

Supplemental Instruction (SI) Sessions

Why Should You Go to Supplemental Instruction (SI)?

Numbers don't lie. During the 2006-2007 academic year, over 1,500 students participated in Supplemental Instruction (SI) to enhance their academic experience. Over 90% of them reported that SI contributed to their success in the course and over 78% reported receiving a grade of A or B in the course.

What is SI?

SI is a group of friends who study together. SI has been around for about 25 years and is available for select freshman and sophomore courses that have been identified as traditionally challenging courses. SI Leaders facilitate interactive study sessions where students work together to reinforce material covered in class.

What do SI Leaders do?

Your SI leader attends your course and takes notes just like every other student. Then your SI leader uses these notes and information provided by your professor to plan weekly SI sessions. The SI Leader focuses on information that seemed difficult in class and also on concepts that the professor feels are important to the course objectives.

What are you supposed to do?

First of all, attend as many SI sessions as possible. Even if the information seems easy, working on the material during SI sessions will provide sound review for exams.

At the sessions, expect to be actively involved. SI sessions are not lectures, but instead small group activities. Everyone--students and the SI Leader--work together to understand the course content.

The best SI sessions are those driven by students' questions. Take some time before each SI session to look over your notes. Make a list of what you want the SI Leader review. Come prepared to ask questions and to work together with your peers and SI Leader to "make sense" of your course material.

Do I need to attend class if I'm going to SI?

Most definitely! The SI Leaders are not expected to re-teach the entire class lecture. Instead, they will highlight portions of the lecture that seem the most challenging. For a "complete picture," attending class is a must!

And while the SI Leaders are a great source of academic assistance outside the classroom, the best place for help with a course is the professor or Teaching Assistant's office hours.

For the best results, SI attendance should be combined with regular visits with your professor during their office hours.

How do students become SI Leaders?

Applicants for SI Leader positions are students recommended by faculty who are teaching the SI courses. Most SI leaders have previously taken the course they are working with and have excelled in that course.

If you would like to be an SI Leader for a particular course, it's important to excel in the course but also to let your professor know that you would be interested in the position. Also, talk with your SI Leader about the position so that you know what is expected. Interviews for SI positions generally take place in March and October.

For more information, contact the ESS Associate Director for Academic Resources, James Eller (jle12), in Sears 470 or visit the SI website at ess.case.edu/si.