![STANFORD BIOSCIENCES]

MEMO

TO: All PhD Graduate Students in the Biosciences
FR: Dan Herschlag, Senior Associate Dean for Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs
         Tom Wandless, Chair, Committee on Graduate Admissions and Policy (CGAP)
RE: Important Information on Individual Development Plan (IDP) Requirement
DT: March 31, 2014

Dear Students:

We are pleased to announce the launch of the Individual Development Plan (IDP) program. This memo contains important information about the IDP, timelines and supporting resources.

The Individual Development Plan is intended to facilitate important discussions between you and your advisor in order to accomplish the following: (1) help you assess and develop your core scientific skills as well as complementary skills (e.g. oral and written communication, proposal writing, lab management, and professionalism); (2) provide regular and open two-way feedback; (3) develop a specific action plan, recognizing your ownership of your project and training, to aid your project and development; and (4) guide you to helpful resources related to your research progress, professional development, and general wellbeing.

In light of these benefits to trainee development and the likelihood that the IDP program will be a factor in future NIH funding decisions, the Committee on Graduate Admissions and Policy (CGAP) has adopted a **new policy requiring all Biosciences PhD candidates to complete a yearly Individual Development Plan. Additionally, students and their advisors are required to meet and discuss this plan on an annual basis**. Students and advisors share responsibility for completing this requirement by **August 1** each year.

Students and faculty helped develop the three Individual Development Plan forms specifically tailored for students at different stages:
   Year 1 emphasizes student/advisor responsibilities, training and mentoring, skills, and action plan.
   Year 2 emphasizes research progress, development activities, academic skills, goals, and action plan.
   Years 3-5+ emphasizes research progress, development activities, academic/professional skills, goals, and action plan.

Process and Timeline:
1. SCHEDULE your annual IDP meeting with your thesis advisor either **within 30 days of joining your PhD thesis lab** (first-year students) or **before June 1** (all other students).

2. MEET with your advisor by **August 1** to discuss the IDP, review progress and set goals.

3. VERIFY by **August 1** that the annual IDP meeting occurred. You will enter the meeting date in an [online form](#); your thesis advisor will be prompted by email to confirm the meeting date.

As CGAP has identified regular meetings focused on your progress and professional development as critical components of your graduate training, failure to fulfill the minimum requirements by the August 1 deadline will result in a "hold" placed upon your registration. We anticipate that this will be a very rare occurrence, given that the meeting need happen only once per year and the mutual benefits to trainees and advisors from such meetings.

You can find all necessary information about the Individual Development Plans, including helpful resources and FAQs for students and faculty, on the [Biosciences website](#).

We thank the faculty and student CGAP subcommittee who, along with the School of Medicine Career Center, put together this initiative. We are pleased that this group and Stephanie Eberle, Director of the School of Medicine Career Center, will be available as resources throughout the [Individual Development Plan process](#).

Please feel free to contact us (or the School of Medicine Career Center at somcareers@stanford.edu) with suggestions or questions.

Thanks and best wishes,

Dan H. and Tom W.

Dan Herschlag
Senior Associate Dean of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs
Professor of Biochemistry and (by Courtesy) Chemistry and Chemical Engineering
herschla@stanford.edu

Tom Wandless
Chair, Committee on Graduate Admissions & Policy (CGAP)
Professor of Chemical and Systems Biology and (by Courtesy) Chemistry
wandless@stanford.edu