

STUDENT NAME:

ADVISOR NAME:

Graduate school is about training you to ask and address new questions and discover your passion. Having honest and open discussions with your advisor is an important part of your training.

As a graduate student, you own your education. Be proactive! You are responsible to seek the training and guidance you need to conduct your research safely and ethically. You will want to take steps to foster relationships with mentors, including your advisor and committee, who will support you as partners in your training. The Individual Development Plan (IDP) forms are intended to help you consider what you need to succeed, make a plan, and revisit it every year. We encourage you to complete the IDP and discuss it with your mentors.

## KEYS TO A GOOD MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

### Think intentionally about your training

You will find it helpful to think through what you want to get out of your training. The IDPs can help you focus your goals and determine what you need from your advisors and other sources of support to help you achieve them.

## HOW TO COMPLETE YOUR IDP

1

### Step back and self-assess!

It's easy to lose sight of the bigger picture. Fill out this form, using the questions as a starting point for your mentoring relationship with your advisor.

2

### Meet with your advisor to discuss the IDP.

We encourage you to share your annual IDP with your advisor and schedule time to discuss it. We also encourage you to discuss your plans with your committee annually.

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. You are not limited to what is on this form.

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 your Action Plan accessible and check on it every few months.

5

### Share your plan.

We recommend but do not require that you submit your completed IDP to the DGS office as part of the Annual Progress Review.

### Have open and direct dialogue

Starting off with strong, supportive communication is a fundamental part of getting continual advice to help guide you throughout your academic and professional life.

### Establish clear expectations/steps

If you have additional questions or objectives related to your training, these meetings are a great time to bring them up and set action steps.

**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 primary responsibility for the successful completion of my degree.*
- *Meet regularly with my advisor and provide her/him with updates on the progress and results of my activities and experiments/research endeavors.*
- *Work with my research advisor to develop a thesis/dissertation project and select a committee.*
- *Identify my needs in mentors, including faculty and peers, and seek out those individuals whose mentoring styles are a good fit for my needs.*
- *Initiate requests for feedback and seek advice from my advisor, committee, and other mentors*
- *Be knowledgeable of the policies and requirements of my PhD program.*
- *Be responsible for maintaining up-to-date safety protocols and trainings.*
- *Attend and participate in lab meetings, seminars, etc. as relevant to my research interests.*
- *Keep up with original research in my field.*
- *Inquire about Professional Development Opportunities across Duke and pursue those opportunities that mesh well with my goals and program expectations.*
- *Be a good citizen, maintaining a safe and clean space, working collegially with everyone, and looking to participate appropriately in the intellectual life and collective governance of my program, school, and wider university.*
- *Discuss policies on work hours, sick leave, and vacation with my advisor.*
- *Discuss policies on authorship and attendance at professional meetings with my advisor.*

### **Advisor Responsibilities:**

- *Know my own teaching style and communicate that style clearly*
- *Be committed to my student's education and training as a future member of the CS research community.*
- *Be committed to helping plan and direct my student's research project, allowing my student to take ownership of your research while setting reasonable goals and establishing a timeline for completion.*
- *Provide and seek regular, honest, and respectful feedback on an ongoing basis.*
- *Be committed to improving as a mentor, learning about school and university resources for PhD students, and sustaining an inclusive intellectual community and welcoming climate.*
- *Be open, encouraging my student to raise concerns and helping find acceptable solutions to problems as they arise.*
- *Be knowledgeable of, and guide my student through, their program's requirements/deadlines.*
- *Advise and assist with my student's thesis committee selection.*
- *Lead by example and facilitate my student's training in complementary skills needed to be successful researcher, such as communication, collaboration, writing, management, and ethical behavior.*
- *Discuss authorship policies, acknowledge my student's scientific contributions to my lab, and work with my student to publish their work in a timely manner prior to or directly after their graduation.*
- *Connect my student to individuals in my networks as appropriate and facilitate an initial conversation about my student's career goals.*

1. What program requirements do you need to complete, and what is your plan to fulfil them?
2. What fellowships are you applying to, and have you been able to get the guidance you need?
3. What are your primary goals in academic training?
4. What resources or support will most help with your transition to grad school?
5. What actions can be taken to make sure these needs are met?
6. What is important in your mentoring relationship?
7. What features of the lab group and your relationship with colleagues are most helpful and supportive to your wellbeing?
8. Are there any factors that you are concerned may negatively affect your progress?
9. What help can your advisor or other faculty/staff provide regarding professional development and graduate training?

10. Your success as a student is tightly linked to your wellbeing. What are you doing to tend to work-life balance and positive mental health?
  
11. How do you feel comfortable communicating with your advisor (e.g., email, phone-call, text)?
  
12. How comfortable do you feel talking to other members of your advisor's lab? What can be done to help facilitate feeling included in the lab?

One of the most important parts of your PhD training is to develop a skill set transferrable beyond graduation. Evaluate your strengths and weaknesses below relative to the where you think a student at your stage should be, **marking your perceived current ability level from weak (1) to strong (3)**. Check the boxes for a couple of skills that you would like to target in the coming year. Ask your advisor how s/he agrees or disagrees with this assessment. An honest self-assessment and discussion will help you set goals for your training.

**Research Skills & Scientific Thinking**

	1 (weak)		3 (strong)	Target Skills for this Year
Broad-based knowledge of CS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Critical reading of scientific literature	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Experimental design, if relevant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Statistical analysis and interpolation of data.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Qualitative research methods, if relevant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creativity and innovative thinking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Understanding of submission/peer review process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identifying and seeking advice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Time management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Communication**

Writing for research proposal or publication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Writing with appropriate grammar and structure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speaking to a specialist audience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communicating one-on-one	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English fluency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working with constructive criticism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Translating complex ideas for a general audience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**THIS ACTION PLAN IS TO BE DEVELOPED JOINTLY BY THE GRADUATE STUDENT AND THE MENTOR DURING OR AFTER THE DISCUSSION.** Keep it accessible for your yearly IDP meetings and potential monthly check-ins, as determined by the two of you.

1

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

2

**Target Skills:** What (~1-2) did you identify as important development targets for the coming year? What actions are you planning to take to gain experience?

3

**Activities:** List any activities, whether sponsored within CS, hosted by other Duke units, or provided by entities outside Duke in which you and your mentor agree you should participate to achieve your academic objectives in the coming year.

4

**Financial Support:** If you know, what will be your financial support for the next year?

5

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

6

**Following Up:** How often do you and your advisor plan to meet and otherwise interact, as through regular email updates (reports on progress, challenges, and action items)?

7

**Deadlines:** Please list any known upcoming deadlines/manuscripts/projects that will require your advisor's review or feedback.

8

**Other:** Is there anything else you would like to discuss with your advisor/mentors at this time?