Individual Development Plan (IDP) – Year 1

**Objective:** Maximize your productivity, establish and communicate expectations for your progress between you and your mentor/research advisor, and provide a structure for ongoing assessment of your progress both formally and informally.

Guided by your Individual Development Plan (IDP), formal meetings with your advisor are a chance for you to step back from your daily lab work, assess your progress, and plan for the future. This IDP is a tool that allows you to reflect on your goals, progress, and needs for your graduate career. Meeting with your advisor about this document provides an opportunity to discuss topics that are important to you. Your advisor and mentors are invaluable resources to help you propose and execute next steps that will help make you a better scientist. A key component to your success is establishing honest and open lines of communication with your thesis advisor and mentors. The IDP is designed to help you set your goals for the coming year based on your long-term professional objectives.

**Tips on a good mentoring relationship**

A. Think intentionally about your training

B. Have open and direct dialogue.

C. Establish clear goals/expectations.

**How to complete your IDP**

**1. Step back and Self-assess:** Focus on the bigger picture. Fill out this form, using the questions as a starting point for discussion of your mentoring relationship with your advisor.

**2.** **Set your first meeting with your advisor**. You are responsible for scheduling and meeting with your advisor within 30 days of joining your thesis lab. Please share the completed IDP with your advisor prior to the meeting.

**3. Lead the discussion**. The IDP covers topics students have found helpful. If you have questions or additional objectives related to your training, these meetings are a great time to bring them up.

**4. Complete the “Action Plan” and follow up**. The last page of the IDP encourages you to establish concrete steps in the meeting with your advisor. Keep a copy of your Action Plan accessible and check on it every couple of months.

**5. Submit the signature page to the Director of Graduate Programs by August 15 after your first year as a graduate student, and by June 1 each year of your program after that.** You should consider this form the first few months after joining the graduate program and complete it in your second semester, soon after you have decided on a thesis lab. Each year, the form should be modified and updated to reflect progress and/or revision of goals. The full documents remain private between you and your advisor.

**IDP – Responsibilities**

Students: Read the following responsibilities in advance of your meeting, and discuss with your advisor any questions you may have. This list is intended to help you understand where you should take ownership over your graduate training and how your advisor can support you with your goals.

**Student Responsibilities**

* Take the primary responsibility for the successful completion of my degree
* Meet regularly with my advisor and provide him/her with updates on progress and results of my activities and experiments.
* Work with my research advisor to develop a thesis/dissertation project and select a committee.
* Initiate requests for feedback and seek advice from my advisor, committee members and other mentors (senior students and other faculty).
* Attend and participate in lab meetings, dept. seminars, journal clubs, etc.
* Keep up with literature in my field.
* Be a good lab citizen, maintaining a safe and clean space and working collegially with everyone.
* Maintain a detailed, organized and accurate lab notebook per your advisor’s guidelines.
* Discuss work hours, sick leave, and vacation with my advisor
* Discuss policies of authorship and attendance at professional meetings with my advisor.

**Advisor Responsibilities**

* Be committed to your education and training as a future scientist.
* Be committed to helping plan and direct your research project, allowing you to take ownership of your research while setting reasonable goals and establishing a reasonable timeline for completion.
* Provide and seek regular and honest feedback on an on-going basis.
* Be committed to seek ways to improve mentoring skills through training and advice.
* Be open, encouraging you to come to me with concerns and helping to find acceptable solutions to problems as they arise.
* Be knowledgeable of the program requirements/deadlines.
* Advise and assist with selection of your dissertation committee.
* Lead by example in communication, writing, management, and ethical behavior.
* Discuss authorship policies, acknowledge your scientific contributions to my lab and work with you to publish your data in a timely manner.

**IDP – Training**

**Training/Mentoring**

1. What program requirements do you need to complete in year 1 and what is your plan to achieve this?

2. What are your primary goals in your academic training?

3. What resources or support will most help with your transition to this lab?

4. What actions can be taken to make sure these needs are met?

5. What is important to you in a mentoring relationship?

6. What features of you lab group and your relationships with colleagues are most helpful and supportive to your well-being?

7. Are there any factors that you are concerned with that may negatively affect your progress?

8. What help can your advisor or other faculty/staff provide regarding professional development and graduate training?

9. Your success as a student is tightly linked to your wellness. What are you doing to tend to this?

**IDP – Academic Skills**

One of the most important parts of your PhD training is to develop a skill set transferable beyond graduation. Below, evaluate your strengths and weakness relative to where you think a student at your stage should be, checking the boxes for skills that you would like to target in the coming year. Discuss these with your advisor. An honest self-assessment and discussion will help you set goals for your training.

Research Skills and Scientific Thinking Mark your perceived ability level Targeted

Weak Moderate Strong

Broad-based knowledge of science \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Critical reading of scientific Literature \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Experimental Design \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Statistical analysis and data interpretation \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Creative and innovative thinking \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Understanding peer review \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Identifying and seeking advice \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Time Management \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Communications

Writing for a research pub/proposal \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Writing with appropriate grammar/structure \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Speaking to an audience \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Communicating one-on-one \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

English fluency \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Working with constructive criticism \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

**IDP – Action Plan**

This action plan is to be developed jointly by the graduate student and advisor during or after the discussion. Keep this action plan accessible for regular check-ins as determined by the two of you.

**Communication**: What is the best way to set meetings and communicate regularly?

**Target Skills**: What 1-2 Academic skills did you identify as important development targets for the coming year?

**Activities**: List any activities in which you and your mentor agree you should pursue to achieve your academic objectives in the coming year.

**Financial support**: What will be your financial support for the next year?

**Additional Actions**: In order to aid your success, are there any additional actions that can be initiated or continued by you? By your mentor?

**Following up**: How often do you and your advisor plan to meet?

**Other**: Is there anything else that you and your advisor need to address at this time?

**IDP – Signature Page for Year 1**

**Signatures**

By signing this document, I acknowledge that we have met and discussed the topics identified in this form.

**Student**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Advisor** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Date**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Date**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please submit this page only to the main office for your file.

Individual Development Plan (IDP) – Year 2

In year 2, your project should be well-defined and you should be preparing for the comprehensive exam to be completed by the end of the 5th semester. Your classwork should be wrapping up in the 4th semester.

**Research Progress**

**Scientific Research Goals and Objectives**

* What specific question is your project intended to answer?
* How familiar are you with the scientific literature related to your project?
* Do you have a good grasp of how this project fits into your lab/field as a whole?
* How do you feel your project is progressing?
* What are your near-term research goals? (training, techniques, etc)

**Challenges**

* Describe any unusual or unanticipated challenges you experienced this year in trying to accomplish the goals you set out last year with your advisor?
* What action have you taken to meet these challenges?
* How can your advisor help you?

**Development Activities**

1. What fellowships are you eligible for and what plans are in place to apply for them?

2. Many students find it useful to participate in additional training, teaching, conferences, outreach, and other activities. Do you need any help finding opportunities?

3. Which of the following do you think will help your educational/career goals

* Academic Coursework/training:
* Teaching/Mentoring:
* Professional development:
* Conferences:
* Service/Outreach:

**Academic Skills**

Revisit your strengths and weakness relative to where you think a student at your stage should be relative to where they were last year, checking the boxes for skills that you would like to target in the coming year. Discuss these with your advisor.

Research Skills and Scientific Thinking Mark your perceived ability level Targeted

Weak Moderate Strong

Broad-based knowledge of science \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Critical reading of scientific Literature \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Experimental Design \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Statistical analysis and data interpretation \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Creative and innovative thinking \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Interpretation of data \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Writing

Writing for a research pub/proposal \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Writing for a scientific publication \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Writing for a lay audience \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Grammar/structure \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Editing your own writing \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Oral Communication

To a specialized audience \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

To a lay audience \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

In a classroom \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

One-on-one \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

English fluency \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Leadership/Personnel Management

Delegating or providing instruction \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Providing constructive feedback \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Dealing with conflict \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Leading and motivating others \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Serving as a role model \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Setting expectations \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Professionalism/Interpersonal

Identifying and seeking advice \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Upholding commitments/deadlines \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Maintaining positive relationships \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Approaching difficult conversations \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Project Management

Planning projects \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Breaking down complex tasks \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Time Management \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Managing data and resources \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

What are the top one to three skills that you plan to focus on for the upcoming year?

**Mentoring**

Mentoring is a distributive process, allowing you to take advantage of the talents and experiences of many people throughout your training. You may want to consider using all or some of the IDP as an impetus for conversations with each of your mentors, not just your advisor. In the spaces below, consider the breadth of mentoring you currently receive.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | How often are you meeting | Is this sufficient | Do you initiate the meetings? | Need help finding or coordinating? |
| Advisor |  |  |  | Leave this blank |
| Thesis committee as a group (list names) |  |  |  |  |
| Thesis committee with one-on-one  Additional mentors (list names) |  |  |  |  |
| Collaborators |  |  |  |  |

What have you found most beneficial of the mentoring that you received? Is there anything that would improve the mentoring you receive?

**Goals**

Professional and Personal Development

1. Have you started to think about your long-term goals (5-10 yr plan)?

2. Have you thought about what factors inform these goals?

3. What guidance would help you with your development and exploration of career options?

4. What features of the lab group and your relationships with colleagues are most helpful and supportive to your personal development?

5. Are there any factors that you are concerned may negatively affect your progress?

6. What help can your advisor/thesis committee/other faculty/staff provide?

7. Your success is tightly linked to your wellness. What are you doing to maintain this?

**Action Plan**

This action plan is to be developed jointly by the graduate student and advisor during or after the discussion. Keep this action plan accessible for regular check-ins as determined by the two of you.

**Communication**: What is the best way to set meetings and communicate regularly?

**Target Skills**: What 1-2 Academic skills did you identify as important development targets for the coming year?

**Activities**: List any activities in which you and your mentor agree you should pursue to achieve your academic objectives in the coming year.

**Financial support**: What will be your financial support for the next year?

**Additional Actions**: In order to aid your success, are there any additional actions that can be initiated or continued by you? By your mentor?

**Following up**: How often do you and your advisor plan to meet?

**Other**: Is there anything else that you and your advisor need to address at this time?

**IDP – Signature Page for Year 2**

**Signatures**

By signing this document, I acknowledge that we have met and discussed the topics identified in this form.

**Student**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Advisor** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Date**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Date**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please submit this page only to the Director of Graduate Programs.

Individual Development Plan (IDP) – Year 3+

In year 3 and beyond, your focus should be your research progress in the form of writing papers, attending conferences, networking, and thinking beyond graduate school. As a more senior graduate student, you can assist in mentoring others, teaching, and providing leadership for the student body.

**Scientific Research Goals and Objectives**

* Do you have a clear/defined plan and endpoint for your project?
* How confident are you in your ability to complete it by Year 5?
* How firm a grasp do you feel you have of the field in which you work? If insufficient, what help do you need in identifying relevant readings or other means to be a true expert in your field?
* What are your near-term research goals? (training, techniques, etc)

**Challenges**

* Describe any unusual or unanticipated challenges you experienced this year in trying to accomplish the goals you set out last year with your advisor?
* What action have you taken to meet these challenges?
* How can your advisor help you?

**Development Activities**

List your recent involvement in the past year and/or current plans you have for the following:

* Academic training:
* Teaching/Mentoring:
* Professional development:
* Conferences:
* Service/Outreach:

List your percentage involvement in the past year for the following areas

Research \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_%

Training \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_%

Teaching \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_%

Professional \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_%

Service \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_%

Wellness \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_%

Total 100%

Which experience(s) have been most valuable to you, your research, and/or your professional goals?

**Academic Skills**

Revisit your strengths and weakness relative to where you think a student at your stage should be relative to where they were last year, checking the boxes for skills that you would like to target in the coming year. Discuss these with your advisor.

Research Skills and Scientific Thinking Mark your perceived ability level Targeted

Weak Moderate Strong

Broad-based knowledge of science \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Critical reading of scientific Literature \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Experimental Design \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Statistical analysis and data interpretation \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Creative and innovative thinking \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Interpretation of data \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Writing

Writing for a research pub/proposal \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Writing for a scientific publication \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Writing for a lay audience \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Grammar/structure \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Editing your own writing \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Oral Communication

To a specialized audience \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

To a lay audience \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

In a classroom \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

One-on-one \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

English fluency \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Leadership/Personnel Management

Delegating or providing instruction \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Providing constructive feedback \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Dealing with conflict \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Leading and motivating others \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Serving as a role model \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Setting expectations \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Professionalism/Interpersonal

Identifying and seeking advice \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Upholding commitments/deadlines \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Maintaining positive relationships \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Approaching difficult conversations \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Project Management

Planning projects \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Breaking down complex tasks \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Time Management \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Managing data and resources \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

What are the top one to three skills that you plan to focus on for the upcoming year?

**Mentoring**

In the spaces below, revisit the breadth of mentoring you currently receive.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | How often are you meeting | Is this sufficient | Do you initiate the meetings? | Need help finding or coordinating? |
| Advisor |  |  |  | Leave this blank |
| Thesis committee as a group (list names) |  |  |  |  |
| Thesis committee with one-on-one  Additional mentors (list names) |  |  |  |  |
| Collaborators |  |  |  |  |

What have you found most beneficial of the mentoring that you received? Is there anything that would improve the mentoring you receive?

**Goals**

Professional and Personal Development

1. What are your long-term goals (5-10 yr plan)?

2. For each goal you listed, identify one or two shorter-term objectives that may be important to achieving that goal?

3. What guidance would help you with your development and exploration of career options?

4. What features of the lab group and your relationships with colleagues are most helpful and supportive to your personal development?

5. Are there any factors that you are concerned may negatively affect your progress?

6. What help can your advisor/thesis committee/other faculty/staff provide?

7. Your success is tightly linked to your wellness. What are you doing to maintain this?

**Action Plan**

This action plan is to be developed jointly by the graduate student and advisor during or after the discussion. Keep this action plan accessible for regular check-ins as determined by the two of you.

**Projected timeline**: What is the projected timeline for completing your current projects?

**Target Skills**: What 1-3 Academic skills did you identify as important development targets for the coming year?

**Activities**: List any activities in which you and your mentor agree you should pursue to achieve your academic objectives in the coming year.

**Financial support**: What will be your financial support for the next year?

**Additional Actions**: In order to aid your success, are there any additional actions that can be initiated or continued by you? By your mentor?

**Following up**: How often do you and your advisor plan to meet?

**Other**: Is there anything else that you and your advisor need to address at this time?

**IDP – Signature Page for Year \_\_\_\_**

**Signatures**

By signing this document, I acknowledge that we have met and discussed the topics identified in this form.

**Student**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Advisor** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Date**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Date**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please submit this page only to the main office for your file.