**Ten Essential Elements of SI**

**The Supplemental Instruction model has proven to be successful with institutions of varying size, location, and organizational structure. The SI model can be adapted to reflect the individual needs and differences of each campus but retaining certain elements of the model ensures the integrity of the program.**

1. **SI Sessions Are Peer-Facilitated**

The ideal SI leader…

* is a student who has recently taken the class form the same instructor
* has received a high final subject grade
* should be approved by the class professor for content competency
* neither “re-lectures” nor conducts a Q&A session
* is responsible for organizing and add structure to the SI study sessions
* primary function is to facilitate discussion among SI participants and model successful learning strategies at key moments in the SI sessions

1. **The SI Leader Serves as a Model Student**

* The SI leader functions as a “model student” rather than authority figure
* This process helps students to focus on content mastery, rather than their final grade
* Peer support encourages greater participation and group inclusiveness

1. **SI Sessions Integrate Content and Learning Skills**

* The SI sessions integrate the review of lecture notes, textbook readings, outside supplemental readings along with appropriate modeling of learning strategies.
* “How to learn” is embedded into SI sessions along with “what to learn.”
* Through practice and mastery of effective learning strategies, students can adopt and transfer these strategies to other subjects and content areas.
* Collaborative learning strategies are used in SI sessions as a means of creating a more active learning environment for student participants.

1. **The SI Leader Attends the Targeted Class Lectures**

* When the SI leader attends all lecture sessions, the SI leader is knowledgeable about what is occurring in the class sessions and has an opportunity to model “good student” behavior in the subject.
* The SI leader’s presence in the classroom also serves to market the SI program to students.
* If the potential SI leader cannot attend class, it is generally best to identify the academic assistance sessions as something other than SI, e.g., group tutoring.

1. **SI Leader Receives Training**

* The SI leader receives training prior to the beginning of the term. In-service training continues throughout the academic term. These training sessions include specific teaching/learning theory and strategies.

1. **The SI Program Is Supervised**

A trained professional staff member supervises the SI leader and the SI program. Among other duties, the campus SI supervisor periodically attends SI sessions throughout the academic term and provides helpful feedback for the improvement of the program. To assure the success of the SI program, the professional staff member should have attended a SI supervisor workshop conducted by a staff member from Pierce College or another Certified Trainer.

1. **Faculty Support the Program**

The instructor of the targeted class should both understand the SI program and support its attachment to his or her class. Faculty members generally are encouraged to find ways to fully integrate SI into the over-all subject but should be allowed to choose their level of involvement with the SI program. Faculty may also play a role in selecting and screening SI leaders for content competency.

1. **Regularly Scheduled Sessions**

SI is in place from the beginning of the academic term. Generally three or more sessions are offered each week by the number of weekly sessions will vary depending on student demand or specific issues related to the subject. Students attend SI sessions on a voluntary basis.

1. **Program Evaluation**

There are two reasons to evaluate the SI program each academic term: (1) to continuously improve the overall quality of the program by gathering information about its strengths and weaknesses, and (2) to inform college administrators about the overall impact of the program. The SI program should be evaluated appropriately by assessing institutional outcome measures (e.g., final subject grades, subject withdrawal rates, institutional dropout rates, institutional graduation rates). Assessment is an increasingly important issue in academic life and sometimes has a direct link to funding.

1. **SI Targets Subjects Rather Than Students**

While education has historically created academic improvement programs that follow the medical model of attempting to diagnose students who may have academic difficulty, the SI program serves classes where a large portion of students will experience academic difficulty. SI avoids a remedial stigma by focusing on classes rather than individual students. The SI program provides systemic change in the learning environment for all students enrolled in the targeted subject. While all students may not take advantage of the voluntary service, it attracts an equal proportion of students form differing ability and cultural groups. SI does not segregate students based on prior academic performance or predictions of academic success. SI sessions work best with heterogeneous grouping of students. Participating students receive higher measures of academic achievement in comparison to their nonparticipating counterparts. Because of SI program funding restrictions at some U.S. institutions, the students who are served by SI may be restricted to those who meet eligibility requirements. When this is the case, the essential nature of the SI sessions is unchanged but evaluation procedures must be modified in these situations to ensure appropriate comparisons.