



The
UNIVERSITY
of **VERMONT**

Offices of the Vice President for Research
and the Dean of the Graduate College

Individual Development Plans for Graduate Students and Postdoctoral Researchers

Policy Statement

The University of Vermont and State Agricultural College (UVM) in compliance with the National Institutes of Health (NIH) (NOT – OD - 13 – 093) adopts this policy to support graduate students and postdoctoral researchers in the achievement of their career goals. The University supports and encourages career mentoring best practices, which includes having a trainee construct an Individual Development Plan (IDP).

Reason for the Policy

A Working Group of the Advisory Committee to the NIH Director (ACD) recently completed a study of the future of the biomedical research workforce in the United States (<http://acd.od.nih.gov/bwf.htm>). The Working Group made recommendations to the ACD about funding and training of graduate students and postdoctoral researchers to attract and retain the best and most diverse scientists, engineers and physicians from around the world.

One goal of the University is to better prepare graduate students and postdoctoral researchers to successfully participate in a broad-based and evolving economy. We call for Individual Development Plans (IDPs) for all graduate students and/or postdoctoral researchers.

Applicability of the Policy

This policy applies to all graduate students and postdoctoral trainees at the University.

Policy Elaboration

As NIH encourages the funded institutions to have trainees develop Individual Development Plans (IDPs) as of October 2014, the application of this best practice is extended to all graduate students and postdoctoral trainees at the University. Furthermore, the grantee institutes are to report the

implementation and use of IDPs on grant progress reports and document that IDPs are used to manage the training for these individuals to commence after October 18, 2014 (NOT – OD – 13 – 093).

Role of trainee/protégé: - To prepare at appropriate intervals their own IDP.
- The trainee/protégé is to schedule and meet mentor to discuss how the goals of the IDP will be integrated into the training plan.

Role of trainer/mentor: - To encourage trainees to prepare and utilize an IDP for the trainee/protégé.
- To meet with trainee/protégé to discuss the IDP in the context of the ongoing training program.

It is recommended that all NIH–supported trainees/protégés prepare an IDP using either of the following resources:

My IDP at the AAAS

<http://myidp.sciencecareers.org/>

Or the [UVM My IDP](#)

All other UVM graduate students and postdoctoral trainees are also encouraged to use one of these two forms, but may utilize a different form if it is a better fit with their training program.

Definitions

IDP: Individual Development Plan, which can take the form of anything from a complete 360 ° degree evaluation to a single simple yearly plan of activity. The IDP is designed to assist with:

1. Identifying professional goals and objectives
2. Assessing an individual’s skill set relative to their career goals
3. Developing a plan to acquire the skills and competencies needed to achieve short and long-term career objectives

NIH: National Institutes of Health

For additional information please see:

[Hobin, JA et al. 2014 CBE-Life Sciences 13:49-53](#)

Contacts

Questions related to the individual career development plan policy should be directed to the Dean of the Graduate College or the Vice President for Research.

Effective Date

October 2013