

Structured Learning Assistance (SLA) Program Summary

What is the SLA Program?

Established in 1993, The Structured Learning Assistance Program offers all students the opportunity to improve their study and learning skills in specific courses and encourages collaborative learning. The program provides three hours of guided study workshops each week. These workshops are in addition to the regular class sessions. Enrollment in SLA courses is voluntary; however, once enrolled, if a student's grade falls below a 2.0, attendance at workshops is mandatory until the cumulative grade point improves to a minimum of 2.0. All students are required to attend the first two workshops. The professor's first quiz or test determines if continued attendance is required or voluntary.

The workshop facilitator provides specific background information related to the course and assists students in making connections to class lectures. Workshops stress learning the course content and developing effective study methods. SLA facilitators have contact with approximately 12-15% of the total enrolled Ferris student population per semester.

The program also serves as a mechanism for giving professors regular feedback on their teaching. This feedback is provided by the facilitator who manages the workshop and who attends each class session. This feedback allows the professor to make adjustments or re-emphasize information that students are struggling with collectively.

SLA targets courses, not any specific student population. There is no fee for this program. 

Program Facts:

- The number of courses offering SLA workshops in the 2003-4 academic year is 174% greater than it was nine years ago in the 1994-5 academic year.
- 2829 students were enrolled in courses with SLA workshops in the 2003-4 academic year. This is 7% greater than the 9-year composite average number of students enrolled in SLA workshops each year, which is 2640 students.
- Total SLA student enrollment has increased 288% since the 1994-5 academic year.
- Over the past 7 years, an average of 31 faculty members participated in SLA each semester during the main academic year.
- When the same faculty member teaches both an SLA section and a Non-SLA section in the same semester, an average of 4.8% more students pass with a "C-" or higher in the SLA sections.
- In the 2003-4 academic year, 82.9% of the SLA students received course grades that were a "C-" or higher (79.1% Non-SLA Departmental Average for the same year).
- In the 2003-4 academic year, only 4.4% of the SLA students received failing grades (9.1% Non-SLA Departmental Average for the same year).
- In the 2003-4 academic year, only 7.7% of the students withdrew from courses with SLA workshops (10.2% Non-SLA Departmental Withdrawal Average for the same year).
- Over 92% of SLA students enrolled in SLA sections during the 2003-4 academic year recommend this program and would enroll in it again. The referral rate for the past three years is 90%.

Structured Learning Assistance Program

(Year End Summary: Summer 2003 - Winter 2004)

SLA Summary Information:

Semester	# of SLA Faculty	# of SLA Facilitators	# of Students Enrolled in SLA Course Sections	# of Courses with SLA Workshops	# of Sections with SLA Workshops
Summer 2003	2	2	83	2	2
Fall 2003	27	24	1476	26	63
Winter 2003	25	24	1270	24	60
TOTAL	54	50	2829	52	125

SLA Courses Offered By College:

Semester	Allied Health	Arts & Sciences	Business	Education	Pharmacy	Technology	University College
Summer 2003	DHYG218 MRIS211	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fall 2003	DHYG111 DHYG218 MRIS103 MRIS204 NUCM120 NURS105 NURS226 RADI121 RESP297	CHEM103 CHEM114 CHEM121 CHEM231 MATH010 MATH110 MATH115 SOCY121	ACCT201 ACCT202 BLAW321 ECON221 FINC322 RFIM115	0	0	EEET114 MECH340	READ106
Winter 2003	DHYG121 MRIS103 MRIS210 NURS105 NURS116 NURS236 RADI111 RESP190	CHEM103 CHEM121 CHEM122 MATH010 MATH110 MATH115 MATH116 PHYS211 SOCY121	ACCT201 ACCT202 BLAW321 ECON221 FINC322 STQM260	0	0	EEET124	0
TOTAL	19	17	12	0	0	3	1

SLA Student Success Information:

Semester	# (%) of SLA Student Withdrawals	# (%) of SLA Student Failures	# of Graded SLA Students who Passed w/ C- or Higher	% of Graded SLA Students who Passed w/ C- or Higher
Summer 2003	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	33 (of 36)	91.7%
Fall 2003	97 (6.6%)	72 (4.9%)	1081 (of 1326)	81.5%
Winter 2003	122 (9.6%)	52 (4.1%)	937 (of 1112)	84.3%
TOTAL	219 (7.7%)	124 (4.4%)	2051 (2474)	82.9% (weighted average)

Structured Learning Assistance Program

(Executive Summary - Fall 2003)

Fall 2003 SLA Program Data:

- The SLA Program supported 39 courses and 63 sections. One course (RESP297) with corresponding workshop was entirely online.
- 1476 Students were enrolled on SLA course sections.
- Of the 39 courses, 24 had either a control group and/or a department average for comparison.
- Comparison indicated that 13 of 24 courses (54%) surpassed the control group and/or department averages with C- or better pass rates.
- A pass rate of 10% or higher was obtained in 8 of 24 sections (33%).

Selected Pass-Fail Rates Data:

- BLAW 321 showed a 21% pass rate over department average
- ECON 221 showed a 19% pass rate over the control group
- SOCY 121 showed a 12% pass rate over department average
- ACCT 202 (18.5 ACT) showed a 4% pass rate over the control group (22.2 ACT)

Positive/negative **highlights** from the Fall 2003 program results include:

Composite Student Questionnaire Data:

- 45% of students initially enrolling in a SLA course thought it might be helpful
- 52% of students enrolled in a SLA attended voluntarily
- 87% of students felt in important to very important to attend workshops if their grade fell below a 'C'
- 86% of students felt facilitators were effective to very effective in conducting workshops
- 72% of students felt use of learning and study techniques in workshops were effective to very effective
- 79% of students felt they earned a higher grade in the course with SLA workshop support
- 92% of students would recommend enrolling in a course with a SLA workshop a positive choice to other students

Structured Learning Assistance Program

(Executive Summary - Winter 2004)

Winter 2004 SLA Program Data:

- The SLA Program supported 24 courses and 60 sections. One course (RESP190) with corresponding workshop was entirely online. Another course (NURS105) had an online component to the workshop.
- 1270 Students were enrolled on SLA course sections.
- Of the 24 courses, 17 had either a control group and/or a department average for comparison.
- Comparison indicated that 10 of 17 courses (59%) surpassed the control group and/or department averages with C- or better pass rates. This is an increase of 5% from Fall 2003.
- The SLA sections surpassed the control group and/or department averages by a rate of 10% or higher in 5 of 17 sections (29%). This is a decrease of 4% from Fall 2003.
- Four sections had a lower ACT composite score compared to the control groups but achieved outcomes parallel with sections reporting ACT scores 1-5 points higher.

Selected Pass-Fail Rates Data:

- The **average graded pass rate** (C- and higher) for the SLA section (N=23) was 88.04%. This is higher than both the control group and departmental average group. The control group (N=10) was 85.6% and the departmental average (N=16) was 82.37%. Statistics for RESP190 were not reported in the data set.
- SLA sections with control groups (N=10) averaged pass rates 0.40% higher than the control groups.
- SLA sections that had departmental averages (N=16) had pass rates that averaged 3.31% higher than the departmental averages.
- **ACCT201** (20.6 ACT) showed a 19% pass rate over the departmental average (23.3 ACT) and a 10% pass rate over the control group (22.6 ACT).
- ACCT202 showed a 14% pass rate over the departmental average.
- **BLAW321** (19.0 ACT) showed a -13% pass rate under the control group, but had an 8% pass rate over the departmental average (19.5 ACT). No ACT information was given for the control group. I am encouraged that the SLA section had a higher pass rate than the departmental average with similar composite ACT scores. Over a 3-year period, the SLA sections had an average pass rate that was 19.6% higher than the departmental average and 12.6% higher than the control group.
- **CHEM103** (21.3 ACT) showed a -16% pass rate under the control group (26.0 ACT). This may be due to a 4.7 point difference in composite ACT scores. There was also only one control section and four SLA sections.
- **CHEM122** (21.0 ACT) showed a -9% pass rate under the departmental average (23.3 ACT) and a -5% pass rate under the control group (23.0 ACT). There were two SLA sections and two control sections with nearly equal numbers of withdrawals and failures. The W'03 SLA section only had a pass rate of 1% greater than the departmental average (22.0 ACT). The W'02 SLA section (18.0 ACT) was under the control group (19.0 ACT) with a -7% pass rate difference and was only above the departmental average (19.5 ACT) by 1%.
- **ECON221** (22.0 ACT) showed a -3% pass rate under the departmental average (22.7 ACT) and a -4% pass rate under the control group (23.8 ACT). However, F'03 reported 16% over the control and 5% over the departmental average with nearly no difference in the composite ACT for the control and a 6.3 point difference between the SLA section and departmental average. Both semesters had the same facilitator and professor.
- 88% of the graded students in the **MATH010** SLA sections were higher than a "C-" (78% in Fall'03)
- **MATH110** (18.6 ACT) showed a 26% pass rate over the departmental average (18.4 ACT). There was no control group.

- **MATH115** showed a -8% pass rate under the departmental average. They both had composite ACT scores of 20.8 and there was no control group.
- **MRIS210** (23.7 ACT / 3.572 HSGPA) showed a -10% pass rate under the departmental average (20.7 ACT / 3.031 HSGPA). There was no control group. 84% of the SLA students passed with a “C-” or higher compared to 94% of the departmental average students. In W’03, there were no control or departmental average sections, but the SLA pass rate for students with a “C-” or higher was 98% with a 17.3 Act and 2.927 HSGPA.
- **PHYS211** (21.7 ACT) showed a 12% pass rate over the control group (21.7 ACT) but had a -8% pass rate under the departmental average (21.7 ACT). The HSGPAs were nearly equal in all sections at approximately 3.2. W’03 reported -9% (with a 24.0 ACT / 3.520 HSGPA) under the control group (21.7 ACT / 3.343 HSGPA) and -11% under the departmental average (18.5 ACT / 2.792 HSGPA).
- The following courses reported that **100% of the students in SLA sections passed** with a “C-“ or higher: DHYG121, NURS116, NURS236, and STQM260.
- The following courses reported that **90-99% of the students in SLA sections passed** with a “C-“ or higher: ACCT201, ACCT202, MRIS103, NURS105, RADII11, and SOCY121.

Positive/negative **highlights** from the Winter 2004 SLA program results include:

Composite Student Questionnaire Data:

- 48% of students initially enrolling in a SLA course thought it might be helpful and 27% really wanted the SLA when enrolling.
- 56% of students enrolled in a SLA attended voluntarily.
- 86% of students felt it important to very important to attend workshops if their grade fell below a ‘C’
- 79% of students felt facilitators were effective to very effective in conducting workshops. This is a drop of 7% when compared to the Fall 2003 semester. 5% reported them to be not effective in the winter as compared to 3% in the previous fall semester.
- 71% of students felt use of learning and study techniques in workshops were effective to very effective
- 73% of students felt they earned a higher grade in the course with SLA workshop support. This is a drop of 6% when compared to the Fall 2003 semester.
- 91% of students would recommend enrolling in a course with a SLA workshop a positive choice to other students

Composite Facilitator Questionnaire Data:

- 86% of facilitators describe the working relationship with their SLA faculty member as being very positive. 14% report it to be acceptable.
- 36% of facilitators describe the working relationship with their SLA tutor to be very positive. 14% report it to be acceptable or positive. 50% did not have a tutor.
- 93% of facilitators perceived the attitude of students toward SLA to be either mostly positive or more positive than negative. None reported them to be mostly negative.
- 77% of facilitators report receiving very positive administrative support from the coordinator. 23% report the support to be positive. None report the support to be negative.
- 79% of facilitators reported that the coordinator was very useful when providing support in their facilitator role. 21% reported that the support was adequate. None reported that the coordinator was inadequate. None stated that they would like even more support.