Faculty SI Leader Handbook

Texas A&M University-Commerce

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Academic Success Center – Supplemental Instruction Instructor Handbook

What is Supplement Instruction?
Supplement Instruction (SI) is a voluntary academic assistance program, available free of charge to A&M-Commerce students, that utilizes undergraduate Supplemental instructor leaders in a group study atmosphere to assist student success in core level courses. The Academic Success Center (ASC) identifies and targets core courses that typically produce a high rate of grades lower than a C and high rates of withdrawals or drops (DFW), such as Psychology 2301 or Math 1314.

Supplemental Instruction is not a remedial program, for three reasons:
1. Supplemental Instruction supports high-risk courses, not individual high-risk students
2. All students enrolled in a course with SI are encouraged to attend SI sessions, not just high risk or low performing students
3. Supplemental Instruction starts the first day of the semester and continues to the end of term

What is the difference between a Tutor and a SI Leader?
SI Leaders have completed the course to which they are assigned. SI Leaders attend lectures and then set up three to four weekly SI sessions in designated classrooms or Gee Library. SI Leaders design their study sessions based on the material presented in the course. They are paid for their time and work closely with Instructors to ensure student success. During SI sessions, the SI Leader will assist students to compare and clarify lecture notes, review textbook readings and discuss key course concepts.

Tutoring supports a general subject area such as Biology, Organic Chemistry or Physics, whereas Peer Educators support the specific course to which they are assigned, in the same style as the instructors. (Example: a biology tutor may tutor BSC 1406, 1407, 2401 and 2401; a SI Leader only tutors the class section they attend)

Purposes of Supplemental Instruction
- Reduce rates of DFWs within targeted core level courses
- Improve student grades and promote proactive and independent learning
- Increase graduation and retention rates

History of Supplemental Instruction
Supplemental Instruction was introduced in 1973 by Dr. Deanna Martin from the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Dr. Martin developed the SI Model to address the high failure rate among minorities in medical school. The program was so well received that it quickly spread to other universities. Today there are more than 1,800 institutions in the United States and twenty-seven countries that have implemented supplemental instruction.

Outcomes and Objectives
The object of Supplemental Instruction is to assist students in becoming independent, proactive and self-learners.
Objectives include:

- Increase the number of students earning letter grades of “C” or better in targeted core level courses
- Reduce the DFW rate in core level classes
- Improve the graduation and retention rate at A&M-Commerce

Instructors and SI Leaders encourage regular attendance at SI sessions, which helps students improve their class standing by one or more full letter grade. SI assists students to:

- Understand their learning styles
- Gain problem-solving experience via trial and error
- Become proactive learners in their courses
- Understand how to manage study time, and improve study skills
- Understand what to learn and how to learn

**Basic Design of Supplemental Instruction - Key Personnel:**

**SI Coordinator**

- Assist in selecting and training Si Leader
- Provide support for SI Leader as they face challenges in classrooms
- Assist Instructors when appropriate

**Instructor**

- Support and build relationship with SI Leader
- Meet weekly with SI Leader to discuss new material or review what students do not understand
- Allow SI Leader to promote participation in SI sessions (may give bonus points or incentives to students who attend)

**SI Leader**

- Support and build relationship with Instructor
- Support and build relationships with students to encourage attendance at both lectures and SI sessions
- Set up and actively promote study sessions
- Provide students with proactive learning and study skill strategies.

**Specific Role and Duties of the SI Leader:**

SI Leaders follow the same lecture style as the Instructor with whom they work. SI Leader is to attend all lecture sessions, model effective classroom behavior, and transfer that knowledge to students in study sessions. The SI Leader is not the expert, but provides reinforcement from lectures to students. SI Leaders will combine specific study skills with course content, integrating what to learn and how to learn it.

Support of Supplemental Instruction in no way suggests reducing the requirements of the course to make it easier for students to pass. SI Leaders attempt to assist students in improving their success in all courses by modeling skills and strategies to facilitate student transition from pedagogical to anagogical learning. (From being spoon fed style to adult learning style)

Updated 6/15/2017
During classroom lectures, the SI Leader does not answer questions or serve in any official capacity such as proctoring or grading exams or assignments. SI Leader’s do not attend class on the day of tests. However, they are encouraged to lead a SI session review prior to test day with material supplied from lecture or instructor class notes. With instructor approval, the SI Leader can schedule an SI session after the test to review any material the students did not master. However, their primary responsibilities are to:

- Attend all lectures.
- Be visible in class, and have a positive attitude, don’t sit last seat in classroom, be up front where students can see you taking notes and working along with them.
- Act as a model student to others.
- Read assignments prior to class time.
- Organize 4 to 5 weekly hour long guaranteed study sessions.
- Promote themselves and the SI program in a positive manner.
- Communicate weekly with instructors to discuss SI session strategies, activities, and session plans.
- Communicate with the Coordinator about any changes or concerns.
- Send weekly emails to students reminding/inviting them to your SI sessions.

During the first weeks of class, the SI Leader will introduce themselves, let students know they are available, and give students the Supplemental Instruction Session Availability form. By the second week of class, the SI Leader will announce the time and location of SI sessions (will remain consistent to reduce student confusion). Student attendance in SI sessions is voluntary. The faculty member will receive an Excel spreadsheet at week 14 letting them know the students that have attended sessions.

**Time Management for SI Leaders:**

Being an SI Leader involves dedication from the student. In addition to their own coursework, they also manage their time to allow for study and training sessions. SI Leaders are to follow these time guidelines:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Hours per Week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SI Sessions</td>
<td>4 to 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor Consultation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training/Meetings/SI Session Preparation</td>
<td>1*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>9/10 hours per week</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*One hour to be spent for session planning time.

SI Leaders are required to meet with Instructors weekly to discuss student participation and critical course content and to complete the Faculty-SI Leader Meeting and SI Session Plan forms. These forms also need to be submitted with attendance logs.

Updated 6/15/2017
Management of SI Leaders:
The Academic Success Center is located in the Gee Library #103. The Academic Success Center Coordinator is responsible for training, monitoring, and supervising the SI Leaders. The Coordinator facilitates bi-weekly meetings where SI leaders receive training, on-the-job performance reviews, and communicate any questions or concerns. In addition, at the end of each semester, the Coordinator evaluates each SI Leader’s progress and performance through:

- SI student evaluations
- SI faculty survey
- SI leader self-assessments/evaluations
- Data collection and program assessment
- Coordinate with faculty/instructor/SI Leader
- Promote student participant in SI Sessions

Instructor concerns regarding specific SI Leaders (and any general questions) should be addressed to Jodi White, Academic Success Center Coordinator, or Dr. Ricky Dobbs, Associate Provost for Academic Foundations.

Instructor Expectations:
For SI Leaders to reach their highest potential effectiveness and for students to gain the most benefit from the Supplemental Instruction program, the ASC requests that Instructor:

- Announce support of SI sessions and Peer Educators (other tutoring availability) during lectures
- Allow SI Leader to make weekly class announcements and send class emails
- Post SI session availability on syllabi/flyers for class/whiteboard in class.
- Provide incentives, such as points toward grades or extra credit
- Provide encouragement and reduce stigma of attending “tutoring” by showing success of students who attend SI sessions

Location of Academic Success Center Group Study Sessions:
- SI Sessions – Scheduled individually through SI Leader and announced to classes (generally held in Gee library study rooms, booked for entire semester)
- JAMP (Science Building #110) – specific assistance for Biology, Organic Chemistry, Chemistry, Physics:
  Monday thru Thursday 11:00am – 8:00pm
  Friday Noon – 5:00pm
- Gee Library Open Sessions (Walk-In Peer Educators) – open for all core level courses:
  Sunday 2:00pm – 9:00pm thru Thursday
  Monday thru Thursday Noon – 9:00pm

Updated 6/15/2017
Time reports issued to faculty instructors:

ASC will keep track of student’s time in session. Hourly visits are calculated on a sliding scale:

- 60 minutes = 1 hour
- 45 minutes = .75
- 30 minutes = .50
- 15 minutes = .25

If the student fails to sign in or sign out no credit will be given for the visit and no hours recorded. If the SI Leaders fail to sign off on the student’s time, no time will be given. (SI Leader will asked prior to the not issuing of credit) The SI Leaders will be responsible for keeping track of the students signing in and signing out of sessions, and signing off at end of session.

Any time the instructor of record needs to have information provided, please contact the coordinator Jodi White 906.468.8620 or via email Jodi.White@tamuc.edu

Reporting any problems:

The coordinator is always available to schedule a meeting with instructor and SI Leader if problems arise. If you don’t communicate I can’t help. Instructors just need to contact Jodi White, and set up a meeting, she will assist in any way possible to make it a productive semester.

Want to enlist an SI Leader in your class:

We are always looking for ways to improve our student success rate, and help students graduate on time. Please contact us if you feel you would like to enlist an SI Leader into you courses.

Contact information for program:

Academic Success Center
903.468.8620
ASC@TAMUC.EDU

FB: www.facebook.com/TAMUCasc

Or coordinator:

Jodi White
903.468.8620
Jodi.White@TAMUC.EDU

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