**Individual Development Plan (IDP) and Professional Development (PD) Requirements for Nursing Graduate Students**

**Purpose**

To augment your academic graduate program requirements and to promote your professional success after the program, the University of Alberta Faculty of Graduate Studies & Research (FGSR), now called Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS), has a professional development requirement that includes: (1) an Individual Development Plan (IDP), and (2) eight hours of Professional Development (PD) activities (see FGSR [Professional Development Requirement](https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/professional-development/professional-development-requirement/index.html)).

As stated on the FGSR website: “The Individual Development Plan (IDP) is a crucial part of graduate student professional development and is a tool to assist your career planning. The IDP offers you an opportunity to think about how you will complement the disciplinary knowledge you develop through your program with skills, competencies, and experiences academic and non-academic employers are looking for. The IDP is an opportunity to set you on a path to achieving your professional goals” (FGSR website). Your IDP will serve as the document in which you will identify learning goals and activities, while the eight hours of PD activities will allow you to address the career planning needs you’ve identified within your IDP.

Note: Students who completed their IDP & PD as part of a Master’s degree at the U of A, are required to create an IDP & PD relevant to their PhD program at the U of A.

**Timeline**

Please note the following timeline expectations according to your graduate program:

1. Submission of the *Abbreviated IDP Form (attached below)* to your academic advisor/supervisor for review and approval:
   * For Master’s students:

* Full-time students must submit by 12 months into their program
* Part-time students must submit by 24 months into their program
  + For PhD students:
  + Full-time students must submit by 18 months into their program
  + Part-time students must submit by 36 months into their program

1. Attendance and documentation of at least *8 hours of PD*:

* For Master’s students:
  + For students completing a capstone project: Complete by the end of their program.
  + For students completing a thesis: 8 hours of PD must be complete prior to defending thesis.
* For PhD students: Complete by the third year of their program. (Does not necessarily have to be complete prior to defending candidacy exam).

**Process**

**Getting started on your IDP**

1. To begin, read through [the FGSR online platform and IDP Workbook](https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/professional-development/professional-development-requirement/individual-development-plan-idp.html). Utilize this resource to reflect on your own career aspirations, your prior experiences, and what skills and talents you are bringing into this program. You may find it helpful to refer to your admission *Applicant Background Information Form* as well.

**It is not a requirement to complete the 40-page FGSR IDP Workbook. An alternative abbreviated form, the *abbreviated IDP Form*, is provided below.**

1. Using the *Abbreviated* *IDP Form* below, concisely identify:
   1. 2 to 3 areas of strengths
   2. 2 to 3 areas in which you would like to improve
   3. 3 to 5 professional goals or objectives that you have for this program
   4. 3 priority career goals you would like to work on
2. Share and discuss your IDP form with your academic advisor or supervisor.
3. Once your IDP is signed and approved by your academic advisor or supervisor, both you and your supervisor should store a copy for your records.

**Completing your PD activities**

After completing your IDP Form, the next step is to plan out which activities you would like to engage in to fulfill your 8 PD credit hours. These activities should be chosen to help you work towards meeting your 3 to 5 priority career goals.

You will be asked to document *how* these activities contributed to your three priority career goals in advancing your professional development. For details, see below in the section, *Documentation of your PD Activities.*

***What PD activities are eligible for approval?*** \*

The activity must:

1. Contribute to the development of your skills or knowledge in your current or intended field(s) of practice – meeting one or more of your identified career goals.
2. Be delivered by an organization with a formal education structure (e.g., workshop, conference, online course) and include documentation of attendance (see below for more information).
3. Include active learning with an assessment component (self-assessment, reflection, quiz, write-pair-share, evidence of knowledge application). *(Attending a talk/conference presentation is NOT eligible unless there is an active learning activity*)
4. Not be focused on advancing your clinical skills.

Common activities completed by previous students included:

* [University of Alberta Campus BRIDGE Professional Development](https://campusbridge.ualberta.ca/home.htm) opportunities
* FGSR will periodically send out professional development opportunities through emails
* Interactive learning sessions offered by [WCHRI](https://www.wchri.org/)
* Workshops (i.e. active learning) offered at relevant conferences to your area of study
* Applicable workplace professional opportunities (but not focused on clinical skills)
* Faculty of Nursing, Modules on Planetary Health, Academic Writing, and Knowledge Synthesis for Advanced Clinical NP Projects (see eClass: Resources for Nursing Graduate Students.)

\*Note 1: Before attending an activity, it is important to have the event approved by your academic advisor/supervisor because not all events are eligible for approval; your academic advisor/supervisor may suggest an alternative activity which may help you meet your career objectives more readily. Therefore, it is best to have this important discussion prior to beginning your journey to make the most of your time and resources.

**Documentation of your PD requirements**

After attending each PD event, documentation of your attendance is required.

1. For each event, proof of completion is required. Some activities result in a certificate (e.g. the official FGSR PD activities). If there is no proof of attendance form provided, you can alternatively have the presenter/host/coordinator sign this form: [FGSR Declaration of Attendance Form](https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/media-library/professional-development-new-kevin/forms-updated/20201208-declaration-of-attendance.pdf)
2. Your supervisor may request that you write a short description on how the PD activity completion contributed to the development of your three priority career goals initially set at the start of this process in your *IDP Form*.

It is highly recommended and encouraged that you share this journey with your academic advisor or supervisor during your regular meetings, to provide them with the information they need to support you towards a successful career. Your goals may need to be refined to suit your career paths more appropriately as you progress. It is crucial these goals are tailored for you and your own learning needs.

**Completion and submission of PD requirements**

The final step is to complete the [Individual Development Plan & Professional Development Completion Form](https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/media-library/forms-cabinet/records/professional-development/20210412_idpandpdcompletion.pdf) and have your supervisor sign it. Submit this form to the Nursing Graduate office, copying your supervisor on the email.

This document was created for use by graduate students supervised by Dr. Shannon MacDonald. Trainees working with other supervisors are very welcome to use it *with the approval of their own supervisor.*

**Abbreviated Independent Development Plan (IDP) Form**

(submit this page to your supervisor)

|  |
| --- |
| Student Name: |
| Student ID: |
| Admission (Term, Year): |
| Academic Advisor/Supervisor Name: |

In the table below, please list 2-3 areas of strengths, 2-3 areas of improvement, and 3-5 professional goals and objectives you would like to accomplish in your graduate program:

|  |
| --- |
| Areas of Strengths: |
| Areas of Improvements: |
| Professional goals and objectives: |

Next, list your top three priority career goals you would like to work on. Provide a brief statement on how and when you’d like to achieve them to meet your graduation requirements.

|  |
| --- |
| **Priority career goal #1**  *Describe how and when you’ll achieve this goal:* |
| **Priority career goal #2:**  *Describe how and when you’ll achieve this goal:* |
| **Priority career goal #3:**  *Describe how and when you’ll achieve this goal:* |

**Academic Advisor (AA)/Supervisor Approval**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Student name: | Student signature: | Date: |
| AA/Supervisor name: | AA/Supervisor signature: | Date: |