FITW FIRST IN THE WORLD STEM-OSIP

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Supplemental Instruction Faculty Handbook

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Mission

The Department of Education (DOE) First in the World (FITW) Program funding has provided TAMUCC the opportunity to establish a new science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) Online Supplemental Instruction Project (STEM-OSIP) that will provide online instruction to over 10,000 students over the course of five years. This project will focus on online Supplemental Instruction (SI) as the means to address global excellence through STEM graduates.

History of Supplemental Instruction

The Supplemental Instruction (SI) model is a peer-facilitated academic assistance program that was originally developed by Dr. Deanna Martin in 1973 at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, with the overall goal of identifying and supporting the most challenging courses for students. SI integrates how to learn with what to learn, incorporating collaborative learning strategies with course content. Because of its proven success in increasing student performance and retention, SI is now offered at over 1,500 academic institutions in more than 29 countries. Studies show that students who attend SI sessions earn statistically higher final course grades than those students who do not attend, even among students who are under-prepared when they enter the course (Congos, Langsam, & Schoeps, 1997).

SI Program Goals

The SI model targets traditionally difficult academic subjects—those that have a high rate of D or F grades and withdrawals—and provides regularly scheduled, out-of-class, peer-facilitated study sessions. While all students may not take advantage of the voluntary service, it attracts an equal proportion of students from differing ability and cultural groups. Participating students receive higher measures of academic achievement in comparison to their nonparticipating counterparts by developing study strategies, such as thinking and reasoning,

responsibility, and reflection, so they can successfully complete the targeted course and future courses.

The SI Program is NOT:

- Tutoring.
- Teaching or re-teaching.
- Remedial or make-up instruction.
- TA or clerical assistance for the professor.
- A replacement for other support services.

SI Sessions Are Peer Facilitated

An SI leader is a student who has received an A in the targeted course and is recommended by the professor to facilitate the SI sessions. The SI leader will maintain a professional attitude about matters such as class standards, grades, and student complaints; discourage students from attending SI as a substitute for class; share SI materials with the cooperating faculty member before use, if possible; and provide feedback to the cooperating faculty member if requested to do so.

What Is the SI Leader NOT Permitted to Do?

The SI leader is NOT available for grading exams or papers, or to proctor exams. As a rule, we request that you not ask SI leaders to run copies and errands or to distribute exams, graded papers, and other class literature. It's important for the SI leader to maintain his/her peer status among the students in the class. SI leaders are paid to attend class, keep up with the material, and run study group sessions. SI leaders typically do not answer questions you ask the class; they are not there as a student. The SI leader is in class to get a better sense of the areas emphasized during lectures so that they can design and develop more focused SI sessions.

The SI leader will NOT:

- Grade assignments.
- View or discuss grades.
- Proctor exams/assignments without the professor being present.
- Independently create exams/assignments for which students receive a grade.
- Re-lecture nor introduce new material; instead the SI leader's responsibility is to organize and add structure to the SI sessions, allowing students the opportunity to engage in their own learning.

The SI leader WILL:

- Act as a model student with a mastery of the discipline.
- Attend all class sessions, takes notes, and reads all assigned material for the target course.
- Conduct three in-person SI sessions and three online SI sessions per week.
- Conduct one in-person office hour and one online office hour per week.
- Continually announce in class SI session and office hour schedule and room locations.
- Write session dates and times on the board in the classroom where lecture is conducted.
- Inform students of times and locations of double sessions.

SI leader in regards to the professor WILL:

- Interact with the professor professionally and treat them with respect.
- Meet and communicate with the professor throughout the semester to develop a positive working relationship and to discuss course content and any uncertainties regarding material discussed in the SI sessions or the lectures.
- Provide the instructor with feedback about how the sessions are going, including any handouts to be distributed or upcoming session topics.
- Work with the professor to promote SI sessions and make announcements in each class.
- Be helpful to the professor whenever possible. They will not assume the role of being the professor's assistant but offer to assist the professor in tasks such as helping with computer equipment, distributing materials, etc.

What Goes on During SI Sessions?

A typical SI session is an hour-long meeting which might include a review of lecture and assigned readings, group work and discussion, problem-solving and critical thinking activities, or a mock exam. The SI leader's primary focus is to assist students in understanding the course material while helping them to develop effective study skills that are applicable to the content. The SI leaders will never structure SI sessions as a forum to re-lecture to students who missed class.

Top Ten Positive Outcomes and Benefits of Supplemental Instruction:

- Students earn higher subject grades while they learn effective study skills.
- SI provides an opportunity for students to develop relationships with other students and staff, an important factor in retention.
- SI places the responsibility of learning with the students.
- SI helps to develop self-confidence and independence in students.
- SI is proactive and participatory rather than reactive and passive.
- SI provides collaborative learning experiences which promote assimilation into the campus culture.
- SI improves communication skills.
- SI accommodates various learning styles.
- SI provides students with group work experiences.
- SI enjoys a non-remedial image while offering academic support to all students enrolled in historically difficult subjects.

Faculty Member Involvement and Cooperation

SI is not intended to create additional work for faculty. You can support SI by granting time for occasional in-class announcements and be supportive of the program by encouraging students to take advantage of SI. Additionally, we will be in contact with you about the following aspects of the program:

- Assisting us in selecting and approving candidates for SI leaders for your subject;
- Assisting us by providing information for SI program evaluation: a copy of the official class roster, copy of grades after each exam and at the conclusion of the semester. Note: students' rights to privacy regarding this information will be fully protected.

The Supplemental Instruction Model

SI Administration—trained professionals responsible for identifying targeted courses, gaining faculty support, selecting and training SI leaders, and evaluating not only the SI leaders but the overall program as well.

Faculty—instructors from identified targeted courses invite and approve of SI support for their classes. SI faculty screen SI leaders for course competency and approve candidate

selections. Faculty members also reinforce SI program support, advocating this academic assistance to all students.

SI Leaders—students deemed course competent, approved by the instructor, and trained in proactive learning and study skills strategies. A key component of the SI model is utilization of peer students (as opposed to TAs or GAs) for this position; doing so negates possible inference linking SI with final course grading

Students—the voluntary and anonymous participants in the SI sessions and, although mentioned last, the most crucial component of SI.

Note: SI leaders are mandated to keep faculty involved in the SI program with weekly meetings. The purpose of these visits is to inform faculty of questions students are asking about particular content, point out areas where the students are struggling, discuss the level of class participation, and offer faculty advance review of study aids, such as mock exams.

<center>Supplemental Instruction Leader Line of Communication</center>

The SI leader should report to the SI Coordinator for the following:

<center>• Hiring and related paperwork • Payroll • Training • Evaluation • Planning sessions</center>
<center>• Handling difficult students • Absence • Group attendance • Resources • Facilities issues</center>

The SI leader should report to the faculty member for the following:

<center>• Course syllabus • Textbook information • Class rosters • Instructor goals/expectations •</center>
<center>Blackboard access (if applicable) • Questions about class material • Planning sessions</center>

<center>Supplemental Instruction Contact Information</center>

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<center>*The information in this handbook is developed from materials provided by the University of Missouri-Kansas City and is adapted from Monmouth University SI Faculty Handbook.*</center>

Faculty Agreement

The faculty member agrees to the following:

1. The SI leader will attend class as often as possible. In addition, the SI coordinator might also attend some class sessions with the SI leader at the beginning of the term.

2. The faculty member will be asked to make grades from the exams available to the SI coordinator as a means of determining whether or not students coming to SI are performing at a higher level than those students not attending. Also for evaluation purposes, final course grades will be given to the SI coordinator at the end of the term by either the faculty member or the registrar.

3. The SI leader will occasionally be given a few minutes at the beginning of class to initiate and make announcements about the SI program.

4. The faculty member may ask to be given the names of students who do or do not attend SI sessions.

5. The SI leader and faculty member meet on a regular basis during the faculty member's office hours.

6. The faculty member is encouraged to share reactions to the SI program, oral or written.

7. Weekly oversight of SI leaders' online video sessions (80 hours per course each semester).

_____   _____

            Faculty Member Signature   Date