Individual Development Plans (IDPs) for Graduate Students & Post-Docs

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“Graduate school is the first time that you really fail, and really feel like a failure in the one thing that you are really completely invested in.” (Djokic & Lounis, 2014)

“By creating my IDP, I was able to convert my goals into an action plan” (UH graduate student in IDP pilot program)
IDPs & Effective Goals

- Effective goal-setting practices based on decades of psychological research (e.g., Latham & Locke, 1991; Berkman & Lieberman, 2009; Balcetis & Dunning, 2010; Granot et al., 2017)
Individualized Development Plan (IDP)

- Personal action plan
  - 6 core areas
  - YOU define goals & priorities
  - Skip areas not relevant to you

but first.....

- Stages
  1. Reflection & self-assessment (all 6 areas)
Teaching & Mentoring

• What are your teaching and mentoring goals?
• Have you ever taught, guest-lectured or served as a TA?
• What feedback have you received on your teaching?
• What teaching skills would you like to improve?
• Have you ever served as a mentor?
• What qualities/skills do you associate with good mentoring?
• What mentoring skills would you like to improve?
## Stage 1B: Self-Assessment

### Teaching & Mentoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>LOW</th>
<th>HIGH</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Familiarity with inquiry-based learning</td>
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<td>Familiarity with active learning strategies</td>
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<td>Encouraging student participation</td>
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<td>Use of instructional technologies</td>
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<td>Providing constructive feedback</td>
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<td>Careful listening</td>
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<td>Respecting diversity</td>
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<td>Providing career guidance</td>
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<td>Serving as a role model</td>
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<td>Seeking teaching/mentoring help when needed</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1 2 3 4 5 N/A
Individualized Development Plan (IDP)

- Personal action plan
  - 6 core areas
  - YOU define goals & priorities
  - Skip areas not relevant to you

Stages
1. Reflection & self-assessment (all 6 areas)
2. Draft Action plan: *specific* milestones & deadlines
3. Get feedback from advisor & PD mentor
4. Review/revise each term
Graduate Student Perspectives (n=21)

All Responses (2017–2019)

- Conversations with my PD mentor exposed me to new ideas, opportunities, or perspectives
  - 63% Strongly Agree
  - 32% Agree
  - 5% Neutral
  - 11% Disagree
  - 32% Strongly Disagree

- My PD mentor provided valuable guidance & feedback regarding my IDP
  - 53% Strongly Agree
  - 37% Agree
  - 11% Neutral
  - 21% Disagree
  - 11% Strongly Disagree

- My research advisor provided valuable guidance & feedback regarding my IDP
  - 53% Strongly Agree
  - 26% Agree
  - 21% Neutral
  - 16% Disagree
  - 16% Strongly Disagree

- Creating my IDP helped me think about & define my long-term career goal(s)
  - 53% Strongly Agree
  - 26% Agree
  - 21% Neutral
  - 16% Disagree
  - 16% Strongly Disagree

- By creating my IDP, I was able to convert my goals into an action plan
  - 47% Strongly Agree
  - 37% Agree
  - 16% Neutral
  - 21% Disagree
  - 16% Strongly Disagree

- I would recommend creating an IDP to other graduate students or postdocs
  - 42% Strongly Agree
  - 42% Agree
  - 16% Neutral
  - 16% Disagree
  - 16% Strongly Disagree

Eason et al. (GSA Today, 2020)
Advisor & Mentor Perspectives (n=21)

Completing an IDP helped my advisee/mentee think about & define their academic & long-term career goals

I would recommend IDPs as a mentoring tool to other advisors/mentors

The IDP process helped facilitate communication about my advisee’s research goals/timeline, areas for skill development, & other expectations* (advisors only)

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Eason et al. (GSA Today, 2020 – Supplementary Data)

IDP forms and guidelines (but any format is fine) [https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1mqr0DtyKN21KHbqLF7pxnC-ieg5grkBA](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1mqr0DtyKN21KHbqLF7pxnC-ieg5grkBA)

Email Barbara Bruno ([barb@hawaii.edu](mailto:barb@hawaii.edu))
“By setting personal and professional goals for myself, I have been able to gain a clear vision of what I want to do with my time and my career. Whenever I feel overwhelmed or confused, I think back to the IDP structure and make goals that I can hold myself accountable to.”

- UH graduate student alum
IDPs especially important under COVID ...

"The graduate school culture feels so toxic."

"I may have to delay my degree to care/provide educational support for my children."

"I’ve already lost over 3 months’ time worth of research."

"The feelings of being useless and left out...are even worse in times like these."

"I have never felt so depressed, anxious, and inadequate."