NYU-STEP
Individual Development Plan Course
New York University
Syllabus

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Introduction:
The Individual Development Plan (IDP) course is intended for PhD students and postdoctoral scholars before they go on the job market. Participants will have the opportunity to evaluate their own values and interests as they relate to their professional careers. They will be introduced to the four career tracks NYU-STEP has identified for PhDs, For Profit Industry, Non-profit and Government, Communications and Academia; and be asked to identify skill areas they would like to develop in the NYU-STEP program.

The course will meet on Mondays at 3:30pm for 90 minutes for 8 weeks. **This is the Medical Center version of the course, and will meet in Skirball 4th Floor Seminar Room**

**Week 1 - October 31**
**STEP Introduction and Entry Survey**
After an introduction to the purpose of IDP course by the course directors, the rest of the first session will be devoted to the assessment of participant awareness about PhD careers and an introduction to the Individual development plan itself. Participants will hear about our ongoing study for NYU STEP on PhD career preparation and outcomes. The class will discuss common misconceptions about how research skills in the laboratory do (or do not) translate to other professional arenas. Participants will be encouraged to identify particular skills currently lacking they would like to develop.

*Homework:*
myIDP – Complete IDP online. Bring it to class for discussion Week 2.

**Week 2 – November 7**
**IDP Discussion and Goal setting**
The class will discuss their IDP results, where they match what people thought and where surprises are found. Short term (1 year) and long term goals will be discussed. The class will discuss who they need to help achieve these goals.

*Homework:*
Refine in-class goals and write final draft of 1-year plan

**Week 3 – November 14**
**Introduction to Career Paths and Informational Interviews**
The four broad career paths will be introduced, and there will be in class discussion among groups with similar interests. The class will also cover what is an informational interview, and how to conduct one, along with goals for the conversation and example questions.

*Homework:* Conduct an informational interview with someone in your desired career field. Prepare a report that will be used for discussion and compiled into a resource for future participants. Report is due by the final class session.

**Week 4 – November 21**
**Career Path**
Guest speakers will come tell the class about their career paths.

**Week 5 – November 28**
**Reading a Job Ad**
The class will dissect a few job ads from inside and outside academia to learn how to read for what skills are important, and how to tailor their application materials accordingly.

**Week 6 – December 5**
**Negotiating an Offer**
The basics of negotiating a job offer will be covered, along with circumstances particular to academic and non-academic jobs. How to find information about industry standards and what a PhD is worth on the job market will be covered.

**Week 7 – December 12**
**Resumes and Interview Skills**
Expert advice about how to write a resume and cover letter, along with some basic interview skills.

*Homework:* Write a resume or CV for a specific job; review and edit someone else’s. Turn in the job ad and your resume Week 6, course directors will review them and choose examples to discuss in Week 8.

**Week 8 – December 19**
**Job Search and Course Wrap up and Evaluation**
We will discuss the job applications, along with a few examples. Students will get feedback about their applications. There will also be an opportunity for feedback about the course before the end of class, and course evaluations will be sent out after the end of class.