

# Supplemental Instruction (SI)

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Center for  
Student  
Achievement

Salisbury  
UNIVERSITY



## Supplemental Instruction (UMKC, 2013)

An academic assistance program that utilizes **peer-assisted study sessions**. SI sessions are regularly-scheduled, informal review sessions in which students compare notes, discuss readings, develop organizational tools, and predict test items.

### Purpose:

- To increase retention within targeted historically difficult courses
- To improve student grades in targeted historically difficult courses
- To increase the graduation rates of students
- To improve student connections with faculty and other students

**Students learn how to integrate course content and study skills while working together.**

- Collaborative Learning approach
- Complement & enhance students' classroom learning
- Non-remedial, inclusive learning environment for all students
- Confidential peer support for course

## Top Outcomes & Benefits of SI Programs:

- Students earn higher course grades while they learn effective study skills.
- SI provides an opportunity for students to develop relationships with other students and staff, an important factor in retention.
- SI places the responsibility of learning with the students.
- SI helps to develop self confidence and independence in students.
- SI is proactive and participatory rather than reactive and passive.
- SI improves communication skills.
- SI accommodates various learning styles.
- SI provides students with team work experiences.
- SI promotes a non-remedial “stigma” while offering academic support to all students enrolled in historically difficult subjects.

## **How it Works:**

- SI Sessions begin the second week of classes and run through the last day of classes.
- SI Leaders work 8 hours/week: 3 in class; 3 sessions, 2 CSA office

## **SI Leader Responsibilities:**

### *Inside the Class:*

- 1<sup>st</sup> Day of Class: SI Leader Introduction/Session Surveys
- Attend each class, model positive student behavior, & promote SI sessions

### *Outside the Class:*

- Create materials and session plans during CSA Planning Hours
- Meet with course instructor for feedback and support
- Meet with SI program staff for supervision
- Track student attendance & promote session attendance

### *During Sessions:*

- Facilitate activities promoting critical thinking, discussion, problem solving, and study skills
- Field questions and prompt group thinking

## History:

- Piloted in 2009
- Supports 80-85 sections per semester
- Employs 60-70 SI Leaders per semester

## Key Players:

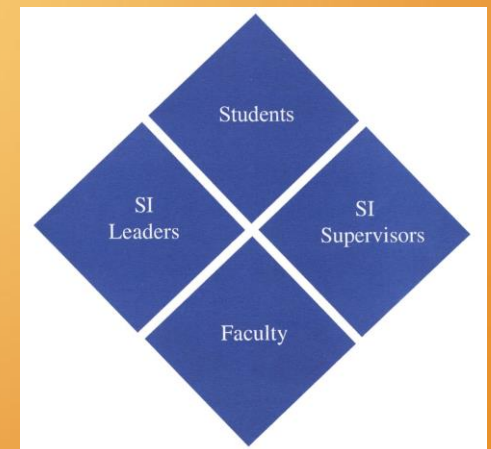
- CSA Staff: Assistant Director, Coordinator, Graduate Assistants
- Undergraduate SI Leaders
- Course Instructors
- Department/School Support

## Program Coordination

- CSA staff oversees all functions of the SI program
- Trainings follow CRLA International Mentor Training Program Guidelines
- All costs covered by the Division of Student Affairs

## Program Evaluation:

- Student usage & feedback
- Faculty feedback
- Students' mean final course grades & DFW rates
- Tracking student retention & persistence
- Track course DFW rates



## Key Factors for Course Selection:

- “Historically difficult”— 25% or higher DFW rate, over academic years
- Course design — material lends itself to group discussion/practice
- Large course enrollment

## Process:

- CSA staff contacts Department Chairs for course requests
- Requests are approved after review of key factors and available funding
- Section numbers are changed to -5XX in GullNet
- SI leaders are assigned
  - If needed, new SI leaders are recruited, interviewed, and hired

## **Student Qualifications:**

- Undergraduate student
- Earned a grade of an A or B in SI course at Salisbury University
- Maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher
- Obtain a faculty recommendation from the SI course's department (instructor)
- Obtain an additional faculty/staff recommendation
- Availability to attend SI class meeting time

## **Process:**

- Nominate a student!
- Candidates submit applications, interview, and are hired by CSA staff
- No candidate is considered without a faculty recommendation

## Training:

- CRLA International Mentor Training Program Certification Guidelines Level I ([http://crla.net/imtpc/certification\\_requirements.htm](http://crla.net/imtpc/certification_requirements.htm))
  - 15 hours of training/academic year
    - Two-day initial training; 3 hours of continuous training/semester
  - Topics Include:
    - Role of peer mentor, professionalism, & ethics
    - Establishing rapport & motivating students
    - Facilitation & communication skills
    - Learning theories
    - Study techniques
    - Leadership styles

## Evaluation:

- Session observations & feedback
- Mid-semester conversations
- End-of-semester student survey



## The Faculty Role with SI Partnerships:

- Help the CSA staff select good candidates for SI leaders
- Allow periodic announcements in class regarding SI sessions
- Maintain your SI leader's peer leader status by not asking them to take on any authoritative responsibilities within the class (i.e. teaching/proctoring/grading)
- Support your SI leader in developing content resources for sessions
- Encourage SI session attendance to all enrolled students
- Avoid requiring or incentivizing students' usage of SI sessions
- Provide feedback and ideas to CSA staff
- Respect the non-disclosure of participant names
- Share your experience with colleagues

College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA)

<http://www.crla.net/>

CRLA Training Certification Programs

<http://www.crla.net/>

International Center for Supplemental Instruction, University of Missouri-Kansas City

<http://www.umkc.edu/asm/si/index.shtml>

Supplemental Instruction Annotated Bibliography of Articles, Book Chapters, Dissertations and Monographs (Rev. 2009) <http://www.umkc.edu/asm/si/si-docs/sibib.htm>

Stone, M.E., & Jacobs, G. (Eds.). (2008). Supplemental Instruction: Improving first-year student success in high-risk courses (Monograph No. 7, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.



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