Individual Development Plan
Review Guide for Students

Once you have completed your Individual Development Plan (IDP) you will set up a meeting with your supervisor/career mentor to discuss it. When you meet with your supervisor/career mentor you should be prepared to discuss the contents of your IDP and your plan for completing the eight hours of professional development (PD) activities that will support building the skills and competencies needed to be competitive in your chosen career paths.

This guide is drawn from the IDP Review Guide for Faculty/Career Mentors and is intended to assist you in preparing for the review meeting. Your supervisor/career mentor will use the measurable outcomes and discussion prompts given to guide your conversation. The measurable outcomes given are measures by which your supervisor/career mentor can determine whether you have spent sufficient time thinking about your IDP and PD plan. Be prepared for this conversation by thinking about whether you are able to answer the questions outlined below.

Step 1: Choose three career paths
IDP Review: Measureable Outcomes for Faculty/Career Mentors

☐ Has the student chosen three paths which are of interest to him/her?
☐ Has careful consideration been given to the career choice outlined in the IDP?
☐ Can the student explain why they’ve chosen the three career paths?
  ● e.g. How do their proposed career paths align with career goals and personal ideas of career success?
  ● e.g. How do their proposed career paths align with their work and personal values?
  ● e.g. How does their chosen discipline and/or degree set them up for work in these fields?

Possible Discussion Points

- What did you do to research your three career paths?
- Did you use the career search resources outlined on in the IDP workbook?
- What resources did you find most helpful/least helpful when choosing your three career paths? Why?
- Why do these career paths appeal to you?
- Were there challenges/surprises you encountered when researching your career paths? If so, what were they?

Notes:

**The calendar lists the Faculties/programs that complete the PD requirement within their program. We hope all Faculties/Departments include information on their websites that describe which activities meet the PD requirement.**
Step 2: Skills Gap Analysis

NB: Students may wish to share their skills assessment with their supervisor/mentor; however, they are not required to do so.

**IDP Review: Measureable Outcomes for Faculty/Career Mentors**

If the student chooses to share the skills gap analysis with you, consider:

- Whether the student has given careful reflection to their past experiences (work life, leisure, learning, and volunteer work, experiences as a graduate student) and fully considered the level of their skills relative to the career paths they have selected.
- Can the student offer examples that provide evidence of the skills?

Regardless of whether the students shares his/her skills gap analysis, as the supervisor you can review the PD Activities proposed by the student. While this conversation may not be as rich in the absence of the student’s self-assessment you can still provide valuable feedback:

- Do the PD activities planned align well with the career paths identified in Step 1?
- Has the student sufficiently considered the various PD opportunities available on campus (and those that may be available through your department or professional associations)?

**Possible Discussion Points**

- What did the skills gap analysis reveal to you about your strengths?
- Can you give specific examples for the skills where you gave yourself a high rating? Can you explain why you gave yourself a low rating?
- What did the skills gap analysis reveal to you about the kinds of activities/roles to which you are drawn?
- What are the skills you need to develop in order to be competitive in your chosen career paths?
- Do you see patterns in your strengths or skills gaps?
- How do you plan to fill your skills gaps?
- Have you reviewed the PD Opportunities Guide to assist you in directing your activities?

Notes:
Step 3 Timeline

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☐ Has the student fully considered academic (course work, ethics and PD requirement, candidacy, etc.) and personal (family, work outside of program, life-work balance, etc.) factors that impact the timeline as outlined in the IDP Timeline Tip sheet?

☐ Does the student have a strong sense of the scope of their thesis/capstone project and is this appropriately considered in their timeline?

☐ Has the student allotted in time for publications or other measures of academic performance (e.g. exhibitions/performances)?

☐ Has the student considered when and how much time they will devote to professional development?

☐ Has the student considered alternate paths should the timeline not unfold as anticipated?

☐ Is the timeline realistic?

Possible Discussion Points:

- What factors did you consider when creating your timeline?
- How did you ensure that you considered all the factors that impact your program completion and professional development?
- Did you use the IDP Timeline Tip sheet when developing your timeline?
- Is there information you still need to gather/require so to make your timeline more accurate (e.g. funding, issues related to research, factors related to your personal life)?
- What add-ons would make your thesis/capstone project truly outstanding in the field?
- What is the minimum path to thesis and or program completion?
- Is it realistic to expect a clear path forward at this point? If not, what factors could impact your plan?
- What are your alternate plans if one path does not work out?
- What are your next steps in moving towards the goals laid out in your IDP?
- When will the IDP be revisited to measure progress and to reassess?
- Do you have questions or concerns about your next steps?

Notes:
Step 4: What’s Next?

- Once you have completed the IDP, you will keep it for your personal records and are encouraged to revisit it on an annual basis with your supervisor/career mentor. The Department *does not* keep a copy of the IDP in your record.
- The IDP should lay out plans for how the eight-hour PD Activities will be fulfilled. Once you have completed the IDP *and* the eight-hours, you will fill out the Individual Development Plan and Professional Development Form and have your supervisor/career mentor sign it. The form then goes to the graduate coordinator/administrator. He/she will then sign it and file it in your student department record. This form *should not* be submitted to FGSR.
- Still have questions? The FAQ for Students answers the most common questions students have about the Professional Development Requirement.