Introduction

The Individual Development Plan (IDP) course is intended for 2nd or 3rd year graduate students pursuing a PhD degree, and for postdoctoral scholars with some time left in their tenure. Participants will have the opportunity to evaluate their own values and interests as they relate to their professional careers. Then 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. Trainees will be asked to identify skill areas they would like to develop in the NYU-STEP program.

The course will meet for 90 minutes once a week for 8 weeks.

Sessions will be held in MSB 248 on Tuesdays from 10:30am-12:00pm

Week 1- January 12
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. Participants will fill out consent forms if they want to participate in the research program, and will fill out a longer survey about career knowledge and expectations. The course will address 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- January 19
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- January 26
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- Feb 2**  
**Job Search**  
Course directors will cover information about where to look for jobs and how to read job ads to find what they are really seeking in a candidate.

**Week 5- Feb 9**  
**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 6- Feb 16**  
**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- Feb 23**  
**Mock Interview**  
The class will participate in mock interviews.

**Week 8- March 1**  
**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.