Overview of Teaching & Related Responsibilities for Teaching Assistants

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This session will provide . . .
- Overview of teaching & related responsibilities
- Preview of other sessions
- Your TA responsibilities are unique
- Tailor information to your unique roles & needs
- See FacDev Program Schedule for more TA workshops

Overview

Knowing services available
Knowing your responsibilities
Assessing student learning
Effective Instruction
Preparing to teach
Managing the classroom
Delivering instruction

Knowing your responsibilities

Knowing your responsibilities

Types of TA responsibilities
1. Primary instructor of course
   - Handle all aspects of teaching (planning, delivering instruction, grading, etc.)
2. Teaching support
   - Assist faculty supervisor
   - Tutoring, grading, lab supervision, etc.

Ask your supervisor about your specific responsibilities as a TA

Preparing to teach
**Teaching experience continuum**

Where are you on the continuum?

- New to teaching
- 1-2 semesters
- 3 or more semesters
- Guide on the side / Sage on the stage

**Preparing to teach**

Ask about:
- Approved course syllabus
- Course objectives or learning outcomes
- Topics to cover in the course
- Textbook/course website
- Grading policies or requirements
- Departmental / accreditation expectations

Prepare your course syllabus & plan details based on these specifics

**Preparing to teach**

- Consider audience & content when planning for course delivery
- Accommodate diverse learning styles using variety of methods / strategies
  - Lectures
  - Group discussions
  - Hands-on activities
  - Technologies

**Delivering instruction**

First day of class
- Introduce yourself / course
- Establish positive, welcoming tone
- Explain course syllabus / policies
- Clarify course schedule / deadlines
- Mention campus support services
- Explain your willingness to help students
- Encourage students to ask for clarifications

**Delivering instruction**

*Each* class period
- Identify objectives & the content
- Use appropriate delivery strategies

Integrate activities with lecture to actively engage students in learning

Avoid lecturing the entire class period!
**Delivering Instruction**
Typical 50-minute class
- State learning outcomes for the class
- Lecture interactively for 15-20 minutes
- Engage students in small group discussions for ~5 minutes on content covered
- Whole-class discussion after group work

**Managing Your Classroom**
Effective classroom management helps to
- Create positive learning environment
- Establish credibility
- Encourage student participation
- Cover course content as planned
- Prevent academic dishonesty
- Deal effectively with difficult students

Establish & be consistent with classroom policies that are fair & easy to enforce

**Managing Your Classroom**
- Demonstrate respect for students, their needs & interact professionally
- Explain why policies are necessary
- Develop policies with students
- Listen to student concerns
- When in doubt, check with supervisor or appropriate campus support unit

**Assessing Student Learning**
**Assessing Student Learning**

Plan for assessing student learning
- Based on course objectives/learning outcomes
- What you and students covered in class
- Use variety of assessment activities
- Establish performance criteria / rubrics for each assessment activity
- Conduct assessment activities throughout semester

**Formative Assessment**

- Part of the instructional process
- Provides information needed to adjust teaching and learning while they are happening
- Informs instructors and students about student understanding at a point when timely adjustments can be made

**Summative Assessment**

- Occurs after instruction (of unit/content area/semester)
- Given periodically to determine at a particular point in time what students know and do not know

**Assessing Student Learning**

Typical assessment activities
- “One-minute” paper
- Homework assignments, lab exercises
- Quizzes & examinations
- Papers, projects, presentations
- Laboratory exercises, performances

Prevent academic dishonesty
- Design assignments that demonstrate individual student’s performance
- Don’t reuse old assignments/exams

Knowing support services
Knowing available support services

– Familiarize yourself with offices & services they provide
– FacDev / supervisor /department chair can help identify proper service
– Support services help you & your students

No matter your TA role, know that we are here to assist you and your students!

Knowing available support services

ACCESS
– Tutoring & supplemental instruction services
Center for Access-Ability Resources
– Accommodating students with disabilities
Counseling & Student Development
– Helping students with emotional difficulties & study skills assistance
Employee Assistance
– Stress management

Knowing available support services

Office of Community Standards & Student Conduct
– Handling academic dishonesty
Office of the Ombudsman
– General advice on various issues
Office of Testing Services
– Scantron tests & evaluation services
Writing Center
– Writing-related assistance
Faculty Development & Instr. Des. Center
– Teaching-related issues, Blackboard, etc.

Information in this session . . .

✓ Is applicable regardless of your role as a TA
✓ Will better help you communicate & present effectively
✓ Is a teaching resource

Don’t be afraid to ask for assistance!

Thank you for your contributions to the teaching mission of NIU!