Individual Development Plans: Achieving Buy-In
2018 CGS Winter Meeting

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• 2014 study in life and physical sciences*
  • 233 postdocs and 337 mentors surveyed
  • <50% were aware of IDP
  • 19% completed IDP
  • 71% of postdocs and 90% of mentors viewed IDP as value-add

• 2018 study of 183 postdocs in life and physical sciences®
  • 54% completed IDP
  • 38% found it helpful
  • Majority of those with positive mentoring relationships found IDP helpful

Suggests importance of mentor buy-in
Graduate Student Data

- 2018 study in the life and physical sciences
- 663 doctoral students surveyed
- Slightly more than half (53%) completed IDP
- Only 33% said they could have honest discussion about IDP
- Majority of those viewed IDP as effective tool

Mentor attitudes are critical to effectiveness of IDP
As such, it is essential to have buy in from mentors!

University of Georgia Statistics

- Public Land Grant/ Sea Grant University
- Flagship institution of the University System of Georgia
- 38,652 students
  - 29,611 undergraduate
  - 1,600 professional
  - 7,441 graduate
- Degree Programs
  - 27 master’s degrees in 116 major fields
  - 4 doctoral degrees in 89 major fields
  - Education specialist in 8 major fields
  - Professional degrees in Law, Pharmacy, and Veterinary Medicine

Engaging Mentors (subtle approaches)

- T32 Annual Symposia
- Graduate Coordinators Lunch and Learn
- Pipeline programs
- Department meetings
**Encouraging Mentors (not-so-subtle approaches)**

- Training in “professionalism” (e.g. responsible conduct of research)*
- Individual Development Plan*
- Mentor—Mentee Compact*
- Annual evaluation*

*Required for students who have support from UGA Graduate School

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**Advocates (Institutional)**

- T32 Directors
- Graduate Council

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**Advocates (National)**

- Funding Agencies
  - NIH
    - T32 solicitation (PA-18-403)
    - Requires “structured” career development, including individual development plans
    - NOT-GP-14-113
    - Strongly recommended but not required for graduate students on research grants
    - PIs are required to report if IPD is used for graduate students and postdocs
  - NSF
    - NRT (NSF 18-522)
    - “…preparation and structured use of individual development plans for trainees is highly recommended”

- National Academy of Sciences
  - Recommends graduate students develop IDP aligned with core competencies

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Creating a culture for adoption

- Demonstrate the tool
  - I use my own IDP as a model
  - Discipline-specific helps!
  - Encourage students/faculty to pre-register and follow along
- Tie to mentoring
- Tie to other professional development offerings (internships, workshops, etc)

Questions for me??

What strategies have you implemented/can you envision to promote use of IDPs in your graduate programs?

Question for you