What is the IDP?

The Individual Development Plan (IDP) is a tool graduate students use periodically to reflect on their training progress, identify professional goals, create manageable plans, and get feedback from their mentors. We encourage everyone to use the comprehensive career planning tool myIDP hosted by Science Careers at least once. Alternative versions of IDPs can be obtained from the Graduate College. Recognizing that effective use of an IDP varies from person to person and as one progresses through graduate school. We provide a simplified and tailored framework for self-assessment based on the core competencies that graduate students are expected to obtain.

Process

1. **Self-reflection** – Spend some time reflecting and journaling about your time in graduate school. *This is a private exercise*. Prompts include:
   - Are you in good physical, mental, and emotional health?
   - Is your research stimulating?
   - Is your lab supportive?
   - Have you identified a career you want to pursue once you obtain your PhD?
     - (Yes) Do you know what you need to obtain your desired job?
     - (No) How can you learn more about your career options?

2. **Complete the Milestones chart** – Check off the description that best describes your current skill level in each of the five core competencies (conceptual knowledge, research skill development, rigorous & responsible conduct of research, communication skills, and career development). Be honest, if you are below or above the level indicated by the time you have been in graduate school (pre-comps, post-comps, approaching graduation) it will be important to discuss your specific needs with your mentors.

3. **List 2 accomplishments or challenges** – These should be items from the last year (or last time you completed an IDP). Consider any recent experimental methods or results, your coursework, interpersonal relationships in your research group/department/program, your confidence in giving seminar/conference presentations, and your ability to network with peer and/or senior scientists.

4. **List 2 specific goals to complete in the coming year** – These should be "SMART" goals, simple and feasible ways to build on past accomplishments or solve challenges to ensure you progress towards mastery of the core competencies listed in the Milestones chart.

5. **Discuss your Milestones chart and new goals with your mentors** (*i.e.* Research advisor, Student Advisory Committee, Thesis Committee members) to prompt a discussion about your progress and additional opportunities for professional growth.

Biomedical Science Program in Molecular Medicine

Milestones for Graduate Training in Molecular Medicine			
	Pre-Comps (~years 1-2)	**Post-Comps** (~years 3-4)	**Ready to Graduate** (~years 4-6)
Conceptual knowledge	☐ Identify, understand, and discuss primary literature.	☐ Critically evaluate papers, apply concepts and methodology from the literature to your work.	☐ Synthesize a historical perspective on the development of ideas and methods in your specialty.
Research skill development	☐ Replicate experimental results and recognize when controls indicate technical problems.	☐ Design experiments, execute an unfamiliar protocol, and/or teach others how to perform experiments.	☐ Design sets of experiments to test a hypothesis, modify existing methods as needed, teach others how to interpret results.
Rigorous & responsible conduct of research	☐ Describe the rules and policies for ethical research practice.	☐ Identify and discuss how bias or external pressure can lead to misconduct.	☐ Act as a role model of integrity, assess nuance in situations, and report unethical practices if encountered.
Communication skills	☐ Describe your field of study, comfortably giving a short oral presentation on your current work, write a logical description of your methods.	☐ Design and explain a conference poster, give a platform presentation at a national meeting, draft a grant/project proposal.	☐ Give a 45 min seminar and feel comfortable handling questions throughout, be able to write both technical research papers, and distill your work so that non- scientists can understand you.
Career Development	☐ Identify different career opportunities, prioritize tasks to meet deadlines, start building a local professional network.	☐ Build/expand your professional network, identify resources to give you practical experience in a career of interest.	☐ Identify potential projects to further your research, education, or advocacy, and compete successfully for a job interview.
Translational Skills	☐ Identify a clinical mentor, describe the clinical relevance of your work in one sentence.	☐ Expand on your clinical knowledge for your project. What patient populations or subpopulations and underlying mechanisms involved?	☐ Define how your work could develop for use in human clinical populations.

Recent Accomplishments and/or Challenges

Goals for the next year

Biomedical Science Program in Molecular Medicine

Rough Timeline to Graduation					
Milestone	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**Year 4**	**Year 5**	**Year 6**
Aim 1					
Data Collection					
Data Analysis					
Manuscript					
Aim 2					
Data Collection					
Graduation					