Introduction:
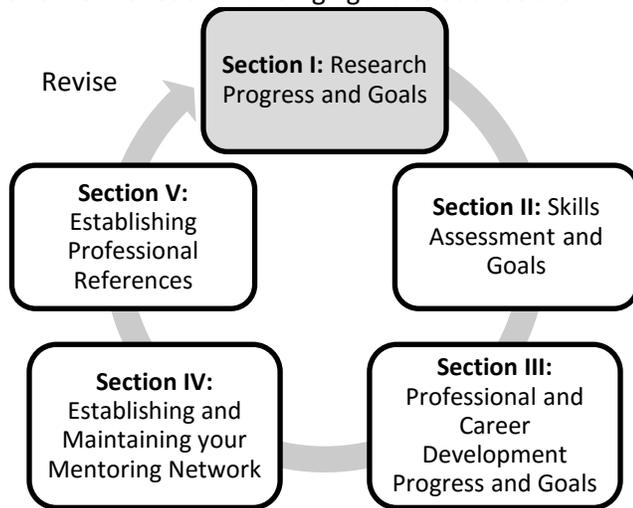
Individual Development Plan for UMass Amherst Graduate Students

An Individual Development Plan (IDP) is a set of professional and career development strategies to help graduate students achieve success at UMass Amherst and beyond. The concept of an IDP has been endorsed by a variety of disciplines and fields as well as federal funding agencies such as the NIH. The structure of the IDP is as follows:

The Role of the IDP
• **Empowers graduate students** to take ownership of their path through a process of self-reflection, assessment and goal setting • **Facilitates conversations** with mentors, allowing mentees to verify expectations and seek feedback and guidance for research and career progression • **Creates realistic road maps** for long term goals, short term deliverables, progress milestones, and career development • **Provides a path to resources, strategies, and mentors** for targeted research and career goals

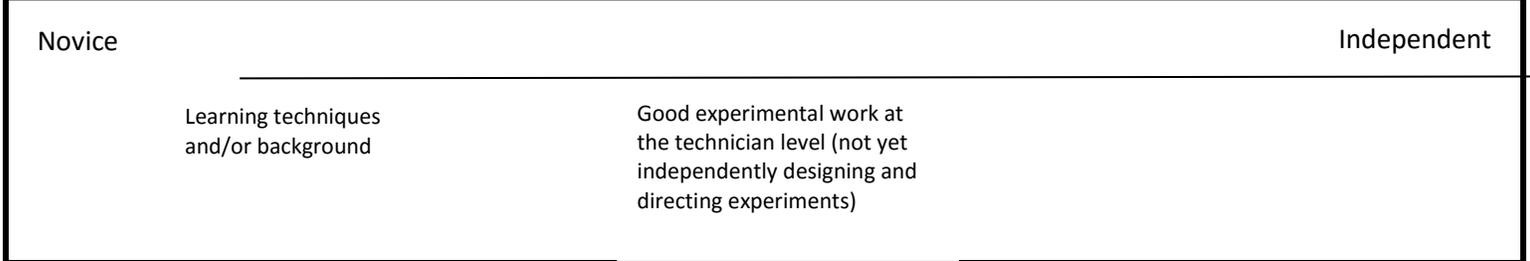| Role of the Advisee	Role of the Advisor/Mentor
• Reflect on annual research progress; establish goals, action plans and timelines for research progress in the coming year[1] • Complete a skills assessment, identifying areas of strength and weakness and establishing goals, action plans and timelines for improving skills in the coming year[2] • Reflect on professional and career development progress; establish goals, action plans and timelines for progress in the coming year[2] • Create a plan for establishing and engaging a Mentoring Network and Professional References[2]	• Foster a positive and safe environment for the sharing of constructive feedback • Discuss research progress and expectations; help prioritize short and long term goals to achieve research and degree milestones[1] • Offer insights about mentee strengths and provides guidance for areas needing development[2] • Create an open dialogue to help mentees align goals, skills, and interests with potential career paths[2] • Help mentees connect with resources and networks to advance research and career development goals[2]

1. Mandatory: discussion and documentation of research progress (Section I)
2. Recommended: discuss advisee-selected portions of these topics to foster advisee success.

Graduate Student:	Degree Program:

Date:	Anticipated time to graduation:	>1 year ☐1 year ☐2 years ☐3+years

Section I: Research Progress and Goals

1. **Reflect on annual research progress** (presentations, manuscripts, grants/fellowship applications, honor/awards, data collected, conferences attended, etc.)

2. **Indicate where you feel you are on the continuum of becoming an independent researcher:**

Novice

Independent

Learning techniques and/or background

Good experimental work at the technician level (not yet independently designing and directing experiments)

3. **Set Research Goals***

Research Goal(s)	Action Step(s)	Timeframe

*With all Goal Setting, make sure Goals are **SMART**- **S**pecific, **M**easureable, **A**ctionable, **R**ealistic, **T**imely

4. Signatures

I certify that I have reviewed Section I (Research Progress and Goals) with my advisor.

X _____
Advisee Signature

X _____
Date

I certify that I have reviewed Section I (Research Progress and Goals) with my advisee.

X _____
Advisor Signature

X _____
Date

5. Advisor Comments (Narrative describing student progress and expected goals)

Section II: Skills Assessment and Goals

1. **Assess Skills and Summarize**
    a. **Complete the Skills Assessment at myidp.sciencecareers.org (see Appendix I for instructions)**
    b. **Summarize highly proficient skills below**
    c. **Summarize skills that need improvement below**

Highly Proficient Skills:

Skills that Need Improvement:

2. **Set Skills Development Goals***

Skills Goal(s)	Action Step(s)	Timeframe

*With all Goal Setting, make sure Goals are **SMART**- **S**pecific, **M**easureable, **A**ctionable, **R**ealistic, **T**imely

Section III: Professional and Career Development Progress and Goals		
1. Identify Career Objectives		
Career Objective 1:		
Career Objective 2:		
2. Reflect on Annual Professional and Career Development Progress		
3. Set Professional and Career Development Goals*		
Professional and Career Development Goal(s)	Action Step(s)	Timeframe

*With all Goal Setting, make sure Goals are **SMART**- **S**pecific, **M**easureable, **A**ctionable, **R**ealistic, **T**imely

Section IV: Establishing and Maintaining your Mentoring Network

Establishing and maintaining a professional network beyond your primary advisor is important for success in at UMass and beyond. Potential mentors can include peers and near-peers (more senior graduate students and postdocs), family, friends, former classmates, former employers, former professors, current professors in your department, professors in other departments, and professionals in your field. Remember, you should be thinking of building a team of mentors. No one individual will share all of your values and provide all of the components you need to be successful. When identifying potential mentors, consider:

1. How might this individual contribute to your professional development?
2. What strategies would help you establish and maintain a relationship with this individual?

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1. **Reflect on your current mentoring environment. Where do you have strong support? In which areas could you use help/improvement? Do you have specific mentors in mind?**

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2. **Set Mentoring Goals***

Mentor Goal(s)	Action Step(s)	Timeframe

*With all Goal Setting, make sure Goals are **SMART**- **S**pecific, **M**easureable, **A**ctionable, **R**ealistic, **T**imely

Section V: Establishing Professional References		
Your job search will be highly influenced by references who can offer specific information about your research and professional skills. Who will these references be and how will you ensure that these individuals will have enough information to provide a thorough reference?		
Reference	Which of your skills can this reference talk about?	Strategy to inform and update your reference on your annual progress

Appendix I. Instructions for Using MyIDP

1.   Go to www.myidp.sciencecareers.org*

2.   To set up and account, click on the "first time user" button and set up a username, email address and password (once this has been set up you can select "returning user" and login with your username and password.)

3.   Once you are in the account, go to "Overview" (on the left side of the screen), select "Personal Information" and update your information

4.   Under "Assessment", select "Skills Assessment", then select the "my Assessment" tab and answer the questions. You can then use the "Summary" tab to get an overview of your skills. Use this to help you fill out Section II of your IDP.

5.   Under "Implement Plan" (the bottom red section on the left hand side of the screen), select "Completion Certificate" and select "Generate PDF" print out that PDF for proof of completion (Note that all sections will not be checked off, however there should be a check mark next to "Skills")

It is recommended that you also do the "Interest Assessment" and the "Values Assessment" as all of these are important when planning for your future.

It is also recommended that you check out the "Career Exploration" section including:
- "Consider My Career Fit" which has the tab "My Career Path Matches." This will suggest some potential careers based on your Skills and Interest Assessments.
- "Read About Careers" which has the tab "Resources." This will give you links to read about career paths.
- "Talk to People" which has the tab "Informational Interviews" which will give you some resources for talking to people about their careers

Please note, MyIDP is recording your answers at a snapshot in time. It is important to continue to reassess your skills, however please be aware that if you retake the assessment, previous results are not stored on MyIDP.

<mark>*Mentors can access a PDF of the skills assessment here and can evaluate the student independently.</mark>

Appendix II. Resources

Representative workshops coordinated by OPD and our campus partners*

Teaching	Communication	Leadership/Management	Career Preparation
☐ Teaching Tools and Strategies ☐ Rubric/ Syllabus Design ☐ Effective Grading and Responding to Student Writing ☐ Multimedia Tools for Enhancing Student Learning ☐ Basics of Online Teaching ☐ Using Digital Tools to Engage Students ☐ Cultivating Student-Teacher Relationships ☐ Engaging Students in Active Learning ☐ Team Based Learning ☐ Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness ☐ Introduction to the Teaching Portfolio	☐ Anatomy of a Science Paper ☐ Critical Reading for Critical Writing ☐ Developing an Effective Writing Process ☐ Soliciting Effective Feedback ☐ Healthy Writing Habits ☐ Understanding Plagiarism in Academic Writing ☐ Writing for a Variety of Audiences ☐ Academic Publishing ☐ Dissertation Writing Retreat ☐ Strategically Communicating Your Research ☐ Designing Technical Posters ☐ Managing a Digital Reputation	☐ Time Management ☐ Business Foundation Series In development: ☐ Conflict Resolution ☐ Team Building ☐ Leadership Skills	☐ Career Exploration Events/ Seminars ☐ Industry Site Visits ☐ Articulating Your Skills ☐ Working in the US (International Graduate Students) ☐ Link in to LinkedIn ☐ Networking at Conferences and Everywhere ☐ Developing Your Pitch ☐ Informational Interviewing ☐ Resume Basics ☐ Interviewing and Negotiating ☐ Finding Mentors, Sponsors and Advisors

*Please note this is a representative list of workshops provided by OPD and other campus partners. For details regarding current programing of OPD and other on campus providers please check individual websites.

Selected Web Resources for Graduate Students

Resource	Description	Link
Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning (CIRTL)	Improves the preparation of STEM graduate students and postdocs for careers that include college and university teaching	www.umass.edu/ctfd/teaching/cirtl
eVisors	Hosts webinars for career preparation (including entrepreneurship and business plans) and connects students with UMass Alumni Advisors	www.umassalumni.evisors.com
Institute for Social Sciences Research (ISSR)	Offers consultations on data analysis software and methods	www.umass.edu/issr/what-we-do/consultation
International Programs Office (IPO), International Students and Scholars (ISS)	Organizes events catered to International Students, including panel discussions and seminars on working in the US	www.umass.edu/ipo/iss/events-and-trips
UMass Amherst Libraries	Supports students with consultations and expertise in citation practices, data management and scientific publication. Contacts include: Maxine Schmidt (Head, Science and Engineering Library) Thea Atwood (Science and Engineering Librarian) David Mac Court (Reference Librarian)	www.library.umass.edu/news/events
Office of Professional Development (OPD)	Provides professional knowledge and skills necessary to thrive in academia, industry, public policy and the non-profit sector	www.umass.edu/gradschool/opd
Teaching Excellence & Faculty Development (TEFD)	Supports the professional development of faculty across all career stages and disciplines with a wide range of programs and resources; several resources and events are open to graduate students and postdocs	www.umass.edu/ctfd/calendar
Versatile PhD	On-line career exploration resource	www.umass.edu/gradschool/versatilephd * *free access provided through this link*
The Writing Center	Offers on-line and in person appointments to help writers develop a draft, clarify an argument, reflect on sentence structure, re-organize text, and build productive writing practices	www.umass.edu/writingcenter