Supplemental Instruction & Faculty Partnerships

Michael Frizell,
Director, Student Learning Services
Supplemental Instruction is...

- Regularly scheduled & voluntary!
- Assigned to Historically Difficult Courses
- Student Facilitated Review Sessions
Repeating Failed Processes

Tell them.

Tell them again.

Tell them again more slowly.

Give them something shiny with which to play.
Breaking the Dependency Cycle

Tell them.

Tell each other.

Get them to tell you!
Supplemental Instruction: What are its advantages and how is it done?
Introduction

Created in 1973, SI is now used in over 2500 colleges around the world.
Part I
Advantages of Supplemental Instruction
Students look to other students for help instead of relying on the tutor all the time. This helps break their dependency on tutoring.
It’s cost efficient. We are able to tutor more students with the same number of tutors.
It allows inexperienced tutors to focus on one subject, so they don’t have to juggle multiple classes at the same time.
Tutors don’t have to repeat the same thing for each student. All students from one course will be there at the same time, so they can all hear it together.

"I had a great day! — I killed two birds with one stone!"
Students benefit from a diversity of ideas and points of view.
Students learn to work as a team with people of different backgrounds and personalities.
Students can springboard ideas off each other benefitting from valuable feedback.
Students can help each other overcome their weak areas.
The best way to learn something is to teach it to someone else.
Students explaining to other students helps them to overcome their doubts and validate their understanding of the material.
Part II
Guidelines for conducting a Supplemental Instruction Session
The SI Leader is to act as a facilitator not an instructor or Teaching Assistant.
Wait for students to answer the question. It’s important to be patient and let students formulate as many answers as they can on their own.
Provide direction, not dictatorship!

Keep the discussion focused on the class material and moving at a pace appropriate to the skill level of the students in the group.
Help make the session as productive as possible by avoiding spending time on irrelevant topics, avoiding arguing between students, and avoiding repetition of concepts already covered.

MIDDLE MANAGER SEZ:

STAY ON TASK
SI Leaders are told to:

Encourage interaction by having students answer each other's questions.

Guide the conversation, but remember to limit how much you talk.

Ask open-ended questions.

Ask the students to vote on an answer, instead of giving a blanket "yes" or "no" response.
Ask probing questions. For example if a student got a wrong answer for a question, ask them why they thought their answer was correct and how they got that answer.

Rephrase questions that do not yield comments.
Don’t always clarify with an explanation; use silence. Encourage students to answer questions, right or wrong.

If you are unsure of whether one student’s explanation is understood by others in the group, ask one or two of them to explain in their own words.
Don’t allow individuals to dominate participation. Try to involve everyone in the learning activity; try to draw non-participants into the activity.

Be respectful.
Provide closure when the session comes to an end. Ask the students what they learned, what they need further clarification on, or what they would like to cover in the next session.

Summarize the ideas presented in sessions.

Summary of Supplemental Instruction Training

• Advantages of SI
  Discuss some of the advantages mentioned and clarify if necessary

II. Guidelines for SI Leaders
  Discuss some of the guidelines mentioned for conducting a productive SI session and clarify if necessary
SI Participants

...receive lower rates of D, F, and W grades.

...persistence (reenroll and graduate) at higher rates.

...earn higher mean final course grades.
Academic Disciplines Using Supplemental Instruction

- Natural Sciences: 53.24%
- Humanities: 19.94%
- Social Sciences: 8.38%
- Math: 8.08%
- Business: 5.88%
- Computer Science: 2.39%
- Health: 1.50%
- Other: 0.60%

National Data, Fall 2003 – Fall 2006, 37 Institutions, 1003 Courses, n = 119,009 Students
Is SI Misnamed?

• Instead of being called “Supplemental Instruction,” Perhaps SI should be renamed:
  • Supplement to Instruction
  • SI Leaders are not qualified to teach, only lead study groups!
Study Skills & Other Presentations

- For Departments, Classes, and Organizations, I offer workshops in:
  - Note-Taking
  - Test Taking & Anxiety
  - Standardized Testing
  - Essays and Writing
  - Motivation
  - Personal Essays
  - APA, MLA, Chicago, etc.
  - Custom Topic for the Course!
References:

The websites for these institutions:

American River College, CA
Austin Library System
Gallaudet School for the Deaf, Washington, DC
Georgia Military College
Owensboro Community College, KY
Three Rivers Community College, CT