Overview of SLA

SLA Program Overview
Provides students with the opportunity to improve their study and learning skills through a unique academic program at IUPUI, Structured Learning Assistance (SLA). SLA was developed in 1994 by Terry Doyle at Ferris State University. The university was awarded the Hesburgh Certificate of Excellence in 2000, and the SLA Program at IUPUI has been modeled after the program at Ferris State.

What is SLA?
- Mandatory, weekly 75 minute study and practice session that is attached to a high-risk-for-failure gateway course.
- Combines study skills, learning styles, classroom assessment, and collaborative learning techniques with content enhancement to support students enrolled in “gateway” courses.
- Mentor assists students in making connections between lessons and concepts learned in class through the application of various learning techniques.

Who are SLA mentors?
- Mentors are IUPUI students who performed well in the class in the past and have been trained in using CoLTs with study skills assistance to best help students master course material.
- Mentors do not simply regurgitate material provided by instructors; mentors do help students to see things through different methods that might happen in class with the instructor.

(Mentors are not teaching assistants).

What is the faculty member’s role in SLA?
The success of the SLA Program is linked to the active participation of IUPUI faculty. Instructors can assist the Bepko Learning Center staff by recommending qualified students to serve as mentors, maintaining communication with mentors who conduct SLA sessions for their classes, and providing feedback on the program. Students benefit greatly from collaboration between faculty, staff, and mentors in providing top-notch academic assistance.

SLA Program Objectives:
- Increase the C– or better student pass rates by 10% or more.
- Increase the academic independence of the student.
- Facilitate learning of content through collaborative methods and study skills implementation.
- Be an affordable alternative to private tutoring for gateway courses.
- Help students develop study skills through application to the course content.
- Foster student effort.
- Integration and application of valuable study skills.
- Encourage and facilitate collaboration among students.
- Promote academic responsibility.
- Model behaviors that are characteristic of successful students.