SI Coordinator Handbook

Information, Resources and Forms

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<p align="center">**Supplemental Instruction Coordinator**
Job Description</p>

Minimum Qualifications:
1. SI leader for at least one semester with positive performance evaluations
2. Demonstrated ability to work independently
3. Demonstrated excellent written and oral communication skills
4. Demonstrated understanding of the SI model and quality assurance needs.

General Responsibilities:
The SI coordinator is hired to support the SI program by supervising approximately five to seven SI leaders, under the guidance of the program director and program assistant. Coordinators attend SI leaders' sessions, performing both formal and informal observations. Coordinators meet with their leaders to review observations, provide feedback, and establish goals for improvement, and/or plan for sessions.

Coordinators meet with the program assistant and program director regularly to review all leaders' progress, plan for training, and discuss other program concerns.

Coordinators must attend all SI training sessions and meet with their SI leaders in small groups to process ideas from the training sessions. Coordinators support the development of the SI program by sharing ideas, materials, and providing feedback. SI coordinators will be evaluated by their assigned SI leaders at least twice a semester and by the program assistant and director once.
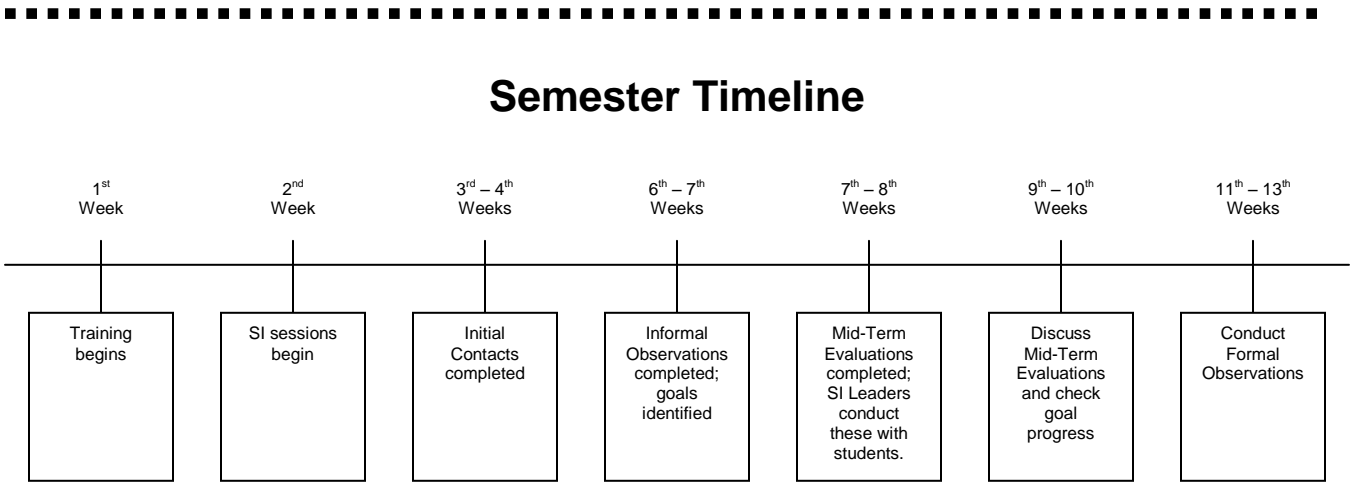
Specific Responsibilities:
1. Conduct observations of SI leaders at least three to four times each semester.
2. Conduct feedback sessions with SI leaders following observations.
3. Develop improvement plans and goals with SI leaders, as necessary.
4. Assist SI leaders in planning and organizing SI sessions, as necessary.
5. Encourage and assist SI leaders in implementing active learning techniques and SI training ideas into their sessions.
6. Assist with planning and presenting SI training sessions and training materials.
7. Ensure that the SI leaders complete necessary paperwork.
8. Model professional attitudes and behaviors to staff, students, faculty, and others on and off campus.
9. Promote the SI program to faculty and students.
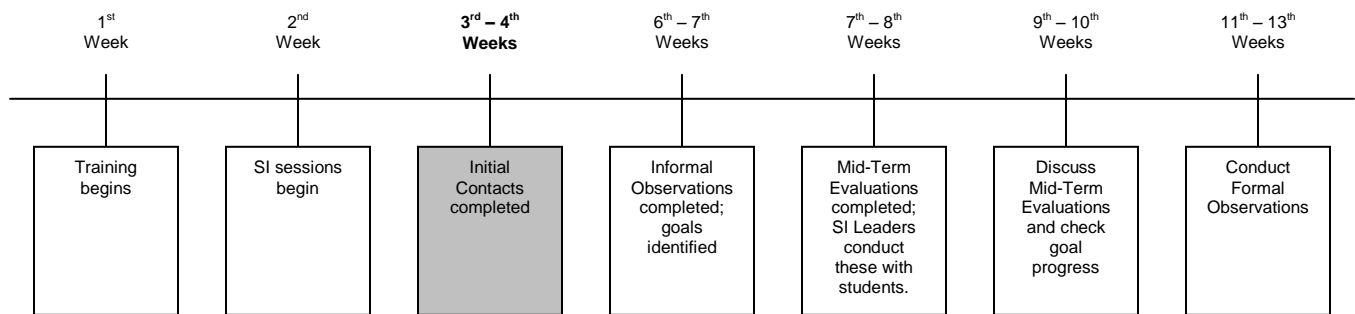10. Evaluate SI program to identify strengths, weaknesses, and recommended solutions.

Observation and Evaluation of SI Leaders

Observations and Evaluations of SI Leaders

The SI Coordinator is responsible for coaching, mentoring, observing, and evaluating SI leaders to help them improve their peer teaching skills and implement the SI model effectively. Throughout the semester, a Coordinator is expected to observe each SI leader at least three times. Each visit accomplishes a different purpose.

Semester Timeline

1st Week	2nd Week	$3^{rd} – 4^{th}$ Weeks	$6^{th} – 7^{th}$ Weeks	$7^{th} – 8^{th}$ Weeks	$9^{th} – 10^{th}$ Weeks	$11^{th} – 13^{th}$ Weeks
Training begins	SI sessions begin	Initial Contacts completed	Informal Observations completed; goals identified	Mid-Term Evaluations completed; SI Leaders conduct these with students.	Discuss Mid-Term Evaluations and check goal progress	Conduct Formal Observations

Initial Contact: conduct during the 3rd week of the semester

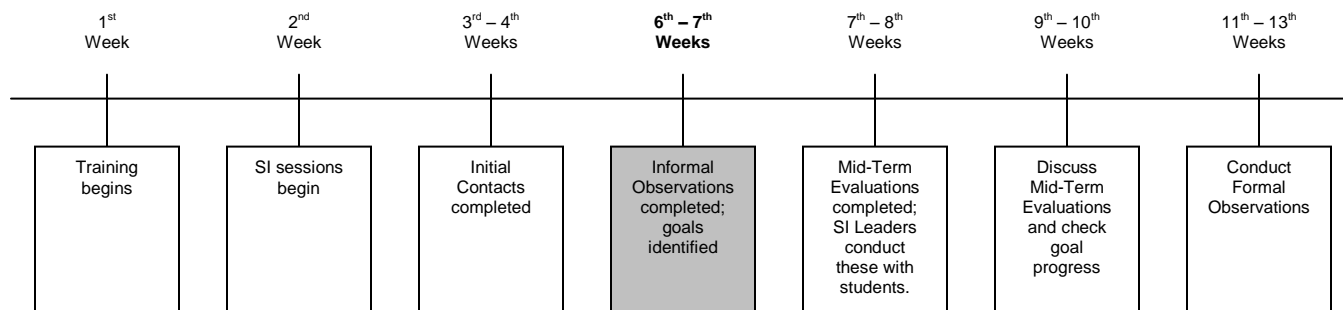| 1st Week	2nd Week	3rd – 4th Weeks	6th – 7th Weeks	7th – 8th Weeks	9th – 10th Weeks	11th – 13th Weeks
Training begins	SI sessions begin	Initial Contacts completed	Informal Observations completed; goals identified	Mid-Term Evaluations completed; SI Leaders conduct these with students.	Discuss Mid-Term Evaluations and check goal progress	Conduct Formal Observations

The first few weeks of SI sessions may be difficult for a new SI leader as he/she gains confidence and experience, so it is important to make contact with all of your SI leaders within the second week of sessions (3rd-4th week of the semester) to provide support and guidance.

The procedure for the Initial Contact is:

1. Plan to visit to each of your leaders' sessions during the third week of the semester. This visit can be brief, 10-15 minutes, and you do not have to schedule it. You can conduct it on a "drop-in" basis.

2. During the initial contact, just observe without any formal observation. Encourage the leader and create a comfortable rapport, while making an early assessment of what the leader may need

3. Plan time as soon as possible after the initial contact to talk with the leader. Provide feedback regarding his/her strengths and establish goals to work towards any immediate improvements the leader needs to implement to ensure effective sessions.

<u>Informal Observation:</u> conduct during the 6th – 7th weeks of the semester

1st Week	2nd Week	3rd – 4th Weeks	6th – 7th **Weeks**	7th – 8th Weeks	9th – 10th Weeks	11th – 13th Weeks
Training begins	SI sessions begin	Initial Contacts completed	Informal Observations completed; goals identified	Mid-Term Evaluations completed; SI Leaders conduct these with students.	Discuss Mid-Term Evaluations and check goal progress	Conduct Formal Observations

The Informal Observation is designed to provide SI leaders feedback early enough in the semester for them to implement additional strategies and/or improvements.

The procedure for the Informal Observation is:

1. Attend one complete SI session for each of the leaders in your group.

2. The observation will be recorded using the template included in this manual. You will also be provided an electronic version of this template.

3. Throughout the session, observe how the SI leader is interacting with students, using active and collaborative learning strategies, questioning techniques, and levels of learning to help students review material. Also pay attention to how the leader is addressing the different learning styles of students.

4. As you make notes during your observations, record specific examples that will support your evaluation and help you with your feedback discussion with the leader. You should be noting strengths as well as areas in which the leader can improve. **NOTE: Examples are illustrated on the following pages.**

5. Meet with the SI leader immediately following the observation, if possible, to provide feedback. Lead into the discussion by first asking the leader for his/her evaluation of the session. This sets a collaborative tone to comfortably discuss the leader's strengths as well as suggestions for improvement. Elicit the leader's ideas as well as sharing your ideas. Guide the leader to set specific or **SMART** goals for future sessions. **SMART** goals = Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-Framed.

6. Discuss how the SI leader is promoting attendance and brainstorm techniques to improve this, if necessary.

7. Ensure your discussion is conducted in a private location away from the students.

8. Send a copy of the evaluation to the SI leader and SI Program Assistant for the leader's file, as well as keeping a copy for future discussions with your leader.

SI Informal Observation Form

SI Leader: _____   Date of Session: _____
SI Coordinator: _____
Number of Students Attending: ___   Roll Distributed? Yes   No

Learning Styles/VARK   Questioning/Bloom's   Wait Time   Redirecting   Study Skills

Topic from Training	Specific Examples (Strengths, Suggestions)
Rapport Beginning session Closing session	

Goals (Specfic, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**elevant, **T**imeframe):
Is my goal relevant to student mastery of course material?
Is my goal relevant to improving my teaching?
1.

2.

EXAMPLE #1

Leader name, course, date, semester, and type of observation is recorded.
This is missing the number of students attending the session.

Coordinator explicitly points out the training topics the leader incorporated into his/her session.

Note the specific examples to document strengths.

Sara Line
CHEM 1010
Jim Smith
2/14/08
Informal Observation
Spring 2008

- Great Outline
  - "The big Picture"
- Calling Students by name!
  - Wonderful!
- Start-up ~ be confident!
- Wait Time
  - Love the Silence
  - Force Involvement, they will catch on and know you expect it!

Wait Time

- Good Visual Aid! ~ Yeah for Technology!
- Asking students to explain further.
  - Wonderful!
- Good calling on students!
  - Involvement is key!
- Mistakes are the best way to emphasize a point. ~ No sweat!
- Tips for the test –
  - Learn the order, etc
- Good background on Quantum Mechanics
  - Then we will go back and connect
  - Wonderful technique
- Good example of the definition of "Quantum"
  - Personal application
- Cold night, you want to sit as close to the fire as you can
  - Yet another great example. BRAVO!
- Colored Markers
  - Rather than writing red, you could use the different Colored Markers! Fun visual idea!
- You can only be on a stair, not inbetween
  - You are the example KING!
- Good try for involvement. Calling on specific students is also great. Key Question - How can you get more involvement?
- Pulled in class examples ~ Very Good!
- Electrons don't get along... remember this.

Visual
Questioning
Techniques

Study Tip
Levels of learning

Application

Suggestions are clear and focused on the session being observed.

Study Skills
Humor / Memory tactic

A few Thoughts:
Excellent!
- Preparation
- Examples- Wow!
- Good clear board work

Upward & Onward!
- Wait Time
- open ended questions
- Involvement
  - kinesthetic?

GOALS-
- Wait time (8 seconds)
- Visual (colors, shapes) (symbols)
- Better probing question
- Every session start up activity

Effective way to note improvements needed.

Goals and action plan discussed with SI leader are identified so that Coordinator can observe and follow-up in future observations.

EXAMPLE #2

FCHD 1500 roll ✓
3/06/08 attendance* 4

Tech training

Bloom's Taxonomy

VARK

• Great student interaction
• Sending out Quiz on email is great
    - great way to start & guide a discussion.
• encouraging student to use their book
• using example = relate 2 students = blended family.
    (Application)
• Great Questioning techniques
    - re-directing ?'s & descriptive questions.
• Multi media (over head, board work, discussion)
• Great presentation skills (eye contact, body language)
    - You are easy 2 talk 2. Students can ask ?'s.
• participation ↑ = everyone participating
• Quizzes are great but make sure you use a mix of activities (group work, learning activities, etc)
    -idea* maybe have the students make up the ?'s for the next quiz you send out/or give.

VARK (visual)

• Awesome visual organizer
    - Maybe next time have students help fill out chart
    - Maybe fill out chart w/ pics or symbols.

WORKING ON Mid-TERM evals & goals

• continue e-mailing quizzes through blackboard
• Continue e-mailing them the game plan for the next week
• Have more variety in activities (Think, pair, share.)
• More multimedia (clips from you tube, doc. cam, ppt.)

EXAMPLE #3

Addie Wood
Econ 1500
3/5/08
John Doe
Mid-term
Observation

- Good, you started confident
- Great Probing
- Awkward Silence ~ 8 seconds!
- Referenced the notes
- Chart Form ~ very visual!
- Going across the row for involvement.
- "Picture This" ~ very fun group activity!
- Good prompting & help when students felt unsure.
- Great flexibility!
  - Sometimes you just have to try again.
  - Move forward with gusto!

GOAL CHECK -
- Had a game plan from the very beginning!
- Fun group activity! - Evaluate things that worked / not worked.

Coordinator comments on leader's implementation of improvements based on goals established after a previous observation.

Mid-Term Evaluations

Trends:

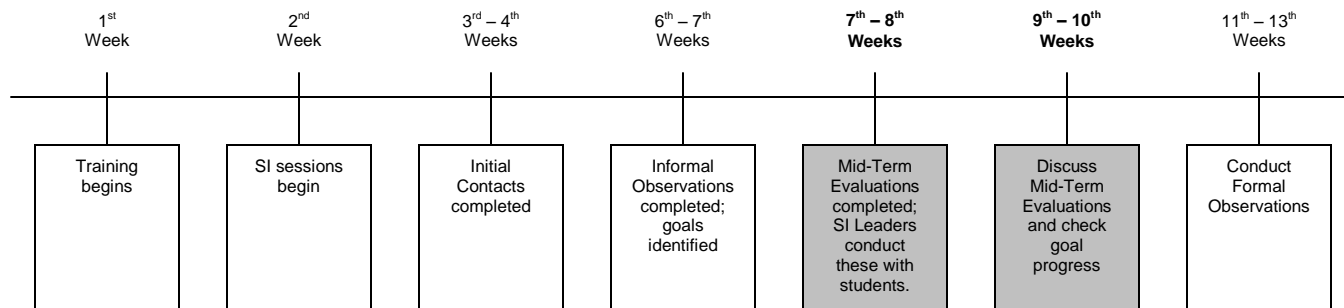| Keep Doing	Stop Doing	Start Doing
·Real-life examples	· Online quizzes doing them in S.I	· emailing more practice questions & study guides
·note card activities	· Get microphone for test review	· Better preparation for weekly quizzes
·Practice questions	· Going so fast with information	

SI leader records the results of the mid-term evaluations by students and establishes goals to implement their feedback.

GOALS
- overcome the "one person answering all questions" phenomenon
- Reviewing past SI information before moving on, so see what level they understand at.

Attendance 16

Mid-Term Evaluation: administered by SI Leaders and completed by students during the 7th – 8th week of the semester. Follow-up by Coordinators during 9th – 10th weeks.

1st Week	2nd Week	3rd – 4th Weeks	6th – 7th Weeks	**7th – 8th Weeks**	**9th – 10th Weeks**	11th – 13th Weeks
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Mid-term evaluations of SI leaders are completed by students in the class. It is important for leaders to know what students perceive as effective and how SI could be more helpful to them.

SI leaders are required to conduct a simple, yet powerful anonymous assessment with their students. The assessment is as follows:

> "What do you want your SI leader to:
>
> Start Doing   Stop Doing   Keep Doing
>
> to make SI sessions more effective in helping you to learn course material and improve your study techniques."
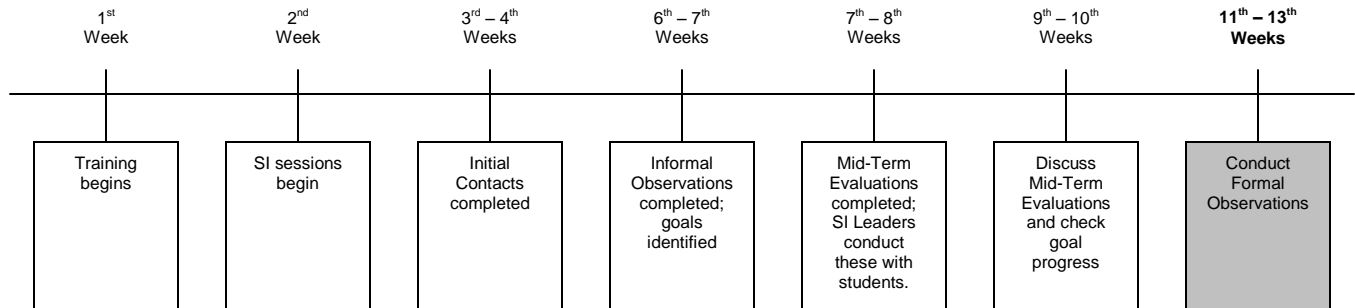
SI leaders can ask students to complete this assessment on blank paper. Alternatively, leaders can email students with the above assessment information and request their feedback as an email reply.

After receiving students' comments, SI leaders are expected to share the feedback with their Coordinators and identify specific action items to implement what seems to be most appropriate or possible.

During the 9th-10th week of the semester, Coordinators should schedule a time to do the following:

1.   Assess how the SI leader is progressing on goals and improvements noted during the Informal Observation.

2.   Discuss the results of the mid-term evaluations and ways to implement students' feedback.

Final Observation: conducted during the 12ᵗʰ-14ᵗʰ weeks of the semester

1ˢᵗ Week	2ⁿᵈ Week	3ʳᵈ – 4ᵗʰ Weeks	6ᵗʰ – 7ᵗʰ Weeks	7ᵗʰ – 8ᵗʰ Weeks	9ᵗʰ – 10ᵗʰ Weeks	**11ᵗʰ – 13ᵗʰ Weeks**
Training begins	SI sessions begin	Initial Contacts completed	Informal Observations completed; goals identified	Mid-Term Evaluations completed; SI Leaders conduct these with students.	Discuss Mid-Term Evaluations and check goal progress	Conduct Formal Observations

Final Observations are designed to provide a comprehensive performance evaluation of the SI Leader. It is also a time to obtain feedback from the SI leaders about the program and set goals for future semesters.

The basic process for conducing Final Observations is:

1. Use the Final Observation forms that you receive electronically from the Program Assistant.

2. Schedule a time 1) to attend one session for each leader that is not a test review and 2) to meet when you can discuss your observation with him/her.

3. Attend an entire session and complete the observation form according to what you observe. Record actual comments, questions, activities and/or events to provide specific feedback to the SI leader. Record his/her strengths and areas for improvement, which will be discussed after the session.

4. Meet with the SI leader to discuss your observation.

5. Involve the leader in identifying and discussing aspects of the session that went well and skills that need improving. Discuss ideas for strategies and methods to ensure effective sessions.

6. Set specific goals with the leader to help him/her implement the necessary improvements and discuss how you will follow-up with him/her.

Final Observation Process

Step 1: Observe the session
→ Record what is said by both SI leader and students during the SI session.
→ Be aware that you are there as an observer, not as an SI leader or facilitator.
→ Regard observations regarding:
  o Opening and closing activity
  o Questioning techniques: redirect? Leader answered? Open vs closed; level of difficulty
  o Type, variety, appropriateness of learning activities
  o Study skills incorporated or explicitly demonstrated
  o Quality of examples or problems
  o Preparation and organization; comfort with course material
  o Involving students, encouraging participation
  o Effective presentation skills: clear visual aids, eye contact, effective wait time, voice volume, enthusiasm and rapport, etc.

Step 2: Discuss observation and evaluation with SI leader
→ Ask for the SI leader's assessment of the session: what was effective and what he/she would do differently to improve the session.
→ Share your observations and use specific examples.
→ Elicit from the SI leader areas needing improvement rather than telling him/her directly what you assessed. Confirm and discuss any other weak areas that you observed.
→ Identify two or three primary suggestions for improvements if the leader failed to recognize critical deficiencies.
→ Identify factors that caused the deficiencies.
  o <u>Example</u>: A common problem is an SI leader who lectures too much or uses weak questioning techniques. Does the leader recognize he/she did not involve students sufficiently? Can the leader identify how his/her questions could be improved to stimulate deeper learning?

Step 3: Set Goals for Improvement
→ Develop a plan of action to improve the weaknesses that were identified. Refer to the SI manual and training to reinforce the leader's goals.

Step 4: End Discussion
→ Provide encouragement to the SI leader to work on identified goals.
→ Identify how you can provide support in achieving goals.
→ Agree on another observation date, if necessary, to observe and discuss progress.

Step 5: Complete Documentation
→ Complete the Final Observation form. **Note: See example that follows.**
→ Give copies to: SI leader, Program Assistant, and yourself.
→ Refer to your notes next time you observe this SI leader=s session, and identify improvements you observe.

UtahState University
ACADEMIC RESOURCE CENTER

SI Leader Final Observation

SI Leader: _____Class: _____Semester _____
SI Coordinator_____ Date of observation _____

Identify specific examples for each of these areas.

1. Leader and student rapport (eye contact, body language, interaction, and atmosphere)

2. Student involvement (comments, questions, engagement with your learning activities)

3. Session opening and closing activities (planned and organized; "beautiful" questions or activity to for immediate learning involvement and summary review)

4. Questioning techniques (think time, redirected questions, levels of thinking)

5. Reinforcement of students' responses (positive reinforcement, clarifying, correcting)

6. Use of examples for clarification

7. Teaching methods and materials used (varied use of VARK methods and learning activities; lecture notes, homework, textbook, old tests, handouts, worksheets, board work, diagrams, document camera, PowerPoint)

8. Specific study skills and test-taking strategies

....

SI Leader's strengths:

Suggestions for improvement:

SMART goals (develop at least two):

SI FORMAL OBSERVATION

SI LEADER: I
CLASS:
DATE: N
OBSERVER:

Number Attending: 100 +
Attendance Role Distributed: Yes

1- Leader and student rapport (eye contact, body language, interaction and atmosphere).

-You immediately started talking with students as they came in. Asked how one student hurt his leg.
-Enjoyed your welcome to leave after new information was given and outline.
-Love the throw of the marker, good student interaction.
-I like the fact that I   is another student leading the session and does not take on an overbearing teacher role. I think that is very important for an SI Leader.

2- Student Involvement.

-Catch and come up.
-Shouting out answers was okay and most students were comfortable with it.
-Student involvement dipped after a little bit, but you still expected it and some students got that after a second, GOOD.
-How can we get more student involvement when working on graphs? The answer is the key for this class.
-"Who wants the marker? You're smiling, here you go." HILARIOUS ☺
-"I'll help you…" when the girl was left doing the harder graph.

3- Questioning Techniques.

-"What goes here? Are you sure?" GREAT!
-Don't be afraid of the silence, wait time is key ☺
-"Does everyone see where we got our numbers?" Good and you got responses.
-In big sessions it's hard to keep open-ended questions, but these are necessary for learning for most people; make sure to ask more open-ended questions in large reviews.

4- Reinforcement of student response.

-Praises on good answers and makes sure that student knows their response and participation was appreciated.
-I   is always positive in her reinforcement and redirects if necessary.

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-Along with being positive   smiles and invites participation and that also reinforces her student's responses.
-If volunteers were brought up she made sure it was a positive experience for everyone.
-I   repeats the correct answers to emphasize them and also reinforce the response.

5- Use of examples for clarification.

-Problem worked for Quotas worked well to clarify vocabulary and concepts. ☺
-Florida and Oranges was a good application for the problem.
-I liked how   will change a problem and say "What if…" It makes the problem adaptable for everyone.

6- Use of materials (notes, homework, textbook, old tests and quizzes, handouts, board work, diagrams, overheads, PowerPoint, and games).

-Mentioned Problem Sets, SI Study Guide, etc.
-Worked problems from Homework Problem Set ☺ Awesome!
-The diagrams for Free Trade and Customs Unions were clear and understandable.
-I   uses a lot of graphs and board work, they are always well discussed and not hurriedly drawn up.

7- Specific study skills and testing techniques.

-What to study: "I   s Order."
-What other study skills do you think are important and how can you implement teaching those skills next semester?
-During one of the homework set problems   analyzed the question to help with test taking.

I-   Noted Strengths of the SI Leader:

-I   understands the student dynamic and how to study and passes that knowledge effectively to her students.
-I   is dynamic in both her speech and movement while teaching which is engaging for her students.
-I   knows how to phrase her lectures to emphasize the most important things. This helps her students get the big concepts.
-I   organizes her sessions in a way that works with a student's schedule, i.e. she does new stuff first and then works on older things.
-I   recognized a mistake or purposefully labeled a graph wrong caught it and made it a learning tool. Great strategy.

-"Someone who's brilliant tell me that answer." Really good way to get participation.

II-   General Suggestions for Improvement:

-Don't worry about this too much, but you need to write larger on the board still.
-Be aware of how visible different things are, when the lights were out I couldn't see the board from the back.
-Make sure not to ask leading questions, direct the questions yes, but don't close them to only yes or no answers.
-"Real Quick" Remember what we talked about.
-Be sure to throw out student's questions so everyone hears and then answer loudly, we tend to answer just that student and that spoils that time sometimes.
-Great Session   !

III-   Specific Goals or Areas of Improvement (to be decided by Coordinator and SI Leader):

-Limit my use of "real quick."
-Try to write larger.
-Try to go deeper on certain examples
-Find new ways to create student participation.

IV.   Feedback from SI Leader: Are there any questions, suggestions, or items to be addressed in during training:

-Would have liked more direct information about undesirable situations, such as: inappropriate behavior from individuals attending sessions and students asking for phone numbers and dates.
-Thanks so much!

Providing Effective Feedback

SI Coordinators provide frequent and consistent peer supervision, mentoring, and coaching of SI leaders. Following observations of SI leaders, it is important to provide effective feedback.

Why give feedback?
You provide feedback for one primary purpose - to coach SI leaders in developing the skills, attitudes and behaviors that will help them become outstanding SI Leaders.

What is feedback?
Feedback is an objective description of a leader's performance. Unlike evaluation, which judges performance, feedback helps leaders identify areas where they are on target and provides suggestions on how to improve specific skills or behaviors.

How do SI leaders react to feedback?
SI leaders consistently request feedback and coaching. They want to know what they are doing well and what they need to improve.   Reflect on your experiences as an SI leader: You probably wanted to know how you could improve your teaching skills and SI sessions as much as you wanted confirmation of how well you were doing.

Characteristics of Effective Feedback

Good feedback is timely.
The best feedback occurs weekly, not just during a session observation. When done frequently, your comments will seem more like helpful suggestions than an evaluation. Coordinator group time is a perfect opportunity to provide feedback and suggestions, as well as through regular email messages.

Private vs. Public
Feedback should be done in private, unless it can be given in a way that won't be embarrassing.   Remember *"praise in public and critique in private."*

Feedback is meant to be constructive.
It is intended to improve performance, not to demean or punish the leader. When you give feedback, describe as objectively as possible what you observed during the session and your reactions.

Feedback is specific.
Use precise language about what specifically the SI Leader did well and what he/she needs to improve. Leaders may momentarily feel good about themselves when you say, *"You did a good job."* However, they will also wonder what specifically they did that earned the positive critique.

 Ineffective: *"Your questioning techniques are good."*

Effective: *"I noticed that you consistently wait for students to respond after asking a question. And, when students asked you to provide the answer, you redirected the question to another student to begin a discussion."*

Ineffective: *"You aren't implementing VARK as we discussed in training."*
Effective: *"Remember when you were talking about perceptual error. What could you have done that was visual or hands-on so that students had specific examples of that concept?*

Feedback is focused on behaviors not the person.
Give feedback on behaviors that can be repeated and that the leader can do something about. Critiques about shortcomings over which the student has no control leads to frustration.

Ineffective: *"You aren't as energetic as you could be during your sessions."*
Effective: *"What are some ways you could begin your session to help students get more interested and excited to learn the material?*

Ineffective: *"Your laugh is a bit annoying"* [Leader cannot control the type of laugh, only inappropriate laughing, e.g., making fun of someone].

Good feedback is based on personal observations.
If you hear of students' concerns with a leader's performance that you did not observe, schedule an additional observation. You may want to discuss what you heard, if it is appropriate. Remember that students express concerns for many reasons that may not accurately reflect a leader's performance.

Feedback must be verified.
Ensure that the SI Leader understood your feedback. Develop a plan to monitor and assist him/her with areas that need correcting.

Example: *"So, from what we discussed, what did you understand you were doing really well? What were some of the things that would help you make your sessions better? Okay, let's turn those into SMART goals….*

Giving feedback is an art, not a science.
Giving feedback involves communication and interpersonal skills. If done improperly or with the wrong intention, the SI leader will experience feedback as criticism. Ask your leaders how often they would like feedback and develop a plan to provide feedback to them.

Prepare before giving feedback.
Take a few moments to choose your words. Ensure that your feedback will support the leader's developing self-confidence and improve his/her performance. Feedback should be done as soon as possible, unless emotions will interfere with the session. Excellent feedback given at an inappropriate time may do more harm than good.

Giving feedback following poor performance.
Often after a bad outcome, SI leaders are working through their own emotions and may be quite critical of their performance. At this time, brief feedback and emotional support are best, followed later by a more detailed feedback session.

Involve leaders in assessing their performance.
Feedback is more effective if you and the leader agree on the assessment. It is helpful to ask the leaders to critique themselves. Often they will be harsher about their performance, which allows you to be more positive in your approach. It is easier and more effective if leaders identify areas for improvement; you can then help them develop a plan of action for doing things differently in the future.

Develop a plan of action.
Ask the SI leader for suggestions for how he/she can improve future performance. Gain consensus on the action plan, so that the leader is more likely to work on the stated goals.

Examples of reasonable goals:
- *I will wait 3 seconds after asking questions.*
- *I will find a video clip for each session that demonstrates the biological principle we are discussing.*
- *I will write my learning objectives for the session on the board before the session begins.*

In conclusion:
The goal of feedback is to help SI leaders be the best peer teachers they can be while helping students succeed in their classes. When you give effective feedback, you reinforce good performance while helping leaders correct ineffective techniques and achieve teaching competence.