Individual Development Plan (IDP) Initiative and Related Resources
Graduate Faculty Executive Committee - Information Item
September 12, 2014
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Review:

July 2013: NIH issued a notice encouraging institutions to require Individual Development Plans (IDPs) for NIH-funded graduate students and postdoctoral researchers: grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-13-093.html.

January 2014: A UW-Madison work group was formed (facilitated by the Graduate School) to determine how those affected by the NIH recommendation wanted to guide a campus response. Participants set guiding principles: using this opportunity to improve mentoring for graduate students and postdocs, utilizing existing IDP expertise on campus, and developing resources to minimize administrative burden.

June 2014: The Graduate Faculty Executive Committee received an update about the work group’s progress.

July 2014: Research Policy Advisory Committee (RPAC) endorsed a policy recommending IDPs for all graduate student and postdoctoral scholars and requiring them for all NIH-funded graduate student and postdoctoral scholars; the policy was signed by Martin Cadwallader and Dan Uhlrich.

August 2014: The work group’s IDP resources (summarized below) were launched: grad.wisc.edu/pd/idp. Approximately 500 NIH-funded PIs and 300 postdocs were notified of the requirement. Workshops for graduate students and postdocs at individual programs (by request) commenced; program coordinators have access to workshop materials and are encouraged to host the workshop themselves as well.

September 2014: Approximately 1,000 NIH-funded graduate students were notified of the requirement.

Upcoming:

September 2014: The IDP Reporting system will go live. The system allows mentees and mentors to log IDP-related activity so that PIs can verify IDPs are in use. It does not capture the content of the IDP, which is private to the mentee.

October 2014: Non-NIH-funded graduate students and postdoctoral scholars, as well as all faculty, will be notified of the policy and resources.

September – October 2014: The work group will host info sessions for NIH-funded PIs, grants admins, and mentors.

October – November 2014 (and repeated each semester): The Graduate School will continue to host IDP workshops for all graduate students and postdoctoral scholars.

October 2014 – August 2015: The work group will assess and refine the IDP resources and tools through surveys and focus groups with across all stakeholders.

Overview of IDP resources:

The following resources are described in greater depth at grad.wisc.edu/pd/idp.

For graduate students and postdoctoral researchers/scholars:

- Description of IDPs, including that the onus is on graduate students and postdoctoral researchers
- 10-minute video introduction to IDPs, referencing online resources, workshops, etc.
- UW-Madison IDP Template for all disciplines, including step-by-step instructions on assessing skills, interests, and values; writing SMART goals; discussing the plan with mentor(s); and implementing and revising the plan
- As an alternative to the UW-Madison IDP Template, reference to myIDP (myidp.sciencecareers.org), an interactive tool developed by AAAS for STEM disciplines
- Workshops hosted by the Graduate School open to all graduate students and postdocs
- **Workshops by invitation of program or department** hosted by the Graduate School - with expectation that graduate program coordinator/faculty will learn to lead these workshops themselves
- **IDP Peer Learning Groups**, facilitated by the Graduate School
- **Tips for discussing the IDP with mentor(s)**, including how to approach mentors who are resistant
- A **one-page summary for a mentee to hand to a mentor** who is entirely new to IDPs
- Reference to **articles from AAAS** about IDPs and career exploration
- **Definition of who can be considered a mentor**, with encouragement to develop a mentoring team
- **IDP Reporting System**, and instructions for use

For mentors:

- **Policy statement** summary, with link to full policy document
- Description of **mentors’ responsibility** regarding the IDP
- Brief description of how **IDPs are consistent with research** that shows a positive impact of goal-setting on performance
- **IDP Information sessions**
- Reference to **Research Mentor Training**, which provides more information about use of IDPs
- **IDP Reporting System** and instructions for use
- **Who to contact** with questions, including Graduate School administrators and faculty members who use IDPs

For principal investigators and program directors of NIH grants:

- **Policy statement** summary, within the context of NIH’s notice, with link to full policy document
- **IDP Reporting System**, and instructions for use
- **IDP Information sessions**
- **Who to contact** with questions, including Graduate School administrators and faculty members who use IDPs

For grants administrators of NIH grants:

- **Policy statement** summary, within the context of NIH’s notice, with link to full policy document
- **IDP Information sessions**
- **IDP Reporting System**, and instructions for use
- **Who to contact** with questions

For graduate program coordinators:

- **Resources to help them train grads/postdocs about IDPs**, including video of a training session and access to all Graduate School’s workshop materials, slideshows, and handouts
- Reference to **Research Mentor Training**, for IDP mentors, which provides more information about use of IDPs
- **Who to contact** with questions

For all:

- In addition to the above sections, the site contains an IDP FAQ and a feedback form
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Plan for NIH IDP Requirement

Background

On July 23, 2013, the NIH released NOT-OD-13-093, encouraging institutions to require graduate students and postdoctoral researchers (including scholars, trainees and fellows, and individuals in other postdoctoral positions) supported by NIH grants to develop Individual Development Plans (IDPs); this applies regardless of the NIH funding type. All progress reports should begin reporting on or after October 1, 2014 using the Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR). Reports should include an outline of current practices documenting how IDPs are used. It is hoped the use of IDPs will prepare graduate students and postdoctoral researchers for careers in the United States biomedical workforce.

In response to the notice from NIH, a work group was formed (facilitated by the Graduate School) to explore how those affected wanted to guide a campus response. Participants determined guiding principles including: using this opportunity to improve mentoring for graduate students and postdocs, utilizing existing IDP expertise on campus, and developing resources to minimize administrative burden.

Individual Development Plans

IDPs are written plans that give mentees ownership and structure to assess their skills, interests, and values, define clear and actionable goals, explore career options, and facilitate conversations with their mentor(s). IDP forms vary greatly, although many are structured around core competencies or learning outcomes. The onus for writing, maintaining, and implementing the plan is on the mentee, and conversations with and feedback from the mentor(s) are essential.

University of Wisconsin-Madison NIH IDP Policy

UW-Madison recommends all graduate students and postdoctoral researchers utilize Individual Development Plans to set academic and career goals and facilitate conversations with their mentor(s). Beginning October 1, 2014, all graduate students and postdoctoral researchers supported by NIH funding are required to have an IDP.
Tools

The Graduate School will identify individuals who must complete an IDP and will notify them of tools and resources available. The Graduate School will offer graduate students, postdocs, and PIs tools to track IDP progress.

Visit http://www.grad.wisc.edu/pd/idp to find:

- The IDP template for graduate student and postdoc mentees
- Guidelines and other supporting resources for mentors and mentees
- Resources for PIs and grants administrators, including the IDP Tracking Tool

Questions

If you have questions or concerns regarding this policy, please contact Bill Barker, Director, Research Policy, 608-262-0558, barker@grad.wisc.edu. Questions or concerns regarding resources or tools should be directed to Alissa Ewer, Assistant Dean, Professional Development and Engagement, at aewer@grad.wisc.edu or call 608-262-9970.

Martin Cadwallader, Vice Chancellor for Research and Dean of the Graduate School

______________________________ Date: 7/1/14

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Dan Uhlrich, Associate Vice Chancellor for Research Policy

______________________________ Date: 7/1/2014
Individual Development Plans
Summary for Mentors

What is an IDP?
An Individual Development Plan (IDP) helps grad students and postdocs assess skills, interests, and values; determine a plan for meeting academic and professional goals; and communicate goals with their mentor(s).

IDPs help mentees identify strengths and areas needing development and are consistent with studies showing the positive impact that goal-setting has on performance. IDPs allow mentees to be responsible for their own learning by setting clear and attainable goals. People are more likely to achieve goals when they have specific plans in place. IDPs also facilitate important discussions between mentees and mentors.

Are IDPs required?
NIH-funded grad students and postdocs are required to have IDPs, and UW-Madison recommends IDPs for all grad students and postdocs, regardless of funding source. The full policy is available at grad.wisc.edu/pd/idp.

What is my responsibility?
While the onus is on mentees to initiate and implement IDPs, it is also important that you encourage them to discuss their IDPs with you for the valuable advice and support you can provide. They may choose to share parts of their plan with you and keep other parts private, and may come to you at various points in the process: after self-assessment, while writing goals, or before implementing the plan.

If a grad student or postdoc indicated you as a mentor in the IDP Reporting System, you’ll get an email with instructions about how to report IDP activity. The system helps PIs and grants admins verify IDP use. It does not record IDP content, which is private to the mentee.

Where do I start?
Try these three easy steps:

- Point your mentees to the many online resources available to help them at grad.wisc.edu/pd/idp. The onus is on the mentee to initiate and implement the IDP; you’ll come in when they are ready to discuss it.
- Take about 10 minutes to listen to this video summarizing IDPs: youtu.be/Hll-gSsNIXY.
- Read through Mentor Tips (grad.wisc.edu/pd/idp/mentortips) so you’ll know how to guide and support your mentees when they come to you.

Where can I learn more about IDPs?
The webpage grad.wisc.edu/pd/idp gives an excellent overview for grad students, postdocs, mentors, PIs, grants admins, and grad program coordinators. Optional Info Sessions (grad.wisc.edu/events) will summarize the IDP process, give tips for IDP discussions, and demo the IDP Reporting System.

Research Mentor Training: UW-Madison is home to a nationally-renowned, evidence-based mentor training program, which includes guidance on IDPs. Try reviewing curriculum, hosting training in your department, or participating in training on campus. Learn more:

- Websites - Designed to provide resources to improve research mentoring relationships, these sites provide curricula, assessments, and resources relevant for mentors and mentees, as well as those implementing training. See: mentoringresources.ictr.wisc.edu and researchmentortraining.org.
- Training - The Delta Program in partnership with the Wisconsin Institute for Science Education and Community Engagement (WISCIENCE) and the Institute for Clinical and Translational Research offer training to members of the UW-Madison community. See: delta.wisc.edu/Courses_and_Programs/RMT.html and mentoringresources.ictr.wisc.edu/TrainingMain.

Who do I contact with questions?
Regarding policy: Bill Barker, Director, Research Policy, barker@grad.wisc.edu
Regarding resources, workshops, or website: Alissa Ewer, Professional Development and Communications, aewer@grad.wisc.edu

Additionally, the following faculty members are available to talk with you about their experiences using IDPs:

- Dr. Alan Rapraeger, Professor, Dept. of Human Oncology; Director, Office of Postdoctoral Studies, SMPH - rapraeger@humonc.wisc.edu
- Dr. Zsuzsanna Fabry, Professor, Dept. of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine; Cell. and Molec. Pathology Grad. Program Chair - zfabry@wisc.edu
- Dr. David Wassarman, Professor, Cell and Regenerative Biology; Chair, Grad. Program in Cell and Molec. Biology - dawassarman@wisc.edu

References