Completing the Eight Hours of Professional Development Activities

Graduate students are required to complete the University of Alberta Professional Development Requirement which includes the Individual Development Plan (IDP) and eight hours of professional development activities. It is mandatory for students admitted September 2016 and onwards. Some departments have professional development incorporated into their programs and students are advised to consult with their department's graduate coordinator to confirm the need to fulfill this requirement.

As students complete the IDP self-assessment of their skills and attributes in the IDP package, they should be able to identify their career goals and skill gaps. Students are encouraged to find the professional development activities that align with their individual career interests and develop non-disciplinary skills not included in their programs to fulfill the eight hour requirement.

FGSR, MyGradSkills.ca, the U of A Career Centre, and various other on and off campus units offer many professional development opportunities from workshops to internships. Please consult the professional development opportunities guide for more information.

Students will receive no more than four hours of credit from any single category listed below including attending sessions or completing online courses that relate to:

1. **Professional Practice**: This category includes topics such as time management, project management, intercultural communication, being an effective team member, receiving feedback and criticism, using strategic thinking skills and promoting creative thinking skills.
2. **Career Development**: This category includes topics related to life as a first year academic, teaching and researching at post-secondary institutions, resumes writing, career forums, mentoring and preparing for a job interview.
3. **Entrepreneurship**: This category includes topics related to starting up a business, self-employment, and entrepreneur training campus.
4. **Teaching**: This category includes topics related to teaching and includes FGSR’s Graduate Teaching and Learning Program.
5. **Skills Training**: This category includes training for safety sessions, learning additional software tools, attending workshops for skills outside the domain of research.
6. **Mentorship**: Only formal mentorship programs with graduate students as mentees apply, such as programs offered by U of A Career Centre, UAlberta Venture Mentoring, and Mentor-Up. Mentorship training sessions can also apply.
7. **Internships**: Students can fulfill the eight hour requirement by participating in a registered internship program and identifying skills and attributes gained during this experience.

What Activities Do Not Fulfill the Requirement?

Since the focus is on developing non-disciplinary skills, the following (unless otherwise stated) do not fulfill the eight hour requirement:

- Sessions also used towards ethics
- Attending a conference or society meeting
- Presenting a talk or poster
- Giving a performance/concert
- Information sessions about resources or programs
- Sessions required for a student to conduct their research

Reviewing the Eight Hours of Professional Development Activities

Students are expected to conduct their professional development activities with the same integrity they apply to all other areas of their graduate program. Students are responsible for keeping track of (and safeguarding) their own PD activities and for gather the proof of attendance. Students can demonstrate that they have attended sessions through a variety of ways. Departments will determine what they consider acceptable evidence. Options include:

1. Google sign-in is available at all FGSR events. Students receive a confirmation of their sign-in through email, which they retain as evidence of their attendance.
2. Students can sign a Declaration of Attendance. The presenter at the session/workshop also signs the form to verify attendance.
3. Many online courses provide students with a certificate of completion/participation.
4. Departments may choose to develop and use a PD record book. Students verify their attendance by having session presenters sign the document. Some departments record the Ethics and Academic Integrity Requirement this way.