



Admire Kuchena, Chem Prefect

THE PREFECT PROGRAM

What Is the Prefect Program?

Supplemental Instruction (SI), the model on which the Prefect Program is based, is a way of offering *optional* collaborative learning sessions for participating classes. Prefect sessions focus on critical thinking and problem-solving exercises centered on the course material. They are scheduled outside of class time, usually in the evening, and they are led by trained student leaders who've received the department's or professor's stamp of approval. *All the sessions are free and open to all students enrolled in the class.*

The Prefect Program is not a remedial program; it is not targeted at "at-risk" students, but rather at historically challenging classes. Faculty members in classes ranging from biology to psychology to economics participate in the program.

What Can the Prefect Program Do for You?

The Prefect Program can help you in a number of ways:

- It gets you to spend more time on the class material: that alone increases your chances of success. Moreover, the time is spent reviewing and discussing concepts and/or solving problems related to the course, which helps you understand the material much better;
- It is collaborative: in the sessions, you work with each other and the Prefect, asking questions, discussing ideas, and participating in ways your class doesn't allow (usually due to time restrictions). Sometimes you'll be a learner in a session; sometimes you'll be a teacher: in both cases the interactions are excellent learning opportunities (as the French essayist Joseph Jourbert put it, "To teach is to learn twice");
- It helps you develop active-learning strategies, often modeled by the Prefect, and improve your study habits;
- It creates links between you and the college community: you'll develop friendships with other participants and with the Prefect, and you'll find people you can work with or go to with your questions about class material. Eventually you can use these links to navigate your way through the college experience;
- Overall, it produces higher retention and success rates, and students who attend regularly develop more interest in the class, contribute more, and earn better grades.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who attends Prefect Program study sessions?

The Prefect Program is open to all students enrolled in the class and therefore attracts students from all

ability levels. The program helps "A" students keep their "A" and it helps struggling students pull up their grades. One strength of Prefect sessions is that students informally quiz and teach each other and thereby deepen their understanding of course content.



Colin McLain, Pol Sci 230 Prefect

How do I find out when and where Prefect study sessions are held?

Your professor will add your Prefect to the class email list. Your Prefect will email the entire class, usually twice a week, with the time, day, and location of the next Prefect session.

What goes on in Prefect study sessions?

Major research studies, such as the Harvard Assessment of Undergraduate Education, indicate that students earn better grades when they work actively with the course material and participate in small groups. Therefore, *you should expect the Prefect sessions to have an informal atmosphere* where you and your classmates can ask questions, identify and discuss important concepts, review class notes, discuss reading assignments, work practice problems or take practice quizzes, and improve relevant study skills. These *active-learning* sessions are facilitated by a Prefect.

What makes the Prefect qualified to facilitate these study sessions?

Prefects are undergraduate students who have already successfully completed Prefect Program training, which focuses on how to encourage active, not passive, learning. Many have done advanced work in the discipline. The leaders are selected on the basis of their academic strengths as well as their communication and people skills. The leaders attend the class, take notes, and do the readings, just as the enrolled students do.

How are the times for the Prefect sessions selected?

During the first week of class, the Prefect will take a survey of when students would most likely attend a Prefect session. Using that input, the Prefect will arrange for an average of two Prefect sessions per week. Sometimes a Prefect will change a session time during the semester to better accommodate the students.

Why do the Prefects keep sign-in/attendance sheets? Attendance is taken solely for statistical purposes. We want to know how many students use the services, how often they attend, etc.

If you're taking a course that has a prefect, but you've forgotten his/her name or lost track of how to contact him/her, please feel free to contact your course professor; Kathy Evertz, Director, Academic Support Center, at x4015; or Lorie Tuma, ASC Program Assistant, at x4027.

The Academic Support Center is here (2nd floor of Scoville)...



...and here: <http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/asc/>