

# Top 40 Attendance Strategies

## In-Class

1. Give a good, well-planned **overview of SI during the SI introduction speech the first week** of class.
2. Put **times and locations of SI sessions on the board or overhead projector** *each time* the class meets.
3. Mention in class that a **specific learning skill** will be presented in SI that will make learning and remembering **specific material** easier.
4. Announce in class **that relevant study skills will be covered at strategic times** like test taking skills just before a test.
5. Announce that **“how to” study skills handouts are available** in SI sessions.
6. Announce in class when you will **present a possible test question on a particularly difficult problem or concept in the next SI sessions**. Add that an accurate and complete answer set will be available through SI.
7. Use **personal invitations** to students in the class to attend SI. This is a good way to distribute SI bookmarks throughout the semester.
8. Leaders can **sit in different places in the classroom** to meet students, be more accessible for questions on SI, and provide a convenient visual model of good lecture notes.
9. Report (in class) the final course **grades from one or more previous semesters** for SI and non-SI students.
10. In rooms where lectures are held, **hang a poster** that reminds students of the advantages of attending SI sessions.
11. Post eye-catching **signs** to remind students of SI benefits, SI session times, and locations in classroom buildings.
12. Put one **difficult problem or concept on the board** in class and mention this will be **covered in SI** this week.
13. Periodically **re-announce the benefits of SI** during lecture. Bring overheads showing the difference in regular SI attendee grades vs. non-regular SI attendee grades.
14. **Close or open sessions with a consistent exercise**, such as a quiz, vocabulary review, continuous test review, etc. Students will become used to this routine and feel they are “missing out” on something if they do not attend SI.
15. Remind students that they can use **SI as their weekly study time**. This will help students keep up with the course and not slack off.

## During SI Sessions

16. During the first 2 weeks, **reiterate how SI sessions work**, the role of the students, and role of the SI leader. As the number of returnees increase, the announcement may be shortened. As new SI attendees appear at SI sessions, reiterate this information, briefly.
17. **Create a worksheet for SI sessions**. It could be an empty matrix box, sample problems, etc. Announce that students in SI sessions will create the information to fill-in the worksheet. This is especially helpful in problem solving courses (e.g., math, science). Make sure students do the majority of the work—goal is to create independent learners.
18. When permissible, **use old tests in SI sessions** to help students properly format possible test questions and answers for upcoming exams.

19. Encourage students to **build relationships amongst themselves** through group work and social time. Going to SI with friends will make the experience even more rewarding, and students will come to SI in pairs or groups.
20. At the end of each SI session, **remind SI attendees of the next SI session.**
21. Give **sample tests** in SI sessions made from the material that *could* appear on the next class exam. Better yet, have the instructor look over the sample questions. This way the SI leader can say that there has been collaboration with the instructor on questions.
22. Have **“bring a friend session”** or other themes to encourage SI participants to bring new participants to SI.
23. Write an **agenda on the board.**
24. **Write the next SI session information** (date/time/location) on the board. If possible, **write an agenda for the next session on the board.**
25. **Be a “model student” during class.** Students will see you as attentive and more professional and will be more willing to come to SI sessions as a result.
26. **Make sessions fun!** Use games, jokes, treats, and social time to lighten the mood and encourage students to get to know each other.
27. **Preview the next SI session** during the current session. This can create an incentive for participants to come back.
28. End each session with a **reason to come back.** Have students summarize the benefits they received by coming to the session.
29. **Use positive reinforcement during SI.** Praise and compliment the students. If students give the wrong answer, praise them for trying and ask if anyone can help get to a better answer.
30. **Make SI worth students’ time.** Plan each session thoroughly, but be flexible at the same time. Have specific activities to work on; don’t expect students to come with questions. They will have more questions after the activity.

### **Instructor Involvement**

31. **At your initial instructor meeting,** establish how often you and the instructor will meet to discuss the course and SI.
32. **Meet with each faculty member** multiple times during a semester. The more clearly instructors understand the SI model, the easier it is for them to see it as something worthy of their support. These instructors will find it easier to say positive things about SI in class and to colleagues.
33. Ask **instructors to encourage SI attendance for all students on a weekly basis.** Without this visible verbal support, SI has reduced chances of success. It is critical that the instructors not just invite students who receive poor grades. If the reputation develops that SI is only for poor students, students will not come to avoid the remedial stigma. It is recommended *not to do SI with instructors who are not willing provide this support.*
34. Make sure the **students see you speaking with the instructor.** This shows the students the Leader has good rapport with the instructor and may have better insight about exam topics.
35. **Provide your instructor with SI signs or bookmarks for their office.**

### **General Student Interactions**

36. **Get to know students’ names, and use them.** Using names humanizes the SI experience, making students feel more important and special.
37. Get regular SI attendees to act as **“undercover SI agents” to promote SI** to other students in the class.

38. **Emphasize your own personal SI experience.** If you attended, or are attending SI for another class, tell students what benefits you got out of SI.

### **General Promotions**

39. Use **testimony** from current and/or past SI attendees on how SI helps learn the subject matter and improves grades. (Refer to past end-of-semester evaluations for suggestions.)
40. **Never let outdated information stay posted online.** Leaders should post new information as quickly as possible.

## **Using the Classroom White Board**

Utilizing the whiteboard in class is an excellent way to encourage students to attend SI! Write on the board **EVERY day!** Writing on the board everyday reinforces that SI should be part of their weekly routine and is an ongoing process. It also lets students know that their SI leader is present at lecture, and he/she wants people to attend the sessions. This also might be a way for students to talk to their peers and ask other students if they have previously attended or if they could possibly go to the session together. This also reminds the instructor to announce SI.

- ◆ Always include session days/time/locations
- ◆ If a session is that night, write SI TONIGHT
- ◆ Use colored chalk/markers
- ◆ Be sure that everyone can see the message.
- ◆ Include other messages on the board. Possibilities could be:
  - Students who attend SI usually earn higher grades
  - Test review- (this doesn't have to be before a test- every session can include a test review.) Midterms? Come to SI for help!
  - SI is for EVERYONE!
  - SI is.... Fun, a place to meet people, etc.
  - Write the agenda for the following session
  - Improve study skills!
  - Bring a friend tonight!
  - Want to score higher on the next test?
  - Post-test review
  - Worksheets!
  - Group work- The possibilities are endless!