Individual Development Plan for UNC DOP Faculty and Fellows

Individual Development Plans (IDPs) provide a planning process that identifies both professional development needs and career objectives. IDPs can also serve as tools to help facilitate communication between mentees and their mentors.

Goals

An IDP can be one component of a broader mentoring program and can help mentees identify: a) long-term career options they wish to pursue and the necessary tools to meet these goals or b) short-term needs for improving current performance. This IDP will focus on long-term career options, particularly as they pertain to NIH-level research.

Outline of the IDP Process

The development, implementation and revision of the IDP require a series of steps to be conducted by the mentee and then discussed with his/her mentor. These steps are an interactive effort and ideally both the mentee and his/her mentor will fully participate in this process.

Step 1	**Identify mentors**: Identify career, peer, and research mentors to help you while you are at UNC.
Step 2	**Conduct a Skills-assessment**: Conduct an assessment of your strengths, weaknesses, and skills; then ask your mentor/colleague to review your skills assessment with you.
Step 3	**Completing the IDP**: State your career goals and write your Annual IDP.
Step 4	**Completing your timeline**: Set a date for your RO1 submission/completion and work backwards to your current position and funding steps (e.g., K award)
Step 5	**Reviewing your IDP**: Set an appointment with the Pediatric Scholars Program (PSP) for a consult.
Step 6	**Implementing your IDP**: Set appointments with your mentors. Discuss your IDP with your mentors; implement the steps in your IDP; periodically review progress with your mentors and the PSP.

Creating and Executing Your Annual Individual Development Plan

Step 1: Identify Your Mentors
Identifying a good mentor is vital to your success as a physician scientist. There are many things to consider before approaching a possible mentor, such as funding, availability and research interests. The time it takes to research and identify a mentor can be anywhere from six months to 1 year. We recommend you identify at least three mentors:
- Career Mentor: A career mentor is a senior or well-established faculty member, who is in the role you are working towards. They should be available to meet with you every six months or yearly to discuss your career goals and progress within your department.
- Research Mentor: A research mentor is someone who matches your research interests and goals. We recommend someone who is well-published in peer reviewed journals. They should be well-funded and match your preferred type of funding. For example, if you would like to apply for a NIH R01 Grant, it is critical to have a mentor who has consistent R01 funding. This person should be available for check-ins every week or every other week.
- Peer Mentor: A peer mentor is someone who has similar experiences, but has been actively pursuing research and career advancement for a longer period of time than you. They may or may not share your research interests. This person should be available for monthly check-ins, but may want to meet more or less frequently.

For more information on choosing a successful mentor, please visit this link from the NIH's Office of Intramural Training and Education.

Step 2: Skills Assessment
Assess your strengths, weaknesses and skills. When you have completed the self-evaluation below, share and discuss the items on the form with your mentors.

Self-Evaluation

Evaluate your skills and abilities in the following areas where a 5 is "Highly Proficient" and 1 is "Needs Improvement."

Research Skills:						
	Designing studies and proposals	1	2	3	4	5
	Obtaining and gathering data	1	2	3	4	5
	Analytical skills	1	2	3	4	5
	Problem solving/troubleshooting	1	2	3	4	5
	Creativity/developing new research directions	1	2	3	4	5
Professional Skills:						
	Grant writing skills	1	2	3	4	5
	Familiarity with different types of grants	1	2	3	4	5
	Budgeting	1	2	3	4	5
	Oral and/or poster presentations	1	2	3	4	5
	Being a mentee	1	2	3	4	5

Step 3: Write an Annual Individual Development Plan
In Step 2, you assessed your skills. Now it is time to reflect on your progress in the past year toward your career goals and to outline how you should move forward during the coming year. Your IDP is a changing document, because needs and goals are constantly evolving. The aim is to set clearly defined career goals. To help you reach those goals, your IDP will help you create an approach for building upon current strengths and skills over the next year while also providing a plan for you to address areas where you need further development.

The specific objectives of an Annual IDP are to:
- Create an annual outline that will help you achieve your long-term career goals.

- Establish target dates for the completion of various training or skills improvement opportunities. Work backwards from when you want to have a R01 and list the steps you need to accomplish to submit a R01 within your timeline. For example: Will you submit a K application? If so, what kind?
- Set goals and sub-goals for the next year, including a discussion of how you will spend your time.
- Define in detail the approach you plan to take in order to obtain the specific skills and strengths needed (e.g., courses, technical skills, teaching, supervision) along with an anticipated time frame for obtaining those skills and strengths.

A blank Annual Individual Development Plan is available at the end of this document.

Step 4: Generating a Timeline
Generating a timeline can be daunting. We recommend separating your goals into short-term and long-term.

Short-term
- 3 months from now: Write Specific Aims
- 6 months from now: Submit for internal or local funding
- 12 months from now: Submit to the NIH
- 24 months from now: Resubmit to the NIH with pilot data

Long-term
A Gantt chart is a useful tool to visualize achievement of your goals over time. You can use this chart for short-term and long-term goals. Below is an example of a Gantt chart showing a long-term outline of career goals, beginning with identifying mentors and ending with submission of a R01.

	2029	2028	2027	2026	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
R01 submitted	███	███	███								
K# awarded				░░░	░░░	░░░					
K# resubmitted					░░░	░░░					
K# submitted						███	███				
KL2 awarded							░░░	░░░	░░░		
KL2 resubmitted								░░░	░░░		
KL2 submitted									░░░	░░░	
Identify Mentors										███	███

You can read more about Gantt charts here.

Step 5: Review Your IDP with Mentors and the PSP
Set up a one-on-one consult with the Pediatric Scholars Program. At this meeting, you should have the following materials prepared:
- Your completed IDP for short-term and long-term goals.
- Up-to-date CV.
- Biosketch in NIH format.
- Any current grant applications and their progress, regardless of completion status.

Follow up meetings may be set up with you, your mentors and the PSP as needed.

Step 6: Implement Your IDP
Writing out your IDP is just the beginning of the career development process and serves as the road map. Going forward, it's important to put your plan into action. Put it somewhere easy to find and read it over regularly to check your progress.

Each major professional goal that you write for the upcoming year should be broken down into smaller, accomplishable sub-goals, steps or "deliverables," with specific dates for completion. These smaller sub-goals ultimately lead to the accomplishment of the final goal. For example:

> Major goal: Submit a paper for publication. Due date—March 2019
> Sub-goal #1: Complete data analysis, figures and outline. Completion date—October 2018
> Sub-goal #2: Complete the Introduction section. Completion date—November 2018
> Sub-goal #3: Complete the Discussion section. Completion date—December 2018

Be specific. Revise and modify the plan as necessary. It will need to be modified as circumstances and goals change. Plan to set frequent meetings with your mentors to review and discuss your IDP. Revise your IDP on the basis of these discussions and set new goals.

Annual Individual Development Plan for (Year)

Name:
Date:
Your current academic year:
Your current academic title and rank:
Tenure-track: Y   N

Step 1: Mentors
Put the names of your mentors below. If you lack a mentor for any of the categories below, then a) determine a timeline to identify one, and b) list some names you are considering.

- Name of your career mentor(s):
- Name of your research mentor(s):
- Name of your peer mentor(s):

Step 2: Skill Development

- What specific skills or expertise (methods, techniques, specific courses, etc) have you already acquired during the course of your project?
- What specific skills or expertise (methods, techniques, specific courses, etc) do you need to learn to accomplish this project?
- What further development do you need in the areas of grant writing, oral presentation of your work, manuscript writing, or being a better mentee? What will you do during the next year to improve in these areas?
- What further development do you need in the areas of leadership, budgeting, time management and organization? What will you do during the next year to improve in these areas?
- What are your specific aims of your research project? Is each aim independent of each other? Are they fishing, or will an answer be obtained regardless of outcome?

Step 3: Career, Professional and Research Goals

- Briefly describe your research project goals.
- Describe your past and anticipated oral or poster presentations (list dates of previous and future presentations, if possible). How does your prior work relate to your current project(s)?

- Describe anticipated publications (describe previous and anticipated titles/topics of manuscripts and anticipated dates of submission; include both first author and collaborative publications).
- What are your professional goals for the upcoming year?
- What are your long-term career goals (3-5 years)?
- What are some motivating factors for pursuing these particular goals?
- Are there special circumstances or barriers that may make it more challenging to achieve your goals for the upcoming year?
- What were your main goals for the past year?
- Which of the above goals did you meet? If you did not meet a goal, please explain why.
- Review the criteria for promotion (link). When will you be due for promotion review? Are you on track for promotion?

Step 4: Timeline
- Sketch or chart your short-term and long-term timeline(s), working back from your end goal (e.g., drafting Specific aims, receiving a R01) to your current position.

Recommended Materials and Resources

Grant Writing:
- The Grant Application Writer's Workbook (National Institutes of Health Version) Stephen W. Russell and David C. Morrison http://www.grantcentral.com/workbooks/national-institutes-of-health/
- Writing for Biomedical Publication (A Publication Guide for Biomedical Scientists) Christopher J. Papasian and David C. Morrison http://www.grantcentral.com/workbooks/biomedical-publication/