2016 Teaching Assistant Orientation

Providing Teaching-Related Support
Jim Horn

Session Summary
Most Teaching Assistants at NIU do not provide direct instruction. Instead, they serve a variety of teaching-related support in and outside of the classroom. This may include conducting lab sessions, supporting a studio or clinic, grading, tutoring, leading recitations, or conducting office hours.

Key Concepts
- Whatever your role as a TA, you have a significant impact on students and their learning. Remember that you are important!

- It is normal to not know what your exact duties as a teaching assistant will be, even right before the semester starts.

- Talk with your faculty supervisor about your responsibilities as well as their expectations for you: policies, performance expectations and evaluations, training/professional development, reporting/documentation, work hours, etc.

- It can be difficult to balance your role as a TA with your own academic requirements. Try to stay organized as best you can, and document the time you spend on your TA work. If you have concerns about workload or balance, talk to your faculty supervisor.

- Remember that your work as a TA is meant to be a learning experience. Try new things, learn new tools, and reflect often on the experience.

Next Steps
- If you aren’t sure about your responsibilities, talk to your faculty supervisor. Connect with other TAs if you need advice or assistance.

- Attend workshops offered by the Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center as well as training offered by your department to continue learning and growing!

Resources
NIU’s Academic Policies and Procedures Manual. Go to: go.niu.edu/NIUAcademicPolicies

Got Questions?
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View the presentation at facdev.niu.edu/tao16