



Center for
Academic and
Future
Faculty
Excellence

PARALLEL MENTORING Individual Development Plans for Graduate Students

IMPORTANCE of Individual Development Plans (IDPs)

Mentoring plans will become of considerable importance for the success of proposals reviewed by the National Science Foundation and the National Institute of Health as well as other agencies and foundations. In addition to the record of the applicant, important elements of any effective mentoring plan are:

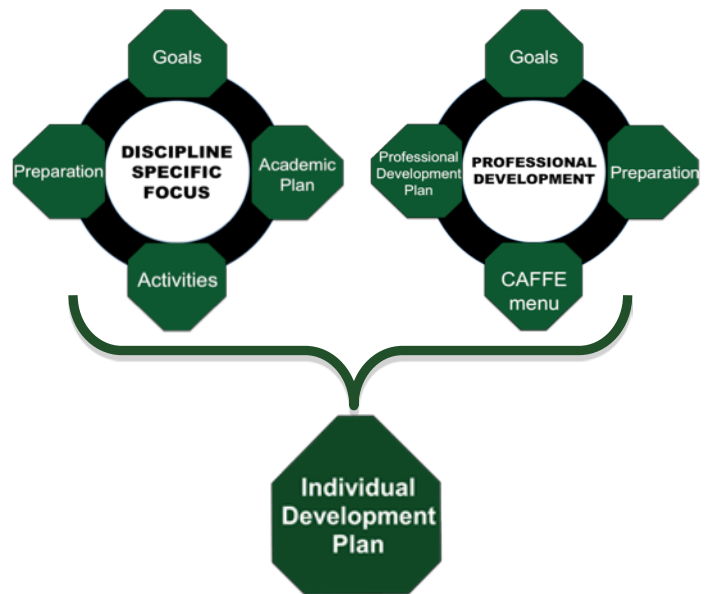
1. The institutional support and resources for the professional development plan.
2. How well the components are integrated with the research activities of the student.
3. How well the professional development is tailored to the career path chosen by the student.

MSU's Center for Academic and Future Faculty Excellence (CAFFE) can help you achieve these goals. Register to find the tools necessary.

Visit caffe.grd.msu.edu where you will find tools to generate a comprehensive IDP.

Parallel Mentoring

Parallel mentoring refers to the concurrent attention to professional development and to the demands of discipline-specific programs.



The approach endorsed by CAFFE involves constructing IDPs with parallel discipline-specific focus and professional development components, which are eventually integrated as a comprehensive plan to optimize the mentored training of graduate students.

BASIC STEPS

STEP 1: Discipline Mentoring Plan

STEP 2: Professional Development Component*

STEP 3: Integration as a comprehensive IDP

*using CAFFE

BASIC STEPS for GRADUATE STUDENTS with MENTORS

1. Discipline Mentoring Plan

Jointly graduate students and mentors assess the experience, disciplinary knowledge and skills derived from undergraduate education, and identify opportunities to develop new technical skills and research activities to complement and enhance the undergraduate disciplinary preparation. Early in the student's discipline-specific focus, the Graduate Handbook of the program would prescribe many of these activities.



For broader career planning, an excellent assessment tool (myIDP) for developing scientists is found on the *Science Careers*

website. CAFFE highly recommends its use in the generation of IDPs (<http://myidp.sciencecareers.org>). Although developed primarily for those in the biomedical fields, it is adaptable to other fields and career paths.

Graduate students and mentors jointly set expectations about:

- **Completion of core courses**
- **Research rotations/skills**
- **Preparation for qualifying exams**
- **Work load and work schedule**
- **Responsible Conduct of Research**
- **Role as part of a research team**

You can also use the CAFFE Mentoring Plan guide found on the MSU-CAFFE site



2. Professional Development Component

Again, graduate students and mentors identify the graduate student's career goals and assess her/his level of skill and knowledge in key professional areas, namely:

- **Expectations of Academic Institutions**
- **Faculty Knowledge Essentials**
- **Academic Work Skills and Responsibilities**
- **Professional Attitudes and Ethics.**

Take Action on the CAFFE website.

Together graduate students and mentors set priorities about the development of key

professional skills, knowledge and attitudes, taking into consideration the disciplinary area and the career path chosen by the student. Although explicitly focused on preparation for an academic career, MSU-CAFFE fosters the development of non-academic professional trajectories.

TAKE ACTION

1. **Create a profile**
2. **Take a self-assessment**
3. **Create My CAFFE Plan**
4. **Review plan**



Use the Events calendar to identify seminars, workshops and other activities that fit your professional goals. Most events are repeated every academic year, thus allowing for multi-year planning. When you are logged in to CAFFE, you can save selected events that will be added automatically to My CAFFE Plan.

3. Integration as an IDP:

- ✓ Combine 1 and 2 to create a multi-year IDP
- ✓ Develop a year-one version of the IDP from the multi-year plan
- ✓ Implement the plan and use it as a template for regular, at least annual, reviews of the progress.



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