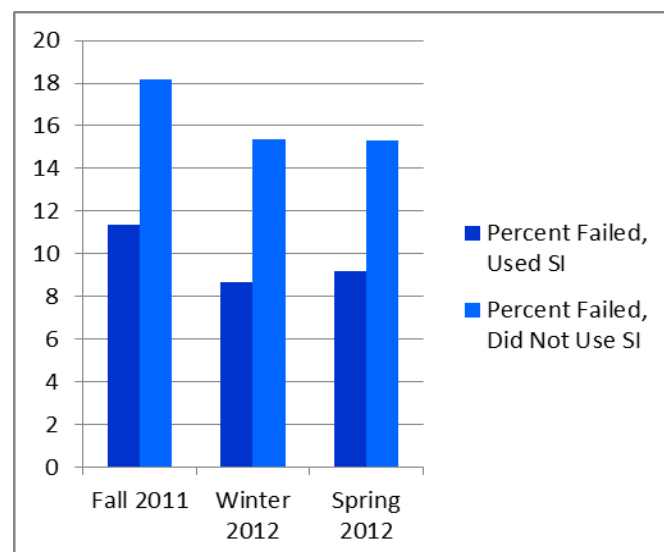


Supplemental Instruction Evaluation Brief

The Supplemental Instruction (SI) program at the Academic Resource Center (ARC) provides additional coverage of course material outside of lecture and discussion sections. SI sessions are led by trained undergraduates who review course material using active learning techniques and cover content specific study skills. In academic year 2011-12, 4,289 students, or about 24% of enrolled undergraduates, attended at least one SI session.

The graphs below present summary findings of a full evaluation report (available at <http://ueeval.ucr.edu/reports.html>) based on the 2011-12 academic year. When all classes in which SI is offered are grouped together, students who attended scored between 0.20 and 0.30 grade points higher than their classmates who did not attend. Similarly, fewer students who attended SI failed their course. (All differences here attain statistical significance at $p < 0.05$.) The full report uses a matching procedure that compares only students in the same course, at the same class level, and with similar high school GPAs. In these matched samples, SI had a positive and significant impact in about half of classes where it was offered. The full report also presents effects of SI by number of SI sessions attended. While students who attended SI only one time per quarter often did not see a significant improvement in their course grade, students who attended at least occasionally showed significantly higher course grade than students who did not attend.



Most courses in which SI is offered are lower-division courses in math and the sciences. Students who attend SI are largely from CNAS and BCoE and they are almost exclusively undergraduates. This suggests expanding SI into upper-division classes and introductory CHASS courses can contribute to student success in these areas. At the same time, a student's GPA in their first quarter is an important predictor of student success. Expanding SI for first-year learning communities will likely pay dividends in graduation rates and retention, as will continuing efforts by instructors to direct struggling lower-division students to SI sessions.

Experience shows that SI works best when there is strong collaboration between course instructors and the ARC staff, as well as when SI sessions can be scheduled to follow soon after lectures (without interfering with office hours or discussion sections). SI instructors have excellent training, but the addition of a new assistant director of SI can ensure a uniformly high level of quality of instruction. By strengthening collaboration, improving scheduling, and through feedback to peer educators, this very successful program can be more successful still.

