



Item: AF: A-1

## **Audit and Finance Committee**

**Wednesday, April 21, 2010**

### **SUBJECT: SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION (SI) FEE PROPOSAL**

---

#### **PROPOSED COMMITTEE ACTION**

Request to approve a Supplemental Instruction (SI) Fee of \$15.00 for students enrolled in courses offering supplemental instruction.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Supplemental Instruction (SI) is an academic assistance program offered at hundreds of colleges and universities. SI sessions are regularly-scheduled, informal peer-assisted study sessions in which students compare notes, discuss readings, develop organizational tools, and predict test items. Students learn how to integrate course content and study skills while working together. The sessions are facilitated by "SI leaders," students who have previously earned an A in the course and act as model students. SI is a non-remedial approach to learning, as the program targets high-risk courses rather than high-risk students. Students who regularly participate in SI have higher average grades and are significantly more likely to pass the course.

The purposes of the SI program align with FAU's strategic goals:

1. To increase retention within targeted historically difficult courses
2. To improve student grades in targeted historically difficult courses
3. To increase the graduation rates of students

**Proposal:** To apply a flat fee of \$15 for every student enrolled in a course offering Supplemental Instruction (SI) to ensure the academic success of students. The fee would generate the revenue to pay for the program. It is estimated that the SI fee would be applied to 26 courses in fall 2010 with an anticipated enrollment of over 11,000 students. We anticipate similar numbers for spring, as well as an abbreviated SI schedule for summer.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN/DATE**

Implement Fall 2010 Semester

#### **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

SI Fee is expected to generate \$200,000 annually, which will enable the program to meet expected demand and provide a small reserve to meet additional demand by expanding options available to students.

---

**Supporting Documentation:** Supplemental Instruction (SI) Fee Proposal

**Presented by:** Dr. Norman Kaufman, Associate Provost  
Dr. Edward Pratt, Dean, Undergraduate Studies

**Phone:** 561-297-3061  
**Phone:** 561-297-0567

## **Supplemental Instruction (SI) Fee Proposal**

Supplemental Instruction (SI) is an academic assistance program offered at hundreds of colleges and universities. SI sessions are regularly-scheduled, informal peer-assisted study sessions in which students compare notes, discuss readings, develop organizational tools, and predict test items. Students learn how to integrate course content and study skills while working together. The sessions are facilitated by “SI leaders,” students who have previously earned an A in the course and act as model students. SI is a non-remedial approach to learning, as the program targets high-risk courses rather than high-risk students. Students who regularly participate in SI have higher average grades and are significantly more likely to pass the course.

The purposes of the SI program align with FAU’s strategic goals:

1. To increase retention within targeted historically difficult courses
2. To improve student grades in targeted historically difficult courses
3. To increase the graduation rates of students

**Proposal:** To apply a flat fee of \$15 for every student enrolled in a course offering Supplemental Instruction (SI) to ensure the academic success of students. The fee would generate the revenue to pay for the program. It is estimated that the SI fee would be applied to 26 courses in fall 2010 with an anticipated enrollment of over 11,000 students. We anticipate similar numbers for spring, as well as an abbreviated SI schedule for summer.

In fall 2009, nearly 3,000 students (36% of the 8,200 students) enrolled in SI courses attended SI sessions. Students who regularly participated in SI had a twenty percentage point higher pass rate in the course as compared to students in the same course who did not attend SI. In fall 2009, students who enrolled in courses with SI rated their participation in SI extremely highly, with nearly 90% satisfaction on every account. In a survey administered to the group that did not attend SI in those courses, nearly 20% of students that did not attend SI indicated that they still got handouts from the SI leaders, 11% went to SI leader’s office hours, and 9% received “other support” (including help via email and before/after class). Most non-attendees indicated that the reason that they did not attend SI was due to time conflicts with work and other classes. This fee would allow us to hire additional SI leaders, increase the number of SI sessions held each week for large classes (to have a wider scheduling variety), or even offer tutoring in addition to SI to better accommodate student schedules and reach more students.

Since SI began at FAU in fall 2007, there has been a consistent increase in pass rates in historically difficult courses. Clearly, student graduation rates will rise as students will take less time completing courses required for their degrees. (A financial benefit to students will be expected as students cut down on the number of courses they are forced to repeat.)

With no fee in place, budgetary cutbacks will force a drastic curtailment of the SI program. The program has a proven record of success and has done much to transform the culture of academic success at this institution.



Florida Atlantic University  
Undergraduate Studies

# **Proposed Fee for Students in Courses Offering Supplemental Instruction**

## What is SI?

SI is oftentimes confused with tutoring, but they are not the same. SI is a form of peer-assisted mentoring for students taking historically difficult courses. Based on theories of peer group learning, leaders share strategies he/she used to be successful in the course.

In the SI sessions, students compare notes, discuss important concepts, develop strategies for studying and learning the subject, and test one another on the course material. The SI leaders are students who took the course in a previous semester and earned an A.

# What are the benefits of SI?

Students who attend SI sessions on a regular basis typically perform significantly better than those who do not attend SI sessions. Students gain a better understanding of course content, as well as more effective ways to learn it. The college level study skills that students learn in SI can be used to the students' advantage in other courses. By attending SI, students form friendships with other students and feel a closer connection to FAU.

## SI Results:

- In fall 2009, 8,224 students were enrolled in courses offering SI
- The mean grade for students in those courses who did not attend SI was 2.3, while the mean grade for those who attended 6 or more sessions was 2.8
- 8% of students who did not attend SI withdrew from their course, while only 1% of those who attended 6 or more sessions withdrew
- 67% of students who did not attend SI earned a grade of “C” or better, as compared to 87% who attended 6 or more sessions



## Overall benefits for FAU:

As a result of the SI program and other initiatives aimed at student success:

- The first- to second-year retention rate of FTICs has increased from 73% to 78% over the past three years.
- The D-F-W rates in our mathematics courses have dropped dramatically. The D-F-W rate for College Algebra has dropped from 62% to 27%

## All SI Courses – Fall 2009

		Overall	SI attendance			
			0 sessions	1 session	2-5 sessions	6 or more sessions
# of Student Enrollments		8,224	5,281	761	1,418	764
% of Enrolled Students		100%	64%	9%	17%	9%
Grade	Mean	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.8
Pass with C or better	%	71%	67%	71%	76%	87%
Withdrawals	%	7%	8%	7%	5%	1%
Term GPA	Mean	2.6	2.5	2.7	2.8	3.0
FAU GPA @ Term Begin	Mean	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.9	3.0
# with FAU GPA	#	4,529	2,865	387	848	429
High School GPA	Mean	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.4
# with HS GPA	#	6,839	4,466	654	1,157	562
SAT Total	Mean	1,035	1,046	1,025	1,019	996
SAT Quantitative	Mean	523	529	517	515	503
SAT Verbal	Mean	512	517	507	504	493
Gender	% Female	54%	51%	57%	59%	64%
Age	Mean	21	21	21	21	22
Course load	% Full-time	80%	81%	81%	79%	76%

## D-F-W Rates in Mathematics Courses

		F06	S07	F07	S08	F08	S09	F09
MAT 1033	Intermediate Algebra			30	25	27	28	29
MAC 1105	College Algebra	62	62	53	42	39	32	27
MAC 1114	Trigonometry	30	65	52	47	42	47	38
MAC 1140	Precalculus algebra	49	51	43	48	59	38	35
MAC 2233	Methods of Calculus	51	47	38	43	27	22	24
MAC 2281	Calculus 1 for engineers	39	45	53	41	48	44	54
MAC 2311	Calculus 1	31	51	42	27	49	32	47
MGF 1106	Math for Liberal Arts I	39	56	64	44	64	38	22
MGF 1107	Math for Liberal Arts II	33	17	47	22	64	26	26
STA 2023	Introductory Statistics	35	24	27	30	22	27	27