

Graduate Student Personal Development Plan

Part I. Overview of Graduate student training:

- **Define expectations for graduate training:** When the student enters the laboratory, mentors should sit down with new graduate students and clearly outline their expectations for the students training experience. Define the timeline for completion of the Ph.D. degree and discuss the specific benchmarks that the student must meet along the way. Outline the departmental requirements for earning the Ph.D. degree. Define your expectations for work habits, including time commitment, scientific ethics and interpersonal interactions within the laboratory.
- **Define student's dissertation project:** Within the first six months, the mentor should work with the student to define the specific aims of the student's proposed dissertation project. Discuss with the student the potential composition of their Ph.D. dissertation advisory committee. Discuss with the student the requirements for admittance into candidacy for the Ph.D.
- **Develop timeline for evaluation of student performance:** The mentor should work with the student to develop a schedule for evaluation of the student's performance. Ideally, the mentor should plan to have a biannual formal meeting with the student that will alternate with biannual Ph.D. advisory committee meetings. Thus, the student will be assessed quarterly and will prepare formal presentations for their advisory committee every six months. The mentor should keep records of these meetings for ongoing evaluation of student progress.
- **Assess student career objectives:** At least a year before the student is projected to earn their Ph.D. degree, the mentor should work with the student to define the student's career goals and to advise the student regarding the issues and process associated with pursuing their goals.

Part II. Ongoing Graduate Student Evaluation:

- **Mentor-Student biannual meetings:** Ideally, the mentor should sit with the graduate student twice a year to evaluate the student's performance during the previous six months. At a minimum, this should be done yearly. During the evaluation of the student, the mentor should discuss the following issues:

Has the student performed satisfactorily in required courses?

Has the student completed required training, including radiation safety, chemical safety, animal care and use, etc.?

Does the student spend adequate time in the laboratory to accomplish research goals?

Does the student have familiarity with the literature relevant to their project?