

1. Student Support Services

The Student Support Services (SSS) program provides opportunities for academic development, assists students with basic college requirements, and serves to motivate students towards the successful completion of their postsecondary education. The SSS program also provides grant aid to current SSS participants who are receiving Federal Pell Grants. The goal of SSS is to increase the college retention and graduation rates of its participants and facilitate the process of transition from one level of higher education onto the next.

Services Provided by the Program Include:

- Instruction in basic study skills
- Tutorial services
- Academic and financial counseling
- Assistance in securing admission and financial aid for enrollment in four-year institutions
- Information about career options
- Mentoring
- Special services for students with limited English proficiency (ESL)
- Direct financial assistance (grant aid) to current SSS participants who are receiving Federal Pell Grants.

Participant Eligibility for Program Services

To receive assistance, students must be enrolled or accepted for enrollment in a program of postsecondary education at a grantee institution. Low-income students who are first-generation college students and students with disabilities evidencing academic need are eligible to participate in SSS projects. Two-thirds of the participants in any SSS project must be either disabled or potential first-generation college students from low-income families. One-third of the disabled participants must also be low-income students.

2. Supplemental Instruction

History

Supplemental Instruction (SI) was first introduced at the University of Missouri – Kansas City in 1973 to address rising drop out rates. By 1981, the SI model was acclaimed as an exemplary program by the US Department of Education. The department certifies that SI participants earn higher course grades and graduate in greater numbers despite differences in entry-level scores, prior performance, race, or ethnicity. Currently, more than 550 institutions of higher education, both national and international... including Stanford, Tulane, the University of California, Rutgers, Morehouse, Mercer University...offer SI to their students.

What is SI?

Supplemental Instruction is an academic assistance program that increases student performance and retention. The SI program targets traditionally difficult academic courses, identified by the Student Support Services grant. The targeted courses are English 111 and 112, Math 101,111, and 112, Political Science 111, Philosophy 121, and Biology 100 and 121; however additional courses are sometimes added when the academic needs of the students change.

The SI program consists of an SI instructor Supervisor (Writing Lab Coordinator), SI Leaders (students) and the instructors of the classes. The SI Leaders are the most important group in this process. These persons are assigned to a class based on a letter of recommendation from the instructor of the class. All SI Leaders will complete an application prior to an appointment to the SI Leader position. SI Leaders will be presented as model students and will attend all classes. SI Leaders will provide supplemental instruction three times per week for 50 minutes each.

Even if the instructor's teaching is good, students do not usually get 100%; therefore there is always room for improvement for students of all levels of ability. Supplemental Instruction facilitates consolidation, practice, clarification, revision and is always looking back over previous material. This facilitation of learning is very much a student-based effort aimed at keeping higher education firmly in the grip of a broad educational ethos. It might be better to think of Supplemental Instruction as Supplemental Learning. We can thereby see the huge importance of choosing the most "content competent" students to model the learning behaviors most effective for success in college as well as in life. The SI Leader is and serves as a model student and a facilitator who helps students to integrate course content and learning study strategies.

SI Sessions

The SI group sessions takes place at a regular time and in the same place each week with the student leader taking full responsibility for the publicity of the sessions. If the location of the session is better suited in a different facility for a specific lesson, then the SI Leader is responsible for contacting the students, the Writing Lab Coordinator and the Director of Student Support Services. Each SI Leader is held accountable for getting their publicity flyers approved by the Writing Lab Coordinator. Only then can the SI Leaders proceed with their supplemental tutoring sessions.

The SI Leader should prompt the group members to explore how they learn as much as what they learn. The material is often based from class notes, course handouts, assessments and other text required for the course section. The SI sessions are not always about processing the last lecture attended, which tends to be the American approach, but rather deal with any problems the students might be having at the moment with a particular subject area.