Supplemental Instruction can get students off to a great start. But to successfully earn a degree from USC, it’s important that they stay on the right path.

To help students navigate sometimes confusing university systems, several Student Affairs offices, including Academic Centers for Excellence and the Student Success Center, collaborated to launch the new Academic Success Web site. The site, online at www.sc.edu/academicsuccess, offers the following:

- **My Game Plan**, a map for student success that stresses the importance of setting goals, managing time, improving study skills and monitoring mental, physical and financial fitness
- **My Academic Advising**, delivering tips on preparing for successful advising appointments
- **My Financial Aid**, a breakdown of the basics of applying for scholarships and other forms of financial aid, as well as methods for students to manage their personal finances
- **My Study Skills**, which provides a host of resources for assessing learning styles, improving concentration and employing effective test-taking strategies
- **My Tutoring**, highlighting the numerous resources available to students who may need extra help outside the classroom
- **My GPA**, which explains how a GPA is calculated and what students can do to increase their score

For many first-year students, the leap from high school to college can be difficult and the first semester a struggle. Freshman frequently report their concerns that the study habits they relied on in high school aren’t adequate to succeed in college. They feel lost in large classes and are unsure how to approach their professors, what questions to ask or how to tackle tough exams and projects.

For these students, and for students of any class who find that the material covered in courses could use a little further explanation, Supplemental Instruction can be the answer.

Through peer instruction; small-group study; and a focus on regularly attending class, developing good study skills and seeking advice from professors, SI can help students on their way to achieving their academic goals.
Here's a look at the program:

**What is Supplemental Instruction?**

SI is an academic success program designed to support students in historically difficult classes through peer instruction, mentorship and collaborative learning strategies.

Each week, students who participate in SI can attend three sessions led by undergraduate students selected for their academic achievements and their desire to help students. SI leaders already have mastered the course material, and they attend current courses to review what SI students are learning. SI leaders are able to expand upon classroom lectures, clarify professors’ expectations of students and help SI students achieve by integrating what to learn with how to learn.

**Why are peer SI leaders successful?**

Students are more comfortable asking questions of a fellow student, one who took the class and succeeded, but is perceived to be on the same “level” as the student in need of help. Peer SI leaders also can help students understand concepts by using examples and language from their daily lives.

**What are the results?**

Carolina's SI program has been a resounding success. SI participants' GPAs increased; courses accompanied by SI saw D/F/W rates decrease; and students reported that the program helped them develop effective learning and study skills.

— Meredith David ’06 contributed

### The Buzz

“SI gives you the chance to test yourself and then review material with the SI leader. Attend SI after each lecture or once a week to get the most benefit out of it. My grade was higher, and I felt more confident going into the test.”

— sophomore Lauren Shull

“At the beginning of the semester, the students seemed shy and inhibited. But now that they understand the structure of the course, they are much more aware of possible test questions, how to study and what methods work best for them.”

— senior Justine Siegers, SI leader for Psychology 101

“SI is an excellent program. It made a difference in the percentage of students who end up with a D or F by pulling it from 12 – 16 percent down to 8 percent.”

— Dr. Mike Dukes, professor of chemistry

### The Numbers

**Success**

Average GPA, by participation

**Improvement**

Average GPA, by frequency of attendance

### The Facts

On average, students who attended SI sessions in 2005 - 06 earned a half letter-grade higher than those who didn't.

Among USC students surveyed in 2005, 34 percent said they spend 11 - 20 hours per week preparing for classes.

Research shows that USC students whose first-year GPA is 2.79 or higher are more likely to graduate within 6 years than those whose GPA is lower.

During the 2005 - 06 academic year, about 2,200 students attended approximately 3,420 SI sessions.

Learn more about Supplemental Instruction and how you can participate.

holliday@sc.edu
803-777-4169
www.sa.sc.edu/supplementalinstruction