

**Graduate Teaching Assistant Conference 2012- Participant Feedback Summary**  
(n=124 of 240, 52%)

The conference is designed primarily for those graduate students who have been newly appointed as TAs for the 2012-12 academic year. All first time TAs are required to attend. The conference helps orient TAs to their instructional roles and responsibilities at Delaware and introduces them to effective practices and central aspects of learning and teaching. Specifically,

- Familiarize TAs with the range of instructional responsibilities, students' expectations and instructional policies.
- Introduce TAs to effective teaching practices that will enhance their teaching effectiveness in their discipline.
- Model approaches to actively engaging students in learning.
- Provide a forum to talk with peers and faculty about teaching, academics, and graduate student life.
- Provide ongoing support and resources.

The conference is followed by discipline-specific training sessions in individual departments. Since the conference accommodates TAs across disciplines and with varied teaching responsibilities, CTL strongly recommends that department faculty highlight those sessions for the TAs that are most relevant to their instructional roles in the department.

**Teaching Assistant Conference 2012- Participant Feedback**  
(n=124)

**Participant Profile**

56% are U.S. TAs (69) and 44% are international TAs (55)  
61% had prior teaching experience (31% of Intl TAs, 45% of U.S. TAs)

**Reactions to the conference:**

85% said the conference met their expectations (80% of Intl TAs, 90% of U.S TAs)  
87% would recommend this conference to newly-appointed TAs (91% of Intl TAs, 84% of U.S. TAs)

Felt More Prepared for their Role as a TA as a result of participating:

	Overall (164)	Intl TA (68)	U.S. TA (96)
Strongly Agreed	13% (16)	13% (7)	13% (9)
Agreed	74% (92)	92% (74)	72% (50)
Disagree	11% (14)	11% (6)	12% (8)
Strongly Disagree	2% (2)	0%	3% (2)

*What aspects of the conference contributed to preparing for your role as a TA*

The majority of participants thought that the Concurrent Sessions, Senior TA panel, and Plenary on Undergraduate Students have all contributed to their preparation for their role as a TA to

some degree, with the Concurrent Sessions contributing the most and the Plenary on Undergraduate Students contributing the least.

### **Qualitative Feedback:**

#### ***What specifically have you learned at the conference that will help you in your TA role?***

*Most common themes:*

- Advice on how to interact with, and engage, students (18)**
- Tips and strategies regarding time management (11)**
- Tips and strategies regarding grading and giving student feedback (7)**
- Clarifying the nature and expectations of the TA role (5)**

#### ***Favorite aspect of the conference:***

- Concurrent Sessions (424)*
  - TAs most appreciated being able to choose which sessions were most interesting /applicable to them. They enjoyed the smaller sessions because it allowed for more interaction and discussion. Many also noted that these sessions provided them with practical tools and suggestions that they could use.
- Learning from Senior TAs experiences (20)*
  - The senior TA panel (12) and the interactions with Senior TAs through the sessions provided valuable knowledge and experience about what it has been like being a TA at UD.
- Meeting other TAs/Socializing (10)*
  - TAs enjoyed having time to meet new graduate students both from their own department as well as other departments.

#### **What they would change about Conference:**

- More specificity, particularly by discipline (5)*
  - Some participants felt the sessions were often too general, because trying to speak to diverse group of TA's. These students suggested that there should be more department-specific sessions because TA expectations in each department might differ.
- Break conference into two half days rather than one full day (3)*
  - A few participants felt that, as it was, the conference was too long. These students voiced preference for a conference spanning two half days rather than a full day.
- Longer question/answer periods (3)*
  - A few participants wanted to see more time for senior TA's to address questions from participants. As it was, they felt that some of their questions did not get answered.
- Fewer sessions that were more in-depth (2)*
  - Two participants suggested that there be fewer concurrent sessions that were more in-depth. As it was, they felt that forty-five minute sessions were not long enough to explore topics with satisfactory depth.

