

Abstract

Entry level STEM courses serve as a gateway to the biomedical research pipeline. However, these courses have relatively high drop, withdraw, and fail (DWF) rates. Supplemental instruction (SI) has been shown to increase student success with particularly pronounced effects on first generation, female, and student of color populations. Unfortunately, participation in traditional SI is low. In order to increase participation, we created a hybrid model of SI held through the social media platform Discord (DSI) for two Spring 2023 sections of BIOL 190A: Introduction to Cellular and Molecular Biology, a class with a DWF rate over 35%. DSI serves as a more accessible, yet still structured, environment where students can interact with SI leaders and their classmates in a hybrid manner. To date, we have seen high rates of engagement in DSI.