



Individual Development Plan (IDP) Self-Assessment

These sample questions and suggestions are meant to help you think through your individual growth areas and skill development opportunities. These are not meant to be exhaustive list of options. The tables are broken into early, mid-, and late graduate career to differentiate when a student may consider different questions or suggestions, however, recognize these suggestions are fluid and should be individualized to your development goals.

- Career Development
- Discipline-Specific Knowledge Development
- Research Skill Development
- Professionalism and Ethics Development
- Communication Skill Development
- Self-Management & Leadership Development
- Teamwork Skill Development
- Inclusive Excellence development
- Civic Responsibility skill Development

REFLECTION	
Questions to reflect on as you begin your IDP or revisit your IDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What activities have you been involved in and do you feel you’re managing your time efficiently? • Which experiences or accomplishments in the past year are you most proud of and why? • What actions have you taken to meet unexpected challenges this past year? • What areas of development would you like to focus on this year? • How do you plan to develop skills in those different areas? • What interests and activities outside of the classroom and lab are important to you? Are you able to spend time doing those activities? • How can your mentor/faculty advisor best support you?

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Early Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about various career opportunities for individuals with a Masters or PhD in your interest area in (e.g. faculty position in a research institution, faculty position at a teaching institution, research scientist in industry, entrepreneur, consultant, etc.) • Identify what your short and long-term career goals are and be specific. • Attend the UNL Career Fair • Conduct informational interviews with alumni • Create/update your LinkedIn, personal website, and CV <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Join groups on social networks relevant to your career goals ○ Make an account in Handshake
Mid - Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to explore your specific interests/objectives for your graduate studies. • If interested in academia, enroll in the COE Teaching Fellows Program and get CIRTL@Nebraska certified • Explore internship or externship opportunities • Identify a timeline for starting your career. • Create/update your LinkedIn, personal website, and CV • If you're interested in academia, what additional opportunities for teaching or tutoring are available within your department or community? • If interested in academia solicit formal or informal feedback on your course syllabi, teaching, pedagogy, online course organization, and diversity statements.
Late Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take advantage of professional and social networking opportunities. • Conduct informational interviews • Explore internship or externship opportunities • Identify universities or companies who you might be interested in working for or positions you may be interested in, review position openings, and apply. • If interested in academia, have you written a teaching, research, or diversity statement? • If interested in academia, review hiring rubrics assembled by the College of Engineering. • Identify opportunities for mentoring students either in the lab or in the community. Are there mentoring skills or knowledge you need to gain to be effective? • Have you received feedback on your CV and resume from your mentor or professional? • What opportunities could you seek out for additional interviewing practice?

RESEARCH SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Early Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What specific protocol or techniques do you need to learn to be proficient in the lab, computationally, analytically? • Identify specific methods or approaches that you need to be familiar with to perform your research. • Develop research questions that could evolve into your thesis or dissertation. • Begin to narrow the scope of your research topic. • Are there Fellowships (National, university, or college) you plan to apply for this year that include a research proposal or essay? Indicate due award amount and due dates. • What skills do you need to acquire to be successful with your research?
Mid - Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and refine your research questions. • Develop a Gantt chart to map your goals and timeline. • Work with your advisor on research you'd like to submit for publication. • What professional meetings or conferences do you want to or plan to attend? • Are their Fellowships (National, university, or college) you plan to apply for this year? Indicate due award amount and due dates. • Identify and define your thesis and dissertation topic • Learn to problem solve or troubleshoot your own experiments
Late Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What professional meetings or conferences do you want to or plan to attend? • Are there Fellowships (National, university, or college) you plan to apply for this year? Indicate due award amount and due dates. • Collaborate with your research advisor to define a timeline for your research publications. • Confidently design your own experiments, interpret results, troubleshoot any issues, and determine next steps. • Finalize your research and identify a timeline for defending your thesis or dissertation.

DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE

Early Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there specific courses you should enroll in to gain additional knowledge or explore interests? • Schedule a meeting with the Engineering subject Librarian. • Are you familiar with Engineering library or research databases? • Learn about new developments in your area of interest and discipline. • Attend discipline specific seminars and related interest seminars. • Determine the laboratory skills you need to be successful. • What preparations should you take for your qualifying exam? Schedule your qualifying exam • Assemble your supervisory committee.
Mid - Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend discipline specific seminars and related interest seminars. • What additional literature do you need to read in your interest area? • Identify reliable and influential sources of information in your field (e.g. trade publications and technical journals). • What knowledge do you need to gain that will broaden the scope of your work? • Learn to be critical of the literature and form questions for future research.
Late Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend discipline specific seminars and related interest seminar. • Stay current on research being conducted in your areas of interest and get a sense of where the field is going. • Make connections between your research and current literature. • Critically analyze the literature and identify important implications • Thoughtfully communicate how your research fits with current research being conducted in your field. • Confidently articulate knowledge from your field.

PROFESSIONALISM AND ETHICS DEVELOPMENT

Early Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the ethical standards of your discipline or discipline's professional organization. Know College and Universities resources if ethical issues arise during your research. Conduct the necessary training to conduct ethical research. Are their networking opportunities on campus or at a regional or national conference for you to participate in? Identify networking skills would like to develop?
Mid - Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend regional or national professional meetings or conferences and identify goals to present a session or poster. Are their networking opportunities on campus or at a regional or national conference for you to participate in? What networking skills do you need develop? Become a peer mentor.
Late Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in the ethics tracks at your disciplines annual conference. Are their networking opportunities on campus or at a regional or national conference for you to participate in? Become a peer mentor. Prepare for any professional exams such as the FE licensure exam

COMMUNICATION SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Early Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have your work reviewed at the UNL Writing Center. Are their Fellowships (National, university, or college) you plan to apply for this year that include a research proposal or essay? Indicate due award amount and due dates. Identify others, in addition to your PI, who can act as an editor and help you brainstorm. Identify opportunities at the department, college, university, and scientific meetings/conferences to present your work. Identify opportunities to practice your networking skills. Participate in professional development focused on communication such as International TA Training
Mid - Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Join a writing group to help stay on task to meet your thesis or dissertation writing goals. Are their Fellowships (National, university, or college) you plan to apply for this year that include a research proposal or essay? Indicate due award amount and due dates. Collaborate with your advisor on research you'd like to submit for publication. Have your work reviewed at the UNL Writing Center. Present your work at a regional or national conference as a session or poster and actively network with professionals in your interest area. Participate in professional development focused on communication such as the COE Graduate Teaching Fellows Program or the Engineering NU Tech Ventures Pitch Competition
Late Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with your research advisor to write a grant, training grants, postdoc fellowships, or co-authors on research grants. Submit your research for publication. Present your work at a regional or national conference as a session or poster and actively network with professions in your interest area. Receive feedback on your presentation skills to help improve. Do you have an elevator pitch to briefly explain your research? Are you able to review others work and provide constructive feedback?

SELF-MANAGEMENT & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Early Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Join a student organization. • Understand your finances, build a budget, and make a plan for loan repayment at the UNL Money Management Center. • Attend related seminars as part of the COE Grad Programs Seminar Series • Attend related workshops as part of the Office of Graduate Studies workshop Series • Review career development opportunities. • Schedule a regular check-in meeting with your advisor and develop a timeline to meet your graduate milestones. • Review the Office of Graduate Studies Steps to Degree Completion website and mark key deadlines in your calendar.
Mid - Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify leadership positions within and outside of the university to enhance your leadership skills (ex: student org leadership, professional org leadership, lab leadership, tutoring, etc.) • Develop a strategy to manage your time effectively. • Review career development opportunities. • Attend related seminars as part of the COE Grad Programs Seminar Series • Attend related workshops as part of the Office of Graduate Studies workshop Series • Mentor an undergraduate student in your lab or student organization. • Fill out your Memorandum of Courses or Program of Studies with your advisor for the Office of Graduate Studies
Late Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in a student organization and take on a leadership role • Learn about conflict management and resolutions and apply them to situations in your daily life. • Review career development opportunities. • Attend related seminars as part of the COE Grad Programs Seminar Series • Attend related workshops as part of the Office of Graduate Studies workshop Series • Apply for graduation and schedule your thesis or dissertation defense. Be mindful of paperwork deadlines to OGS.

TEAMWORK SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Early Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in group work in your courses • Set up study groups to help you tackle difficult material. • Attend related activities, seminars, workshops, classes, or read related literature. • Join a student organization such as Graduate Engineering Student Advisory Board, your department's GSA, NOGLSTP, or many other student orgs focused on graduate students.
Mid - Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate on a research or group project with students in your program or another degree program. • Join a student organization such as Graduate Engineering Student Advisory Board, your department's GSA, NOGLSTP, or many other student orgs focused on graduate students. • If asked, serve on a committee in your department, College or within your discipline. • Attend related activities, seminars, workshops, classes, or read related literature. • Utilize a task management software to increase efficiency in teams • Practice effective teamwork in your lab groups and classes.
Late Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate on a research or group project with students in your program or another degree program. • Practice effective teamwork in your lab groups and classes. • If asked, serve on a committee in your department, College or within your discipline. • Attend related activities, seminars, workshops, classes, or read related literature. • Utilize a task management software to increase efficiency in teams • Start lab or class traditions or celebration to increase community and team building

INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE DEVELOPMENT

Early Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn more about campus resources such as the LGBTQA+ Center, The Women’s Center, Military and Veterans Success Center, and many others. Take a graduate elective level course from one of the following departments to explore issues related to diversity and inclusion in the classroom from departments such as: The Institute of Ethnic Studies, African American and African Studies Program, Latino and Latin American Studies Program, Native American Studies Program, and Women’s and Gender Studies. Enjoy the arts, such as the Sheldon Art Museum (Free for students) or attend an event at the Lied Center (tickets are free or price reduced for current students). Join a recognized student organization such as SWE, SHPE, NSBE, or NOGLSTP. Mentor undergraduate students in your research lab, a class your TA, Summer Research Program, Women in Engineering (WIE) or the Multicultural Engineering Program cohort-based programs.
Mid - Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enjoy the arts, such as the Sheldon Art Museum (Free for students) or attend an event at the Lied Center (tickets are free or price reduced for current students). Mentor undergraduate students in your research lab, a class your TA, Summer Research Program, Women in Engineering (WIE) or the Multicultural Engineering Program cohort-based programs. Participate in or attend international celebrations such as Omani Night, Vietnamese Night, Rwandan Night, or many others. Attend and/or participate in on campus conferences such as the UNL Gender and Gender Equity Conference or the Conference for Undergraduate Women in Physical Sciences
Late Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mentor undergraduate students in your research lab, a class your TA, Summer Research Program, Women in Engineering (WIE) or the Multicultural Engineering Program cohort-based programs. Help develop and expand multicultural activities and programming in COE and university.

CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Early Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek opportunities for community service. Participate in engineering outreach events with K-12 students. Volunteer to tutor students in our local school system. Organize a local clean up or recycling event. Put a team together and participate in UNL’s the Big Event If applicable, register to vote in Nebraska.
Mid - Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek opportunities for community service. Participate in engineering outreach events with K-12 students. Volunteer to tutor students in our local school system. Put a team together and participate in UNL’s the Big Event Submit a proposal for Give Back. Big. If invited, join a search committee. Participate in local advocacy groups.
Late Graduate Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek opportunities for community service. Participate in engineering outreach events with K-12 students. Volunteer to tutor students in our local school system. Put a team together and participate in UNL’s the Big Event Submit a proposal for Give Back. Big. If invited, join a search committee. Participate in local advocacy groups.

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