



## Individual Development Plan (IDP) Self-Assessment

These sample questions are meant to help you think through your individual growth areas and skill development opportunities and are not meant to be exhaustive options. The tables are broken into early career, mid-career, and late career to differentiate when a student may consider different questions, 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	
<b>Questions to reflect on as you begin your IDP or revisit your IDP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What activities have you been involved in and do you feel you're managing your time efficiently?</li><li>• Which experiences or accomplishments in the past year are you most proud of and why?</li><li>• What actions have you taken to meet unexpected challenges this past year?</li><li>• What areas of development would you like to focus on this year?</li><li>• How do you plan to develop skills in those different areas?</li><li>• What interests and activities outside of the classroom and lab are important to you? Are you able to spend time doing those activities?</li><li>• How can your mentor/faculty advisor best support you?</li></ul>

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT

<b>Early Career</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.)</li> <li>• Identify what your short and long-term career goals are and be specific.</li> <li>• Attend the UNL Career Fair</li> <li>• If interested in academia, enroll in the <a href="#">COE Teaching Fellows Program</a></li> <li>• Conduct informational interviews with alumni</li> <li>• Create/update your LinkedIn, personal website, and CV             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Join groups on social networks relevant to your career goals</li> <li>○ Make an account in <a href="#">Handshake</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Mid - Career</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to explore your specific interests/objectives for your graduate studies.</li> <li>• Get <a href="#">CIRTL@Nebraska certified</a></li> <li>• Explore internship or externship opportunities</li> <li>• Identify a timeline for starting your career.</li> <li>• Create/update your LinkedIn, personal website, and CV</li> <li>• If you're interested in academia, what additional opportunities for teaching or tutoring are available within your department or community?</li> <li>• If interested in academia solicit formal or informal feedback on your course syllabi, teaching, pedagogy, online course organization, and diversity statements.</li> </ul>
<b>Late Career</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take advantage of professional and social networking opportunities.</li> <li>• Conduct informational interviews</li> <li>• Explore internship or externship opportunities</li> <li>• Identify universities or companies who you might be interested in working for or positions you may be interested in, review position openings, and apply.</li> <li>• If interested in academia, have you written a teaching, research, or diversity statement?</li> <li>• 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?</li> <li>• Have you received feedback on your CV and resume from your mentor or professional?</li> <li>• What opportunities could you seek out for additional interviewing practice?</li> </ul>

## RESEARCH SKILL DEVELOPMENT

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

## DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE

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

## PROFESSIONALISM AND ETHICS DEVELOPMENT

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

## COMMUNICATION SKILL DEVELOPMENT

<b>Early Career</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have your work reviewed at the <a href="#">UNL Writing Center</a>.</li> <li>Are their <a href="#">Fellowships</a> (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.</li> <li>Identify others, in addition to your PI, who can act as an editor and help you brainstorm.</li> <li>Identify opportunities at the department, college, university, and scientific meetings/conferences to present your work.</li> <li>Practice your networking skills.</li> </ul>
<b>Mid - Career</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Join a writing group to help stay on task to meet your thesis or dissertation writing goals.</li> <li>Are their <a href="#">Fellowships</a> (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.</li> <li>Collaborate with your advisor on research you'd like to submit for publication.</li> <li>Have your work reviewed at the <a href="#">UNL Writing Center</a>.</li> <li>Present your work at a regional or national conference as a session or poster and actively network with professionals in your interest area.</li> <li>Participate in the <a href="#">Engineering NU Tech Ventures Pitch Competition</a></li> </ul>
<b>Late Career</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with your research advisor to write a grant, training grants, postdoc fellowships, or co-authors on research grants</li> <li>Submit your research for publication.</li> <li>Present your work at a regional or national conference as a session or poster and actively network with professions in your interest area.</li> <li>Receive feedback on your presentation skills to help improve.</li> <li>Do you have an elevator pitch to briefly explain your research?</li> <li>Are you able to review others work and provide constructive feedback?</li> </ul>

## SELF-MANAGEMENT & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

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

## TEAMWORK SKILL DEVELOPMENT

<b>Early Career</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage in group work in your courses</li> <li>• Set up study groups to help you tackle difficult material.</li> <li>• Join your department's /school's Graduate Student Association</li> <li>• Join Graduate Engineering Student Advisory Board</li> <li>• Join a student organization such as your department's GSA, <a href="#">NOGLSTP</a>, or many other <a href="#">student orgs</a> focused on graduate students.</li> </ul>
<b>Mid - Career</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate on a research or group project with students in your program or another degree program.</li> <li>• Engage in group work in your courses</li> <li>• Join your department's /school's Graduate Student Association</li> <li>• Join Graduate Engineering Student Advisory Board</li> <li>• Practice effective teamwork in your lab groups</li> </ul>
<b>Late Career</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate on a research or group project with students in your program or another degree program.</li> <li>• Engage in group work in your courses</li> <li>• Practice effective teamwork in your lab groups</li> <li>• Utilize a task management software to increase efficiency in teams</li> <li>• Start lab or class traditions or celebration to increase community and team building</li> </ul>

INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE DEVELOPMENT	
Early Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn more about campus resources such as <a href="#">the LGBTQA+ Center</a>, <a href="#">The Women’s Center</a>, <a href="#">Military and Veterans Success Center</a>, and many <a href="#">others</a>.</li> <li>Take a graduate elective level course from one of the following departments to explore issues related to diversity and inclusion in the classroom: <a href="#">The Institute of Ethnic Studies</a>, African American and African Studies Program, Latino and Latin American Studies Program, Native American Studies Program, and <a href="#">Women’s and Gender Studies</a>.</li> <li>Visit the <a href="#">Sheldon Art Museum</a></li> <li>Join a recognized student organization such as SWE, SHPE, NSBE, or <a href="#">NOGLSTP</a>.</li> <li>Attend the <a href="#">UNL Gender and Gender Equity Conference</a>.</li> </ul>
Mid - Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate as a poster judge for the <a href="#">Conference for Undergraduate Women in Physical Sciences</a></li> <li>If you haven’t yet, attend an event at the <a href="#">Lied Center</a> (tickets are free or price reduced for current students)</li> <li>Participate in or attend international celebrations such as Omani Night, Vietnamese Night, Rwandan Night, or many others.</li> <li>Attend the <a href="#">UNL Gender and Gender Equity Conference</a>.</li> </ul>
Late Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend the <a href="#">UNL Gender and Gender Equity Conference</a>.</li> <li>Mentor undergraduate students in the Women in Engineering (WIE) or the Multicultural Engineering Program cohort based programs.</li> <li>Help develop and expand multicultural activities and programming in COE and university.</li> </ul>

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

## References

Rutgers University. (2020). Graduate School New Brunswick and Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School: The individual development plan for graduate students at Rutgers University. Retrieved from [http://rwjms.rutgers.edu/education/gsbs/student\\_affairs/documents/IDPRutgers.pdf](http://rwjms.rutgers.edu/education/gsbs/student_affairs/documents/IDPRutgers.pdf)

Stony Brook University. (2020). Stony Brook University Graduate School IDP Toolkit. Retrieved from <https://grad.stonybrook.edu/professional-development/idp-toolkit/>

Stanford University. (2020). Stanford Office of Postdoctoral Affairs: Your Individual Development Plan (IDP). Retrieved from <https://postdocs.stanford.edu/current-postdocs/navigating-your-individual-development-plan-idp/your-individual-development-plan>

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. (2020). Graduate School Professional Development: Individual Development Plans. Retrieved from <https://gradprofdev.unc.edu/idp/>