



YEARLY CHECK-IN: GRADUATE STUDENTS

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BACKGROUND

- This document is designed to provide structured feedback on performance, to allow time for reflection on progress and to identify roadblocks to success and strategies to overcome them. You should fill this out on your own and bring it to a meeting with Dawn who will provide you with input. This enables a structured discussion of expectations, goals and troubleshooting. For undergraduate students this should be performed at the middle of the thesis project to allow for changes in direction and time for trouble shooting but can be used more frequently if desired.

SELF-ASSESSMENT (DATE: _____)

List your three best pieces of data/greatest discoveries this semester:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

List the major troubleshooting activities you had to perform (no need to list 3 if there weren't that many)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Who did you seek advice from?

What did you learn from your trouble shooting?

What goals did you set for yourself at the last State-of-the-Lab chat?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Which of these have you completed? _____

Which of these have you partially completed? _____

Which of these have you not started yet? _____

What have been the major roadblocks to accomplishing these goals?-

How do you plan on overcoming these roadblocks this year?-

How often do you use the scientific literature to search for similar protocols to yours, especially when troubleshooting? _____

The best students read the relevant literature and find paper that use similar, or very similar techniques to aid with troubleshooting. Based on this information, how will you change your reading of the literature next semester?

How up to date is your lab book? _____

Do you bring your lab books to meetings with Dawn? _____

The best students update their lab book almost daily and bring the lab book to meetings with Dawn to discuss the raw data. Based on this information, how will you change your reading of the literature next semester?

Based on the above, how would you rate your performance?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 5 10
(met expectations) (exceeded expectations)

Based on the above, what is your best guess at how Dawn would rate your performance?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 5 10
(met expectations) (exceeded expectations)

If there is a discrepancy between these two rankings, why do you think that might be?

How many hours a week do you spend doing experiments? _____

Do you feel this is...

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
(not nearly enough time) 5 10 (way to much time)

How many hours a week do you spend writing in your lab book and analyzing your data? _____

Do you feel this is...

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
(not nearly enough time) (enough time) (way to much time)

How many hours a week do you read papers/keep up with literature specific to your project? _____

Do you feel this is

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
(not nearly enough time) (enough time) (way to much time)

How many hours a week do you read papers/keep up with the broader scientific literature? _____

Do you feel this is

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
(not nearly enough time) (enough time) (way to much time)

How many hours a week do you discuss your data with your peers? _____

Do you feel this is

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
(not nearly enough time) (enough time) (way to much time)

How many hours a week to you spend on healthy outside activities (exercise/friends/family)? _____

Do you feel this is

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
(not nearly enough time) (enough time) (way to much time)

The ratio for doing/thinking changes over the course of a graduate degree. In the early days, more hours are spent on doing experiment, in later years, reading/reflecting/analyzing becomes more important *however*, no matter where you are in your graduate degree you need to have a healthy balance of doing and reflecting on the data. The most successful students have both a detailed knowledge of the data in the field but also a broader scientific view. The best students spend a lot of time bouncing ideas off peers and discussing their data often formally (e.g. lab meetings) and more often informally. Successful people in general tend to be able to balance personal needs and work need. Based on this, do you feel you need to make any changes to your scheduling or prioritize different aspects of your work-week? How will you make this happen? _____

How many times per month did you meet with Dawn? _____

When experiments weren't working or you didn't have any data to share did the number of meetings go up or down or stay the same? _____

Do you have a peer network of people you can discuss your experiments with? _____

The most successful students have almost daily conversations with the other members of the lab. They also aren't shy about asking for or insisting on more meetings with Dawn and consider attendance at these meetings more important when things aren't working than when they are. Based on this information, how will you change how you handle formal/informal meetings next semester?

What are your experimental goals for the next year?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Based on what you learned from your performance this past year, how will you ensure that you will be able to reach those goals?

What support do you need from Dawn, from other lab members or elsewhere to achieve these goals?

What other skills do you aim to build?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What opportunities will you take to build these skills?

What support do you need from Dawn, from other lab members or elsewhere to achieve these goals?

What are your major career goals?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What opportunities will you take to investigate these career opportunities?

What support do you need from Dawn, from other lab members or elsewhere to reach these career goals?

Any feedback?