

Supplemental Instruction
(SI) Training
for LSKL 400/ESOL 400
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Table of Contents

The Journey Begins	3
The ESOL 400 Course	3
Students in ESOL 400	4
Elements of SI Training	5
1. Time Management Assessment and Guidance	6
SAMPLE: 168-hour Week Grid	7
SI Leader Training Activity 1	8
2. Grammar Reference Cards	9
SI Leader Training Activity 2	11
3. Reading Strategies	12
SI Leader Training Activity 3	14
Final Thoughts	15

The Journey Begins...

Welcome to Supplemental Instruction for LSKL 400/ESOL 400! In this training, you will explore three aspects of your task as an SI Leader for the ESOL 400 course. You will also learn information about the ESOL 400 course and its students.

Every ESOL 400 course will be a bit different, and there will be unique tasks that the instructor of the parent course will decide are paramount to the success of the SI portion of the course. Between the two of you, you will come to conclusions as to how best to spend your time as an SI Leader and what areas you need to focus on.

The ESOL 400 course

ESOL 400, Composition for Nonnative Speakers (5.0 units), was created originally as ENGL 400 and was designed to be a special section of English composition aimed at assisting nonnative speakers with acquiring academic English. The course was traditionally taught by an English composition instructor who also had certification in teaching ESOL. In 2005, ENGL 400 became ESOL 400 and was transferred to the ESOL department, thereafter being taught by instructors holding any minimum qualifications appropriate for teaching ESL.

The ESOL 400 course used to be accepted as a transfer course for the CSU system under the area of A2 – Communication Skills and Critical Thinking. This acceptance was removed in 2007 although ESOL 400 still transfers as units in residence. ESOL 400 still qualifies as applicable to the Associate Degree under Area E2, but that will be changing in 2009 with the raising of degree requirements.

Passing ESOL 400 makes a student eligible for ENGL 100, or freshman college composition. Therefore, the skills that a student needs to attain in order to pass ESOL 400 include reading and critical thinking, writing essays of 750 words or more, conducting research, and using the English language at a level of academic proficiency sufficient to enter ENGL 100. Please see the attached course outline which describes the Student Learning Outcomes for ESOL 400.

ESOL 400 has a computer-blocked prerequisite of completion of ESOL 840 or equivalent or placement test. Some students who fail to test into ESOL 400 do challenge the placement to be able to enter ESOL 400. Those challenges are reviewed by two independent faculty and the dean of Language Arts before they are approved.

A collection of essays representing grade levels as well as a rubric used to grade ESOL 400 are available by request from the ESOL department or the Language Arts division. All ESOL 400 teachers use the same rubric to score essays. At the end of the semester, students write a holistically graded in-class essay on an article and topic of faculty's choosing.

Students in ESOL 400

ESOL 400 has a large mix of students and this mix can vary depending on the time of day that the course is offered. Evening courses tend to attract a mix of older, re-entry students as well as traditionally-aged college students from Skyline and City College of San Francisco. Day courses have a higher number of traditionally-aged students. Ethnically, the course sees more Asian, Filipino, European, and middle Eastern students than Hispanic students; Hispanic students currently have the lowest success rate of all ethnic groups.

Some students are what can be termed as “traditional ESL:” they were reasonably well-educated in their own countries, they came to the US as adults, and they struggle with skills according to how and where they use English the most. Many of these have strong speaking skills and weaker writing and reading skills while others have the opposite balance.

ESOL 400 has a large number of “Generation 1.5” students, or students who attended US schools prior to college. These students typically have the following characteristics:

- “Ear-learning:” they have learned English from speaking and listening and therefore exhibit little accent (if occasional incorrectly learned phonemes and affixes)
- Weak reading skills due to lack of academic vocabulary
- Weak writing skills due to writing in the same way that they speak

Depending upon the student’s experience in US schools, length of time in the US, use of English outside the classroom, affect and attitude toward English, length and depth of formal education in the first language, background of family education, and socioeconomic level, students will have varying responses to ESOL 400. In general, the course attracts students who have motivation, but may lack skills, staying power, or financial/personal resources to continue.

Key elements to success for an ESOL 400 student include:

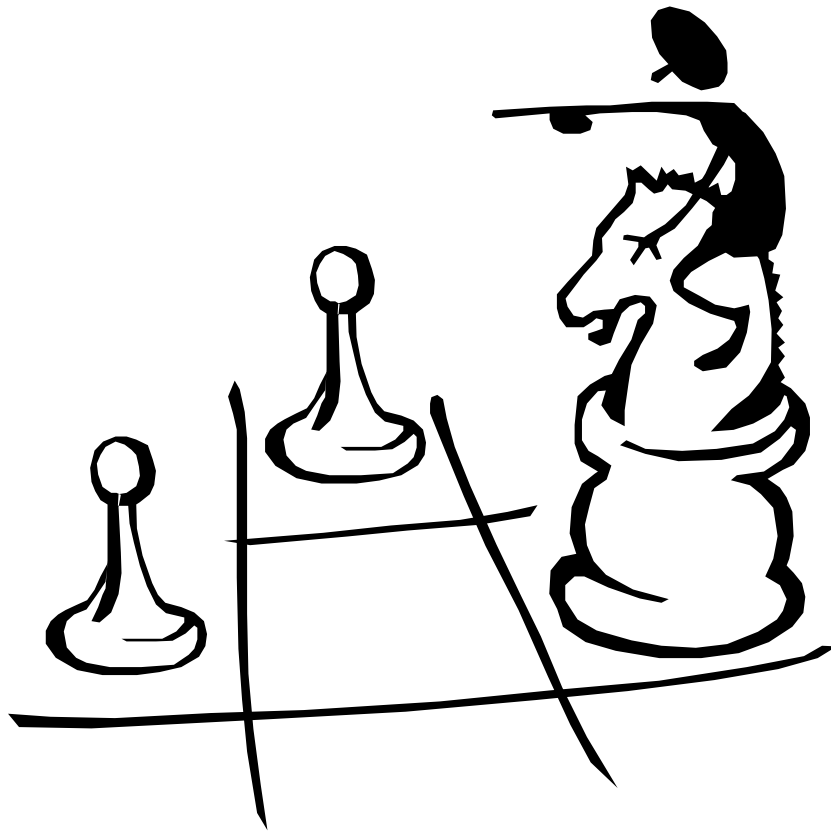
1. Ability to keep track of assignments and keep to deadlines.
2. Knowledge of high-intermediate level grammar including sentence structure, verb tenses, modals, subordination, word forms and families, agreement, and singulars/plurals.
3. Proficiency in constructing a standard paragraph.
4. Listening comprehension sufficient to sustain a student through five hours of lecture and class discussion per week.
5. Speaking skill sufficient to participate in classroom discussions.
6. Familiarity with essay structure and awareness of academic honesty.
7. Ability to employ reading strategies that keep the student from getting “stuck” and “hung up” on complex ideas expressed in a higher level of English.

Elements of SI Training

This training may go through future additions, modifications, and revisions, but the LSKL 400 course has been created in order to address key concerns in ESOL 400 as we perceive them to be at present. Those key concerns are mainly **time**, **language in writing**, and **reading skills**.

The three elements for this training are:

1. Time Management Assessment and Guidance
2. Grammar Reference Cards
3. Reading Strategies



1. Time Management Assessment and Guidance

The chief reason for failure in ESOL 400 is lack of engagement at the level necessary to achieve writing growth and proficiency. Many students are new to college, especially college in the United States, and they are not prepared for the large amount of self-starting that they must now do. Many students are also overcommitted and do not schedule their time in a manner allowing them to finish their assignments and meet their deadlines. The later they are with their work, the more ashamed they are to turn it in. This vicious cycle needs to get broken and accountability (via good habits) needs to be inserted in its place.

Materials:

- a scheduling booklet or device (student's) which can be found at the counseling office, or students may use their own.
- a grid showing the 168 hours in a week

Process for the Scheduling Booklet (ongoing):

1. Students must be responsible for getting a schedule and keeping it with them at all times. The SI leader can check to be sure that this happens in the first few weeks of SI.
2. Each assignment given in class must be entered into the schedule booklet.
3. Along with each assignment, Ss will be led by the SI leader in "backdating" to critical points where the assignment will get fulfilled: i.e., research in library, rough draft, final draft, etc.
4. For every assignment, SI leader asks students to share their scheduling pattern with others to reinforce good scheduling habits.

Process for the 168-hour Week Grid (week 1-2 of SI; plus adjustments as needed)

1. The SI leader will lead a session going over the 168 hours in a week. Ss fill in how they spend their time each week: work, family, shopping, recreation, etc.
2. In groups, Ss are asked to help each other find the necessary 10 hours per week (2 hours per each 1 hour in class) needed for this course. Schedules must be rearranged to fit this time in.
3. Ss present on the things that they are forced to move aside in order to fit in time for their studies. Group offers suggestions on how to make for a schedule that works both functionally and humanly.

SAMPLE: 168-hour Week Grid

Time Management

Name _____

Did you know that there are only 168 hours in a week? How do you break up your 168 hours? Fill in all of your weekly activities below. Be sure to include **work time, sleeping time, in-class time, home & family time, and shopping/errands time.**

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
5:00am							
6:00am							
7:00am							
8:00am							
9:00am							
10:00am							
11:00am							
12:00pm							
1:00pm							
2:00pm							
3:00pm							
4:00pm							
5:00pm							
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7:00pm							
8:00pm							
9:00pm							
10:00pm							
11:00pm							
12:00am							
1:00am							
2:00am							
3:00am							
4:00am							

For every hour of class time spent in a college course, you should expect 1-2 hours of homework. This means that you must find 5-10 hours per week where you are working on homework for this class. Schedule that time now.

SI Leader Training Activity 1:

Think about these questions and discuss them with the instructor of your paired course.

1. What variations on the 168-hour Week Grid can you think of that can increase students' awareness of the amount of time they need to devote to classes?
2. What advice might you give to a student who is struggling under severe time constraints and isn't able to find sufficient time to devote to the course?
3. What are some ways to motivate students to shift their time schedules around so that they can find more time to be more successful in their classes?

2. Grammar Reference Cards

Grammar Reference Cards (GRCs) come from an activity taken from the Learning Assistance Center at San Francisco State University. The basic premises of this tool are a) students need support tools to guide them in editing their writing, b) those support tools are best when generated by the student in the student's own words, and c) such tools empower students to discover patterns and rules on their own, leading to higher retention of the concept, great awareness, and more understanding of the importance of editing.

GRCs are colored index cards with one hole-punch where they are secured to a clip ring. Each card contains information about one grammar point. The cards can be used during in-class essays, out-of-class essays, and in other classes as "cheat sheets" to help them remember what to revise for when writing and editing.

Materials:

- 3x5 or 4x6 cards
- Metal clip rings
- Hole punch

The process of creating these cards has a very organic and engaging approach. The process should begin after an intentional focus on the target structure (either in the parent class or in SI sessions), or at least after the SI Leader is sure that students have had some exposure to the structures being examined. Ss also need to know how to identify a subject and a verb. To start, students are given a sample text (either drawn from their own class or from another class) whose language has been 1) retyped and inserted with line numbers, 2) revised to eliminate most errors except the target structure. This keeps the focus on the target.

Process:

1. In groups, students are asked to mark the text: circle the subject, underline the verbs (once for present verbs, twice for past), put a squiggly line under time expressions, and use any other symbols for other target structures that the teacher may be focusing on. This consistency in marking the text reinforces awareness of the language and its behavior as well as student habits of omitting or not completing these words in writing.
2. After Ss have marked the text, SI Leader asks them to pull out examples of a target structure (i.e., modals). Ss pull out all examples of modals they can find. SI Leader helps to filter out the correct examples and asks Ss to put the sentences on the board.
3. Next, SI Leader asks Ss to identify the parts of the target structure in the sentences on the board. For example, SI Leader asks Ss to identify the modal and asks what happens to come after it (a verb) and what form it is in (the base form). SI Leader marks it on the board.

4. SI Leader asks Ss to create the rule based on what they see. **Ss write this on one side of their Grammar Reference Cards.**
5. SI Leader then asks Ss to do the same with the remaining (incorrect sentences) that they have found. Ss write them on the board. SI Leader elicits structure and corrections to the structure.
6. SI Leader asks Ss to create rules for correction based on what they see. **Ss write this on the other side of their Grammar Reference Cards.**

This process is engaging because it doesn't require Ss to memorize grammar rules, but rather to discover, analyze, and apply them. Plus, Ss feel supported because they can take these GRCs with them into an in-class essay or at home with them on a longer assignment, and it can help them remember what to look for when editing.

Sample GRC:

Modals	
Affirmative	Negative
Can	Can't (cannot)
Could	Couldn't (could not)
Will	Won't (will not)
Would	Wouldn't (would not)
Should	Shouldn't (should not)
May	May not or Cannot
Might	Might not
Must	Must not (prohibition) or Don't Have To (no obligation)

1. Modals are always followed by the base form of the verb
2. Modals don't have ing or ed or s on them

How to fix modals

1. Find all the modals on the paper
2. Look for the verb after it and make sure it's in the base form
3. Make sure that the negative is correct

SI Leader Training Activity 2:

Think about these questions and discuss them with the instructor of your paired course.

1. What other activities can you think of that allow students to discover grammar and language rules?
2. Set up a tentative plan for when and how frequently you can focus on GRCs.

3. Reading Strategies

The jump in reading length, complexity, and level of critical thinking between ESOL 840 and 400 is quite large, and many students have trouble navigating it. Few teachers in the department actually teach explicit reading strategies in the class; ESL textbooks tend to favor a gestalt rather than a skill-based approach. Also, many students test in at this level and come with a variety of backgrounds in reading habits. It is therefore vital to have some sort of approach to instilling good reading strategies and habits.

The SI Leader can be instrumental in the following:

- Guiding students in scheduling time for doing their reading and related assignments to reading.
 - Use 168-hour Week Grid
 - Use Scheduling Booklet or device
 - Keep track of assignments via meetings with instructor and class sessions
- Providing students “time and space” (that is, focus and assistance) in doing the Writing Before Reading activities
 - Lead a brief discussion of the topic that can be finished as a journal activity
 - In occasional readings where appropriate, incorporate **KWL** into the journal activity by asking Ss what they already **K**now about the topic, what they **W**ant to know about it, (then write the journal, then read the story), and what they **L**earned about the topic from reading.
- Demonstrating and supporting good annotating techniques such as Spack’s Double-Entry Journals and Note Taking
 - Guide students in identifying parts of the reading that interest them or that they find difficult
 - In left margin (or column on paper), guide Ss to interpret the meaning of the text.
 - In right margin (or column on paper), guide Ss to pen their own reaction to the selected text.
- Holding discussion groups about current readings to aid comprehension
 - These can be informal or guided by certain questions
 - These can be pre- or post-class discussion
- Helping to explain and discuss cultural references, slang, irony, and other subtle aspects of the reading that may deter comprehension
 - Key vocabulary can be recorded by Ss in a vocabulary journal for use in the writing assignments to come
 - Words that are not key vocabulary, but that are needed to help facilitate message or meaning, can be pre-selected and explained prior to reading

- Guiding discussion groups with questions that send students “back to the text”
 - Use guiding questions to prompt Ss to find the answers
 - Design reading pairs or triads to complete comprehension tasks
- Guiding students in identifying, researching, learning, and using key vocabulary encountered in the readings
 - Design vocab research teams: one S with a dictionary, one S on Google. S with dictionary looks up actual definition; S on Google searches the word to find 5 uses of it in context and checks to be sure that the word is being used in the same way as the definition. Together, team creates a sentence to illustrate the meaning of the word.
 - Guide Ss in keeping a vocabulary journal with multiple bits of lexical information: definition, pronunciation, part of speech, relevant definition (to text), prepositions or collocations used with the word, sample sentence.

SI Leader Training Activity 3:

Think about these questions and discuss them with the instructor of your paired course.

1. What techniques can you suggest to a student who is researching the uses and collocations of a new word?
2. What strategies do you think are effective in getting students to “go back to the text” for their answers to questions?
3. What other journal activities can you recommend to enhance students’ reading and comprehension?

Final Thoughts: SI for LSKL 400/ESOL 400

This SI course has been designed to address key concerns for students in ESOL 400, and as such, includes elements relevant to the time and makeup of the course in the Spring of 2008. Future versions of these two courses (and indeed, this training session) will follow as a result of what is learned in the process of SI Leader and Instructor working together.

SI Leaders are encouraged to talk as much as possible with the Instructors of the paired courses in the interest of improving SI for future offerings.