TWU SI Faculty Partner Guidebook

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About Supplemental Instruction

Overview and History

Supplemental Instruction (SI) began in 1973 when Dr. Deanna Martin at the University of Missouri–Kansas City developed a non-remedial learning model to address high attrition rates in introductory science courses. What started as a pilot program in a dental school anatomy course has evolved into a comprehensive academic support model, now implemented in over 1,800 institutions across 30 countries.

At its core, SI is a free, voluntary academic support program that uses peer-led group study sessions to help students succeed in historically difficult courses. The program uniquely focuses on both course content mastery ("what to learn") and effective learning strategies ("how to learn"), serving three fundamental purposes:

- 1. Reduce rates of attrition within targeted historically difficult courses
- 2. Improve student grades in targeted historically difficult courses
- 3. Increase the graduation rates of students

The goal of SI is to help students become independent learners. Objectives include:

- Increase the number of students earning C or better in targeted historically difficult courses.
- Reduce the number of D/F grades and withdrawals in targeted historically difficult courses.
- Improve re-enrollment and persistence of participating students.
- Ultimately, improve student graduation rates.

By encouraging regular attendance, SI aims to help students improve their class standing by one-half to one full letter grade. To accomplish this, SI helps students:

- Understand and plan for the demand of college-level courses.
- Gain problem-solving experience through trial and error.
- Develop analytical and critical thinking skills.
- Become more actively involved in the course.
- Develop more effective study skills.
- Understand what to learn and how to learn.
- Articulate their learning style(s).
- Develop transferable study skills.

For more information on SI history and research, please visit the <u>International Center for Supplemental</u> Instruction.

Why SI Works!

In traditional learning processes, students have learned to become overly reliant on instructors for information, direction, and guidance, rather than developing independent learning skills. SI, when done well, helps break this cycle by employing the following strategies:



- 1. SI begins in the first week of class, with regular sessions starting in the second week. By offering "guaranteed study time," students can prevent academic difficulties and enhance performance early on. This ongoing support allows for immediate feedback, helping students identify misconceptions and adjust their study strategies effectively.
- 2. Models effective learning and study skills that students can continue to use when studying independently. Students often find that the study strategies learned in SI are transferable to other classes and learning contexts.
- 3. Offers a non-threatening, low-risk environment where students can ask questions that they might not ask during lecture and gain problem-solving experience through trial and error. As students develop confidence in SI sessions, they often become more actively involved in the classroom and more willing to seek clarification from instructors outside of class.
- 4. Encourages content-based discussions among students. SI provides a structured setting in which students can share what they know, ask questions, and solve problems together. Students who attend SI learn the importance of establishing study groups and are more inclined to seek out group study opportunities for other classes.

SI at TWU

TWU's Supplemental Instruction journey began in 2012 when the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science developed a hybrid version of SI called <u>Supplemental Instruction/Tutoring (SIT)</u>. The SIT program, recognized by Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) as a Program of Excellence, has provided support to students in College Algebra, Introduction to Statistics, Introduction to Chemistry, and Microbiology. Today, SIT primarily supports multiple sections of the Introduction to Statistics course.

Now, TWU is expanding its academic support services. In Spring 2025, the Pioneer Center for Student Excellence will pilot a new SI program, after the UMKC model. In this initial phase, we will provide support for Anatomy and Physiology I, Anatomy and Physiology II, and Microbiology.

SI Program Staff

Director of Academic Success Initiatives

PCSE staff that leads the development, implementation, and promotion of a comprehensive SI Program at TWU. They collaborate with administrators and SI Faculty Partners across campus to address the needs of the university community. You may contact Dr. Elia Tamplin, Director of Academic Success Initiatives, at etamplin@twu.edu or (940) 898-3950.

Assistant Director of Supplemental Instruction

PCSE staff that has a deep understanding of the UMKC SI model and plays a key role in supporting the SI Program. They work closely with the Director to ensure program quality and are responsible for course identification, securing faculty and student support, managing supplies and inventory, hiring and training SI Leaders, and assessing the effectiveness of both SI Leaders and the program.



SI Faculty Partner

Faculty that serve as Instructors of Record for courses designated for SI support. They play a key role in the SI Program by recommending future SI leaders, providing feedback for improvement, and collaborating closely with their assigned SI leaders and staff to ensure the program's success.

SI Leaders

Students who have successfully completed an SI-supported course with a grade of B or higher, demonstrating their competency. SI Leaders are paid to attend all class sessions, trained to plan and facilitate three weekly study sessions, and maintain regular communication with their assigned faculty partners and the Assistant Director of Supplemental Instruction.

The Course Selection Process

To ensure that we meet our goals, it is necessary to evaluate where SI can have the greatest impact on student success and how we can provide the highest quality program possible. As such, course criteria for the SI program are as follows:

Criteria for a course to qualify for SI:	Criteria for a course to remain in SI:		
 Support from Course Instructor(s) >20% of D, F, W course grade rate Course enrollment of >100 students Willingness to share exam grades Availability of funds Availability of SI leaders 	 Continued support from course instructor Continued support of Department Chair Number of SI leader contact hours met Adherence to expectations for 		
Additional criteria for consideration:	faculty		
 Support of Department Chair Priority to introductory level course Priority to gateway/prerequisite courses Presence of disproportionate impact for course success High student repeat rate (>2 times) 	 Ability to share exam grades Availability of funds Availability of SI leaders 		

Criteria may be re-evaluated or modified at the discretion of the Pioneer Center for Student Excellence. Furthermore, some courses that do not meet all the above criteria may still be eligible for consideration. Please direct questions to Dr. Elia Tamplin at etamplin@twu.edu.



The SI Faculty Partner - SI Leader Relationship

For SI to achieve its highest potential effectiveness for the students, collaboration between the SI Leader and Instructor is imperative. SI Faculty Partners will serve as content experts and mentors, while SI Leaders will bridge the gap between formal instruction and student understanding.

SI Faculty Partner Responsibilities

The faculty part of our collaboration is critical to the SI Program's success; however, we understand the busy schedules of our faculty partners. With that, we do not expect instructors to be involved any more than the following (unless they are willing to do so).

Communication

Regular communication between SI Faculty Partners and SI Leaders is essential. We recommend weekly or bi-weekly meetings, lasting 10-15 minutes, outside of regular class time. During these meetings, SI Leaders should:

- Discuss specific content-related questions from students
- Highlight areas where students are struggling
- Report on class participation levels
- Offer advance review of study aids, such as mock exams

On weeks without meetings, SI Leaders may update SI Faculty Partners via email about SI session activities. This ongoing communication ensures effective resource-sharing and alignment between classroom instruction and SI support.

Additionally, faculty should be available for up to two meetings per year with the Assistant Director of Supplemental Instruction (remote, group, or one-on-one).

Resources

SI Faculty Partners should share resources with SI Leaders such as: syllabus, handouts, practice tests, course textbooks, online course materials, etc. If Instructor uses online learning platforms such as Google Docs or Moodle, SI Leaders should be given access as well.

Recruitment of SI Leaders

We welcome the chance to collaborate with you on hiring SI leaders. This may include reviewing applications, recommending specific students for the role, interviewing applicants, and offering feedback on final selections. We will contact you at the start of the hiring process to discuss your desired involvement.

We will consider your recommendations and any feedback you have about other prospective candidates. However, we reserve the right to make final selections. We are committed to inclusive hiring practices and will make hiring decisions based on a variety of criteria, including merit, past work experience, ability to meet the roles and responsibilities of the position, and programmatic need.

Promotion of SI



Collaboration with faculty is crucial for the success of the SI Program, and we aim to keep faculty involvement manageable. We ask that faculty complete the following tasks at a minimum.

Week 1

- Meet with your SI Leader to discuss the upcoming semester
- Sign the SI Faculty Partner SI Leader Agreement Form
- Share your syllabus and any other help course materials with your SI Leader(s)
- Allow the SI Leader to:
 - Make a brief (3-5 minutes) introductory speech to encourage attendance
 - o Announce the tentative session schedule
 - Write session details on the whiteboard (for F2F classes)
 - o Distribute SI promotional material.
- Add the SI Leader to your Canvas as a Non-Grading TA for announcements
- Add the Assistant Director of Supplemental Instruction to your Canvas as a TA to allow them to pull exam grades

Weeks 2 to 16 (excluding holidays and breaks)

- Continue allowing the SI Leader to:
 - o Make brief announcements (3-5 minutes) to encourage attendance in sessions
 - Write session details on the whiteboard (for F2F classes)
 - Announce session details via email and Canvas
 - Share relevant information about class content that will be covered in sessions
 - Distribute SI promotional material.
- Provide class materials to SI Leaders at least one week in advance
- Promote SI for ALL students, emphasizing its advantages for everyone
- Make regular announcements during lectures
- Putting SI information in your syllabus and slides.
- Meet with your SI Leader weekly (or bi-weekly) to discuss upcoming course content and assessments, feedback on session materials, and session progress
- Share exam, midterm, and final grades for assessing SI effectiveness.

Reporting

Please note that <u>FERPA</u> allows institutions to collect and share this information. Faculty who share grades with our office will be actively supporting program evaluations, allowing us to analyze program effectiveness, support efforts to improve student experiences, identify training needs for our Supplemental Instruction leaders, and adhere to the best practices and standards set by the International Center for Supplemental Instruction.

The Assistant Director of Supplemental Instruction will prepare exam reports following each test to provide valuable feedback to students, course instructors, and SI Leaders. Because data from the ICSE and institutions across the globe show positive correlation between SI session attendance and improved test scores, we believe these reports will serve the crucial purpose of reinforcing the value of supplemental instruction and encouraging students to attend SI sessions.



To streamline the data collection process and minimize additional workload for instructors, we ask that you grant Canvas TA access to the Assistant Director of Supplemental Instruction each semester. After each exam, the Assistant Director of Supplemental Instruction will extract the grades and prepare an exam report to share with the course instructors and SI Leaders. Summary reports provided to SI Leaders will be aggregated, ensuring that individual student grades remain confidential. SILs are encouraged to share these exam reports with their classes as a motivational tool

Disclaimers

Extra credit is not allowed. SI is meant as a learning support for students to gain valuable learning strategies as well as review course material. Offering grade incentives for SI participation defeats the purpose of SI. Instead, faculty may consider offering extra credit for attending their office hours, tutoring at <u>SLRC</u>, or <u>academic coaching</u>.

Anonymity is required. Faculty cannot attend SI sessions or know which students attend SI sessions for their course. Attendance in SI sessions is anonymous to the instructor. This allows the sessions to be a safe learning environment for students without worrying about evaluation or if their grade in the course will be influenced.

SI Leader Responsibilities

SI Leaders serve as peer facilitators for SI session group study. This role requires SI Leaders to attend all lectures for the course to ensure constant and consistent knowledge of the lecture and classroom expectations. The SI Leader's role in the classroom is to model effective classroom behavior and then transfer that knowledge to the SI session. To form the basis of their sessions, SI Leaders combine specific study skills with key course content, integrating what to learn with how to learn.

The SI Leader is **NOT** in the classroom to serve in any official capacity. This includes re-teaching or relecturing course content, grading assignments, or discussing student grades. SI Leaders also do not attend lab sessions or cover lab assignments in SI sessions. However, SI Leaders do have these responsibilities:

- Attend all lectures, including exam days (unless requested by the instructor to not attend).
- Be a visible presence to the students in the class.
- Act as a model student during lectures listen and take notes.
- Read assigned texts and supplementary materials.
- Plan and facilitate three (3) 50-minute SI sessions per week.
- Promote their SI sessions through classroom announcements or other ways.
- Communicate with students to encourage participation.
- Meet with faculty to discuss SI session strategies and activities.
- Communicate with the Assistant Director of Supplemental Instruction and assigned SI Faculty Partner(s).
- Attend mandatory training and staff meetings.

Please note that SI Leaders can attend class on a rotating basis if supporting multiple sections.



The SI Leader position is fairly autonomous, and we appreciate faculty providing feedback regarding their leader's performance. Early detection of poor SI Leader performance allows us to address the behavior quickly. Reach out to Dr. Elia Tamplin (etamplin@twu.edu) if you have any questions or would like to learn more about SI.

Beginning of the Semester

During the first week of classes, the SI Leader makes an introductory SI announcement about what the program is and how it works. The SI Leader also announces their tentative SI session schedule for the term and/or may ask students for their preference of days/times to hold sessions. Once a schedule and location are set, the SI Leader will announce it to students. SI sessions will begin **Week 2** of the semester.

SI Sessions and Student Attendance

SI sessions are the perfect platform for SI Leaders to integrate what to learn with how to learn. As they review course material, students in SI develop study skills strategies specific to the course and also learn to focus their study efforts. Students attend SI on a voluntary basis and no effort is made to segregate them based on academic ability. Because of that, SI enjoys a nonremedial, non-threatening, and non-punitive image.

SI Leader Management

SI Staff play a vital role in ensuring the quality and effectiveness of the SI program. They provide comprehensive training for new SI Leaders, along with ongoing professional development and workshops on effective facilitation techniques. Monitoring includes overseeing attendance at classes and SI sessions, conducting regular observations, and reviewing session plans weekly.

To evaluate performance throughout the semester, SI Staff implement a multi-faceted process that includes session observations, mid-semester reviews, and bi-weekly staff meetings. SI Leaders will also meet and maintain open lines of communication with their Assistant Director of Supplemental Instruction for check-ins, session debriefs, and issue resolution.

At the end of each semester, the Assistant Director of Supplemental Instruction evaluates each SI Leader's progress and performance through:

- SI Session Surveys
- SI Faculty Partner Check-ins
- SI Leader Staff & Peer Observations
- SI Leader Performance Reviews

Faculty are encouraged to communicate any issues regarding their assigned SI Leader to the Assistant Director of Supplemental Instruction immediately, ensuring timely intervention and upholding the program's integrity.



SI Leaders vs Other Peer Educators

	Supplemental Instruction	Tutoring	Teaching Assistant
Definition	A non-remedial, peer-led,	A peer-led or professional	Students can access
	group-focused academic	academic support service	tutoring through walk-in
	support service designed to	providing individualized or	services or scheduled
	enhance student	small group assistance with	appointments. Tutors help
	performance in high-risk	subject-specific learning	clarify specific concepts,
	courses by facilitating	and review.	answer questions, and
	deeper understanding of		assist with problem-solving
	content and developing		in brief, focused sessions.
	transferable study skills.		
Leader	SI Leaders are students	Tutors can be students or	TAs are assigned to specific
	who have excelled in the	professional staff with	courses or chosen by
	course (B or better) and	demonstrated subject	instructors. They possess
	attend classes alongside	expertise. They may receive	in-depth knowledge of
	current students. They	additional departmental	course content and may
	receive specialized training	training but are not	lead lectures or discussions
	in facilitation techniques	typically associated with	to supplement the
	and learning strategies	specific faculty members.	instructor's teaching.
	from the Pioneer Center for		
	Student Excellence,		
	adhering to standards set		
	by the International Center		
	for Supplemental		
	Instruction.		
How it	SI Leaders conduct three	Students can access	TAs work closely with
works?	50-minute group study	tutoring through walk-in	instructors to determine
	sessions weekly outside of	services or scheduled	their responsibilities, which
	class. They plan interactive	appointments. Tutors help	may include leading in-class
	activities to review course	clarify specific concepts,	lectures, facilitating
	material, teach study skills,	answer questions, and	discussions, grading
	and promote collaborative	assist with problem-solving	assignments, and holding
	learning. SI Leaders do not	in brief, focused sessions.	regular office hours to
	re-lecture, grade work, or		address student questions.
	introduce new material.		



Frequently Asked Questions: Faculty

What is SI?

Supplemental Instruction (SI) is a non-remedial approach to learning that combines "what to learn" with "how to learn." It features weekly structured study sessions outside of regular class time, led by students who have previously excelled in the course.

Key aspects of SI include:

- **Focus on Challenging Courses:** SI targets courses with high D, F, and W rates, promoting participation from the entire class to eliminate any stigma associated with seeking help.
- **Early Intervention:** Sessions begin in the second week of classes, aiming to prevent academic difficulties rather than just addressing them.
- Active Learning: SI fosters collaborative learning that benefits students at all academic levels.
- **Embedded Learning Strategies:** Effective study techniques are integrated into course material, making them immediately applicable.

By participating in SI, students can deepen their understanding of the content and enhance their academic performance.

Is SI a remedial program?

No. SI is not remedial for the following reasons:

- SI targets high-risk courses rather than high-risk students.
- All students enrolled in SI-supported courses are invited and encouraged to attend not just those who are struggling.
- SI starts with the first day of classes and continues to the end of the term.
- Studies show that students of all academic and learning abilities and levels benefit from participating in SI sessions and earn on average a half to full grade higher than those who do not participate

How long has SI been in existence?

SI was created in 1973 by Dr. Deanna Martin at UMKC. SI will be piloted at TWU during the Spring 2025 semester and will follow the model set by the International Center for Supplemental Instruction.

Who benefits from the SI program?

Supplemental Instruction (SI) provides benefits for everyone involved:

- **Students:** Regular attendance leads to higher grades and the development of effective study skills.
- **SI Leaders:** Enhance their leadership abilities, build stronger relationships with faculty, and deepen their understanding of course content.



- **Faculty:** Gain insights into student needs, enjoy higher evaluations, and can mentor topperforming students.
- **University:** SI reduces D, F, and Withdrawal grades by an average of 13%, which helps improve retention rates, and serves as a cost-effective alternative to traditional tutoring.

How is the effectiveness of SI tracked?

We evaluate the impact of Supplemental Instruction through a data-driven approach. SI Leaders track attendance at each session, submitting weekly records to the Assistant Director of Supplemental Instruction. At the end of the semester, the Assistant Director will compile a report comparing the grades of SI attendees with those of non-attendees. This report is shared with you, providing valuable insights into the program's effectiveness and helping us refine our approach to support student success.

What courses are supported by SI?

To see what courses are available for SI, view our SI Session Schedule page.

How much does it cost to attend a session?

SI sessions are completely free for all enrolled students in SI-supported courses. The program is a part of TWU's academic support services, covered by their tuition and fees.

Why was my class selected?

SI targets historically difficult courses. In other words, this course contains content that students consider to be challenging. SI is designed to support faculty teaching and is assigned to a course because of what is being taught, not because of the manner in which it is being taught or by whom it is being taught.

Do I need to change how I teach?

No, SI is designed to complement your teaching methods without dictating how you should conduct your classes. It aims to enhance student learning regardless of your instructional style.

What is discussed at SI Sessions?

SI sessions are thoughtfully designed to reinforce the most challenging aspects of your course, drawing directly from the regular collaboration between SI Leaders (SILs) and faculty. During their weekly meetings with instructors, SILs review recent lecture content, identify concepts that students find particularly difficult, and discuss upcoming course material. They will also gather your feedback on their session plans and handouts, ensuring that the activities they create are relevant and helpful.

Do students work on Homework during SI sessions?

No, SI is not for homework or a study hall. The goal is to foster independent learning. By working through analogous problems and focusing on understanding concepts, students become equipped to complete homework independently. SI Leaders create problems that challenge students to verbalize and demonstrate their understanding, providing tools for homework and exams.



What is expected of students at a session?

See our SI Participation Guidelines to learn what's expected of students at a typical SI session.

When do SI sessions start?

SI sessions begin no later than the second week of classes. SI Leaders will hold **three (3)** sessions per week depending on their availability.

We do not offer SI sessions during finals week or during spring/fall breaks.

May I visit an SI session?

No, SI sessions are instructor-free zones to maintain a collaborative learning environment. The presence of authority figures like professors or administrators can shift the focus away from the SI Leader and alter the session's dynamic. Faculty interested in session content should contact the Assistant Director of Supplemental Instruction.

Can I know who attends SI sessions?

No, attendance at SI sessions is kept anonymous to foster open discussion and collaborative learning among students. This confidentiality helps create a comfortable environment for all participants.

How are SI Leaders selected?

The selection process for SI Leaders is a collaborative effort between faculty and the SI program. Throughout the year, faculty can recommend outstanding current or former students for the role. Around mid-semester, applications open, and students who've excelled in the course are encouraged to apply. The Director of Academic Success Initiatives and the Assistant Director of Supplemental Instruction carefully review all applications and faculty recommendations, with particular weight given to faculty input. Based on this comprehensive evaluation, promising candidates are invited for interviews, after which final selections are made to ensure the best fit for this crucial peer leadership role.

What can I expect from my SI Leader?

SI Leaders (SILs) are generally upper-class undergraduate students who have successfully completed the course with a B grade or better. They play a vital role in supporting their peers both in and out of the classroom.

In the classroom, SILs serve as role models by consistently being a visible presence. They attend all lectures, listen actively, take notes, and read all assigned texts and supplementary materials. This engagement helps them stay current with course content and expectations, making them relatable figures for fellow students.

Outside of class, SILs plan and facilitate three (3) hours of weekly group study sessions, leveraging their training to guide collaborative learning. Additionally, SILs create and distribute promotional materials for SI, maintain regular communication with faculty and the SI Program Manager, and refer students to



campus resources as needed. Their efforts contribute significantly to fostering an inclusive learning environment that benefits all students.

Please note that SI Leaders do NOT:

- Re-teach or co-teach
- Administer tests
- Assist with grading homework, assignments, or exams
- Discuss grades with faculty or students
- Do anything that is typical of a teaching assistant or graduate assistant

Note: The SI Leader position is fairly autonomous, and we appreciate faculty providing feedback regarding their leader's performance. Early detection of poor SI Leader performance allows us to address the behavior quickly.

What if I have concerns with an SI Leader?

If you have any concerns regarding an SI Leader, please reach out to the Assistant Director of Supplemental Instruction. Your feedback is important, and we are committed to addressing and resolving any issues promptly.

What can I expect from the SI Program?

The SI Program, coordinated by the Center for Academic Success and Engagement, will:

- Collaborate with faculty to implement SI in targeted courses and recruit SI Leaders
- Hire and train all SI Leaders according to established guidelines and standards
- Monitor the activities and presentations of SI Leaders for as long as necessary by occasionally attending class with them, helping plan sessions, and supervising their performance
- Manage administrative tasks, such as purchasing textbooks and supplies, tracking timesheets and session attendance, and collecting feedback throughout the semester
- Provide training, in-service experiences, and consultations when necessary for SI Leaders
- Provide faculty with an end-of-term comparative analysis of student performance

How can I support the SI Program and SI Leaders?

Faculty involvement in the SI program is flexible and designed to minimize extra workload. At a minimum, we ask that faculty:

- Add their SI Leader(s) to their Canvas site as "TA-No Grades". This allows them to email the class, post announcements, and share resources with students.
- Add the Assistant Director of Supplemental Instruction to their Canvas site as "TA. This allows them to access exam grades for assessment purposes.
- Include information about SI and SI sessions in your course syllabus.
- Encourage student participation in SI sessions
- Allow SI Leaders to make brief in-class announcements



- Meet weekly (or bi-weekly) with your SI Leader for 10-15 minutes to discuss challenges with content and provide feedback on session plans
- Share exam and final grades for evaluation (with student privacy protected)
- Share SI data (provided by the Assistant Director of Supplemental Instruction) with students about the positive impact of SI on student grades.
- Participate in evaluating SI services

Am I allowed to provide students' grades to the SI program?

Yes. For purposes of evaluation, we have permission to obtain those grades under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy (FERPA), 34 CFR Part 99: Printed in the Federal Register, April 11, 1988, pages 11942-11958. Section 99.31 states that "An educational agency or institution may disclose personally identifiable information from an education record of a student without the consent required by Section 99:30 if the disclosure meets one or more of [several] conditions . . . including to improve instruction."

Students' rights to privacy regarding this information will be fully protected.

What information should I include on my syllabus?

Providing information about SI in your syllabus is a great way to boost participation in SI sessions. Check out our sample syllabus statement and slides to add to your presentations.

Where else can I direct students for academic support?

If students cannot attend our SI sessions, we encourage them to:

Visit our campus partners! Check out other campus resources that can support your academic needs:

- 1. Academic Coaching
- 2. Academic Advising
- 3. The Write Site
- 4. Science Learning Resource Center (SLRC)
- 5. Psychology Resource Center (PRC)
- 6. Mathematics & Technology Success Center (MTSC)
- 7. Disability Student Services
- 8. Campus Alliance for Resource Education Center

Talk with their instructor! Share with your instructor that you feel SI would be beneficial to your learning experience in their course. Encourage your faculty member to contact the Assistant Director of Supplemental Instruction to discuss support options.

