



Appendix 2. Individual Development Plan

PhD Students

This Individual Development Plan (IDP) document is meant as a way to help you, as a PhD student, assess your goals, strengths, weaknesses, values, and plans for your future career. We expect you to complete this at the beginning of your doctoral studies and update it annually. Note that this IDP is not meant as a way to track progress towards specific degree requirements. Rather, it is designed to assist you in considering your future career goals and how to best ensure your current activities prepare you appropriately for those.

If you would like to also complete more self-assessment focused IDPs here are a few:

- American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS): <http://myidp.sciencecareers.org/>
- University of Michigan: http://faculty.medicine.umich.edu/sites/default/files/downloads/individual_development_plan_0.pdf
- Stanford University: <https://biosciences.stanford.edu/current/idp/forms.html>

An Individual Development Plan helps with self-assessment, planning, and communication:

- An IDP can help you communicate your professional development and career planning needs and intentions to others including your advisor, which can lead to helpful advice and resources.
- You can use the IDP to make sure you and your advisor's expectations are clearly outlined and in agreement so that there are no big surprises, particularly at the end of your training.
- The current job market is challenging and research has shown that individuals who perform structured career planning achieve greater career success and satisfaction.
- Some of you, especially those early in your studies, may not yet have a firm understanding of where you hope to take your career. The IDP can also help you think about your strengths and weaknesses as you evolve towards career planning.
- The IDP is meant as a living document, to be modified as you move through the program and solidify your goals and plan.
- Take advantage of this opportunity to reflect on your success and challenges from the previous year and anticipate any successes and challenges in the coming year(s).
- Use the questions below as a starting place for thinking; do not feel you need to respond to all, if some are less relevant for you, and feel free to also consider other aspects not included.

We hope that you find this opportunity for reflection helpful and welcome feedback on the process.

Name:

Date:

Year of Matriculation:

Department:

Advisor:

Short-term scientific/research goals and objectives

For 1st year students:

1. Do you know which area of your field you want to concentrate in?
2. Do you have a specific public health problem that is of primary interest to you?
3. Do you have experience with the methods and approaches used in your planned area of work?
4. What are the main goals you would like to accomplish this year?

For 2nd year students and beyond, and please respond to these by in part referring back to your previous year's goals, plans, and challenges:

5. Do you have a clear/defined plan for your research/dissertation work? Outline it here.
6. How confident are you in your ability to complete it by the end of Year 4 or 5?
7. Describe any unusual or unanticipated challenges you faced in the past year in trying to reach the goals you set out previously.
8. What actions have you taken to meet those challenges?
9. Do you anticipate any challenges in the next year and what can be done to help reduce barriers in the coming year?

10. How can your advisor help you?

Long-term goals

11. What are your long-term goals? (e.g., what activities do you want to be doing on a daily basis 5-10 years after graduation? What career responsibilities do you want to have?).

a. What professional or other factors inform these goals?

b. For each goal, identify 1-2 shorter-term objectives that may help you achieve that goal.

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

13. Are there factors that you are concerned may negatively affect your progress? What help can your advisor or other faculty/staff provide?

14. List some of your involvements in the following activities in the past year

Category	Activities
Academic coursework/training	
Your own research	
Research led by others (e.g., RA jobs)	
Teaching/Mentoring	
Professional development	
Conferences	
Service/outreach	
Wellness	

14a. Describe and explain your level of satisfaction with your research progress in the last year.

14b. Describe and explain your satisfaction with other aspects of your career development in the last year.

15. List the approximate percentage of time spent on each activity in the past year, and what you expect that to look like in the upcoming year. Note that these percentages are expected to change substantially throughout your academic career.

Category	% time in past year	% time in next year
Academic coursework/training		
Your own research		
Research led by others (e.g., RA jobs)		
Teaching/Mentoring		
Professional development		
Conferences		
Service/outreach		
Wellness		

16. In the following table mark the 5 or so areas in which you feel you made considerable progress in the past year, as well as 5 or so that you would like to focus on in the next year. Discuss with your advisor(s) ideas for how to identify activities in the focus areas.

Area	Progress in past year	Focus area for next year
Research skills and scientific thinking		
Critical reading of scientific literature		
Study design		
Data analysis		
Interpretation of results		
Translation of research to practice		
Writing		
For a scientific publication		
For a research proposal		
For a lay audience, the media, or practitioners		
Grammar/structure		
Oral communications		
To a specialized scientific audience		
To a lay audience, the media, or practitioners		
In a classroom		
One on one		
English fluency		
Leadership/Personnel management		
Delegating, providing instruction		

Providing constructive feedback		
Leading and motivating others		
Advocating for change		
Professionalism/interpersonal		
Identifying and seeking advice		
Upholding commitments/deadlines		
Maintaining positive relationships		
Approaching difficult conversations		
Networking		
Establishing a professional identity		
Project management		
Prioritizing work		
Planning projects		
Budgeting projects		
Breaking down complex tasks		
Time management		
Managing data, finances, and other resources		
Bringing a project to completion		
Teaching		
Course planning		
Lecture delivery		
Other (specify)		

17. What are specific actions you will take in the next year to reach some of your goals in those focus areas?

The remaining sections have a series of questions you may find helpful to reflect on and discuss with your advisor as you see fit.

18. Mentoring

18a. Who are the advisors/mentors you interact with now?

18b. Are you getting sufficient mentoring from them?

18c. Name two things your mentor could do better

18d. Name two things you as a mentee could do better

18e. Do you initiate meetings?

18f. Would it be helpful to meet more or less?

18g. Are there other faculty it would be helpful to make connections with?

18h. In reference to your career goals, what resources can your advisor help provide or help you find?

19. Other considerations and factors

19a. What sorts of environments or relationships do you find most helpful for your own success?

19b. Your success as a student and in the longer-term is linked to your wellness. What are you doing to maintain your wellness? Do you want to talk to someone about wellness?

19c. Are there any new collaborations or connections you would like to make in the next year?

19d. What further research activity, other training, or professional development is needed before you can start a career search?