



SLA RESOURCE GUIDE

For Students and Advisors

SLA Statement of Purpose:

SLA is designed to give Ferris State University students a high level of academic support, while reducing course withdrawal/failure rates and increasing pass rates of students in some of the most challenging and high risk-for-failure university courses.

What is SLA?

Structured Learning Assistance (SLA) is an academic support system available to all Ferris students. SLA is offered with a wide variety of highly challenging courses. The content of these



courses remains the same. However, SLA features additional weekly workshops in which students master course content and develop and apply specific learning strategies for the course. These workshops are led by trained facilitators, who clarify lecture points and assist students in understanding the expectations of the professor. The facilitator works in collaboration with the professor to develop materials and activities for the workshop, which may include worksheets, study guides, test preparation, discussions, collaborative learning, study skills, and games. The best part is that this assistance is free to our students!

How effective is SLA?

On average, SLA-supported sections have lower rates of failure and withdrawal than non-SLA sections of the same course. More than 72% of SLA students believe that they scored at least one-half to one full letter grade higher in the course as a result of SLA. After completing an SLA course, 78% of the students would recommend that others enroll in an SLA course.

Is SLA a remedial program?

No. SLA targets high-risk-for-failure courses, not students. This service is available to all Ferris students who choose an SLA section at registration.

What requirements are placed on students?

Students in SLA courses have a required attendance policy. All students are required to attend the workshops until their first assessment. If the student's grade is below the cut-off grade established by the professor (typically 80%), they are required to continue attending. Students who are above the "cut-off" grade may choose to attend voluntarily, but are no longer required to attend. By contract, students are allowed four unexcused absences from their SLA workshop. The fifth absence will result in a W or F grade for the course.

How do I find an SLA section for a specific course?

After selecting the term, when you are looking up classes in MyFSU, you can choose "Advanced Search". Select a subject and course number and select "Structured Learning Assistance" for Attribute Type. Now it will display all sections for that course having an SLA workshop. You can also find a complete listing of SLA courses by clicking on the "Course Offerings" link on the SLA website's homepage.

If the SLA course section is full, how do I get in?

You will need to check with either your advisor or the course's departmental office to see if it is possible to officially enroll in the SLA section or to be placed on their waiting list.

If I have a time conflict with a course and an SLA workshop, can I skip the SLA workshop?

No. The registration system will not allow students to register with a time conflict. Time conflicts should not be overridden in an attempt to schedule courses that overlap SLA workshops. All students are required to attend the SLA for their course until they satisfy the "cut-off" grade established by the professor.

If I don't need SLA, but it was the only section offered, can I skip the SLA workshop?

No. All students who register for an SLA section are initially required to attend the workshops. The attendance of students who score above the professor's cut-off grade becomes voluntary and they are encouraged, but not required, to attend. Students scoring below the professor's cut-off grade will continue to have required attendance.

What do students say about SLA?

"Taking the SLA class was very helpful in improving my grade and I would like to take more SLA classes."

"I really enjoy going to SLA. I am not required to attend but it helps me review what we learned in lecture and keeps it fresh."

Need more information?

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