

**Individual Development Plan  
GSBS PhD Students  
Year 2 Guide**

**Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences**

**GSBS IDP Overview:** The IDP for year 2 begins with reviewing your training expectations and competencies, and revising your career self-assessment from the previous year. You will then review, revise, and make new goals towards your research training and career advancement.

# 1 REVIEW TRAINEE EXPECTATIONS

In the second year of graduate school, GSBS students should be completing course requirements, working with their research advisor to develop a dissertation project, and working towards developing in-depth knowledge about their chosen research discipline. Students should also plan to participate in select career exploration and professional development activities.

The following are milestones you must complete by the end of year 2:

- Hold first advisory meeting
- Hold subsequent advisory meetings
- Complete online ethics module
- Complete all pre-candidacy course requirements
- Complete Scientific Writing course\*
- Petition for PhD candidacy

\*For a complete listing of milestones, see the [GSBS website](#)

# 2 REFLECT ON KEY TRAINING COMPETENCIES

GSBS has identified 7 training domains students should develop during graduate training. These are based on (but not limited to) those recommended by *ScienceCareers*. The following questions are intended to help you reflect on these 7 graduate training domains and guide you in establishing training goals.

<p><b>Scientific Knowledge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What literature should I be reading to develop my discipline specific knowledge?</li> <li>• Am I actively participating in departmental or program activities such as seminars, retreats, and journal clubs? Do I formulate questions about the content and results presented?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Research</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will I need to improve certain skills to carry out objectives required for my research?</li> <li>• Do I thoughtfully plan my experiments? Do I incorporate necessary controls?</li> <li>• Will I need additional training or guidance to apply appropriate statistical measures to my data?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do I organize, interpret, and present my research results using appropriate graphics and text?</li> <li>• Can I communicate my research results effectively in an oral and visual presentation to my colleagues?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Responsible Conduct of Research</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can I recognize and address concerns related to research misconduct?</li> <li>• Have I discussed authorship and publication practices with my research advisor?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Management, Leadership, and Professionalism</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Am I managing my time effectively in the lab?</li> <li>• Do I work collaboratively (fulfill tasks, communicate openly, give credit appropriately) with others?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Career Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have I updated my CV to reflect accomplishments over the past year?</li> <li>• Will I attend career development events to explore careers I may be interested in?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Wellness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Am I effectively managing my responsibilities and stress?</li> <li>• Do I recognize and tend to my physical needs (exercise, diet, sleep)?</li> <li>• Am I financially secure? Have I sought out resources to assist with financial planning?</li> <li>• Do I engage and maintain a social connection with others who can help support my wellness?</li> </ul>	

## 3 REVIEW/UPDATE YOUR CAREER ASSESSMENT

Review the career self-assessments of your skills, interests, and values at [myidp.sciencecareers.org](http://myidp.sciencecareers.org). Update your self-assessment scores and review your list of suggested career paths.



*Print or save your results, as you will need them for the rest of this IDP.*

## 4 SET YEAR 2 TRAINING AND CAREER GOALS

Once you have had an opportunity to reflect on your skills assessment and the training expectations for year 2 graduate students, it is now time to set your goals for the upcoming year.



Use the “GSBS IDP Year 2 Worksheet” to set your training and career goals.

## 5 IDP DISCUSSION

Having discussions about your IDP is a critical step in making progress towards your goals. In year 2, you are *highly* encouraged to have an IDP meeting with your research advisor. Having these conversations early in your research career helps establish an open and transparent line of communication between you and your research advisor.

### ***Steps to having an effective IDP discussion with your research advisor***

1. **Set up your “IDP Meeting”:** This meeting should be done privately and solely dedicated to a discussion on training and career-related goals. You will use the GSBS IDP Year 2 Worksheet to guide the meeting.
2. **Discuss your progress and goals:** Give an overview of your progress for last year and the goals you have set for this year. Share why these are the goals you have decided to focus on and how you arrived at them. Invite your research advisor to share his or her perspective on each of your goals, and listen carefully to his or her perspective and reactions. Ask whether the goal is realistic and feasible? Will you have the resources to achieve it? Are there additional or alternative goals your research advisor would like to share with you at this time?
3. **Discuss your career plans:** Invite your research advisor to share his or her perspective on your career plans, and listen carefully to understand his or her perspective and reactions.
4. **Meeting wrap up:** your research advisor for his or her support and set a time when you will meet to check-in.
5. **Revise your GSBS IDP:** After your IDP discussion, you may want to revise your goals for the upcoming year.



*Some students find it helpful to engage in IDP discussions with a career advisor before initiating the conversation with their research advisors.*

## 6 ACT ON YOUR IDP

This is your training, your career, and your future. By taking ownership over your development, you are taking the steps required to grow your skills and prepare yourself for your future career. The following are helpful tips on how to implement your plan:

- Break your larger goals into step-by-step plans with specific timelines. Consider creating deadlines that are added to your calendar.
- Communicate successes and challenges to your research advisor regularly.
- Periodically reflect on whether you need to revise your IDP throughout the year. Be flexible to arising opportunities and needs that may require a re-assessment of your IDP goals.

**Congratulations on completing your GSBS IDP for this year!!!**