valuable out of it! The other reason you may want to take effective notes is that **I will award you 3 points of extra credit** for doing it throughout the semester.

HOW?

There are two ways to earn extra credit by taking effective notes in this class.

1. Take *physical notes* instead of using a device.
2. Take notes on your device using an *anti-distraction software* (so, a software that prevents you from using your browser, or from using any site other than our course site) throughout the class period.

If you do this throughout the semester and send me a brief email reflecting on the experience by [date], you will earn 3 points of extra credit. Your email should contain a few sentences about whether you found it difficult, helpful, annoying, illuminating, etc. to take effective notes, and whether you plan to try it in the future. Even if you hated it, you will earn the extra credit - just show me that you made a good faith effort.

The anti-distraction software I recommend is called [Cold Turkey Blocker](#). Another good option (for those who don't take notes in a browser) is just to turn off the wi-fi whenever you're in class. *If you have another software you prefer, or if using an anti-distraction software is incompatible with accessibility-related needs, please come chat with me so we can find another way for you to take effective notes!* On the following pages, you will find a guide to downloading and using Cold Turkey.

Your future self will thank you.

Block websites, games and applications to boost your productivity and reclaim your free time.

Download

Explore Features

(1) On getcoldturkey.com, hit “Download.”

(2) Scroll down to “Blocker Free,” and hit “Download Blocker.”

Blocker Free

For people that just want the basic features like blocking websites for a duration of time.

Download Blocker

FREE FEATURES

- Block websites
- Website Exceptions
- Timed blocks
- Statistics

For macOS 10.12+ Intel/M1
Or [download for Windows](#)

 Cold_Turkey_Ma....pkg ^

(3) The installer should begin downloading. Open it and proceed through the steps for installation.

(4) Cold Turkey will ask to install extensions on *all* your browsers. Make sure to do this – otherwise it’s too easy cheat by opening a different browser!

Install Extensions

Cold Turkey Blocker **requires** extensions to be installed on **ALL** of your browsers. Disabling or removing these extensions during a locked block will force close your browser until you re-enable them.

▲ Data collected from the extensions will **never** leave your computer.

Supported Browsers:

Safari:	Installed
Chrome:	Restart Required
Firefox:	Installed

Unsupported Browsers:
No unsupported browsers found.

[Help](#) [Close](#)

Cold Turkey Blocker Free (v4.3)

Blocker

- Overview
- Blocks
- Statistics
- Settings

Overview

Active Blocks

No active blocks right now. [Start a new block.](#)

Upcoming Blocks

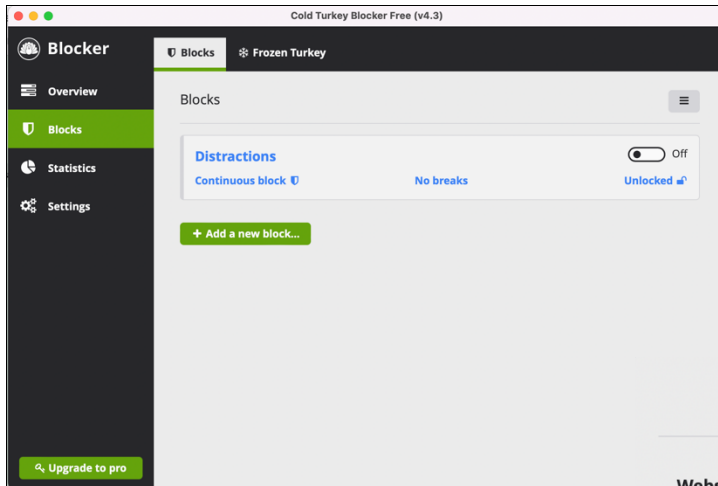
No upcoming blocks for today. [Start a new block.](#)

Summary of Today's Blocks

No upcoming blocks for today. [Start a new block.](#)

[Upgrade to pro](#)

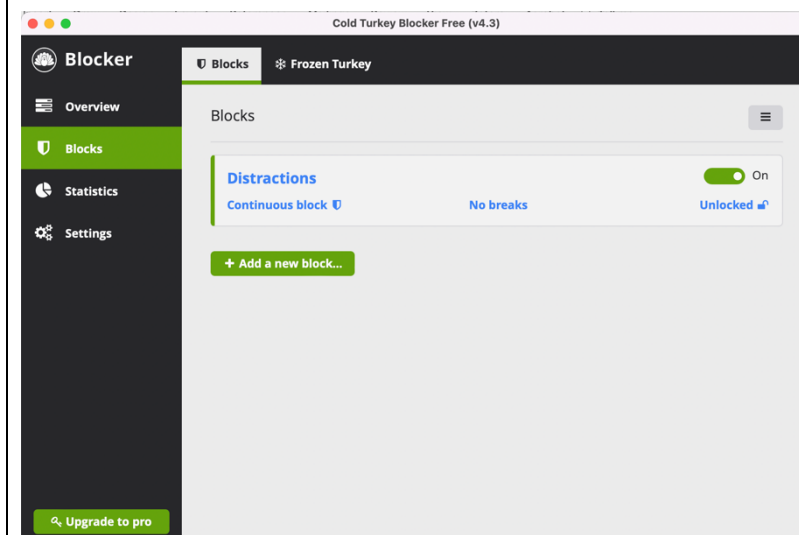
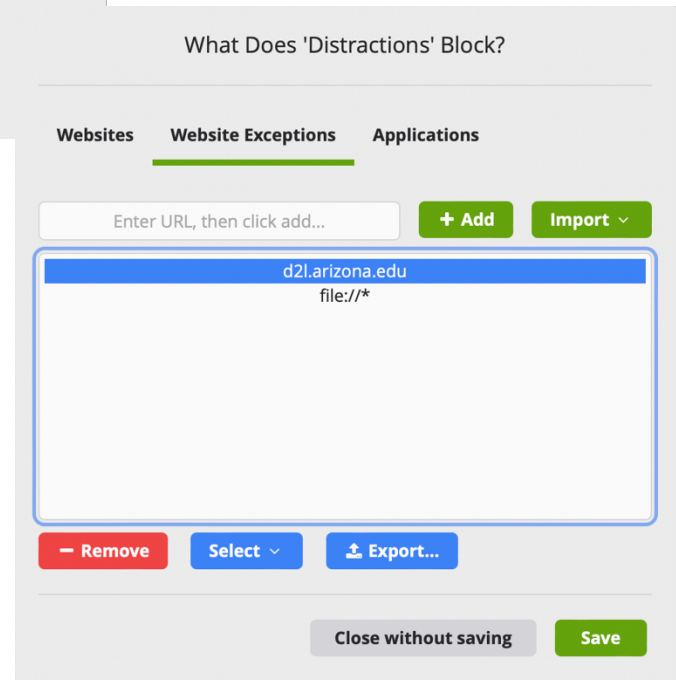
(5) Now your Cold Turkey Blocker should look like this.



(6) To set up a block, hit “Blocks” on the side bar, then hit “Distractions.”

(7) Now hit “Website Exceptions.” This means Cold Turkey will block the use of *all* websites *except* the ones you enter here. You should enter “d2l.arizona.edu” as your sole exception. This means you can only use a browser to access the course site (and, thus, to access the course readings).

The only other exception could be Google Docs or another note-taking software that uses a browser, if you plan to take notes on your device.



(8) Now that you have your block set up, turn it to “on” whenever we begin class. It will prevent you from opening any tabs besides D2L. When you’re finished using the software, simply switch the block to “off.”

Congrats, you are distraction-free!