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**PhD
Program
First Year Advising
Guidelines**

Definitions:

A faculty advisor is assigned to each new student prior to orientation. Although the assignments take into account mutual areas of scholarly interest, the first year advising role is primarily a starting point to connect students with faculty and programmatic resources and to address procedural matters and questions. This means a substantive match is less important than a willingness to help guide the student during the transition to graduate school in Year 1 and preparation for Year 2.

An advisor may become the student's Supervisory Committee Chair after the student's Supervisory Committee is formed, typically in Year 2. However, the student may choose someone else to be their Chair/Primary Mentor early in Year 2. In some instances, either the student or first year advisor recognizes that the match is not suitable and will agree to a change in advisors prior to the formation of the Supervisory Committee. There is not a problem with changing advisors, but the Doctoral Program Office must be informed of the change.

In contrast to advising, the mentor role is longer term and characterized by shared scholarly interests, attention to building trust, helping the student progress through the program's academic milestones, particularly the Qualifying Paper and the Dissertation, and addressing big picture issues of career and professional development.

These guidelines are intended to assist both the student and advisor since an effective advising relationship involves both the student and advisor agreeing on how they will work together. The student and advisor are strongly encouraged to review regularly the PhD Program Manual on the doctoral program website: <http://socialwork.uw.edu/phd-program-manual>. Knowing the relevant policies and procedures will ensure productive advising interactions and timely completion of the degree

Role of the first year advisor

- A. To assist the student in integrating into the academic and social life of the school and program and to work with the student in addressing any problems that arise in Year 1.
- B. To assist the student in clarifying his/her substantive and methodological areas of interest and in planning the Teaching and Research Practicum and the Supervisory Committee selection process for Year 2 in ways that support the student's learning and professional goals.
- C. To work with the student in early spring in Year 1 to develop the Individual Development Plan (IDP). A link to the IDP can be found here: <https://socialwork.uw.edu/phdacademics/individual-development-plan-idp>.

Expectations of Advisors:

Initial Meeting

- A. Advisors will meet their advisees at orientation, but are encouraged to welcome them to the program prior to orientation
- B. Advisors should contact their students to arrange a meeting within two weeks after the orientation at the beginning of autumn quarter.

Orientation addresses many procedural aspects of the program and factors/issues common across students. In meetings with the advisors, students can discuss their specific programmatic interests and concerns along with any follow up questions from orientation.

- C. The Advisor should do the following during the first meeting:
 - See if the student has any particular questions about the program or School.
 - Learn about the student's research interests, prior academic work experiences, and current TA/RA position—all of which will be part of the IDP development.
 - Share views about doctoral education as a way of describing the school's expectations of PhD students, and share information about the advisor's own research.
 - Take the initiative by asking the student if he/she might like help in identifying faculty whose interests overlap with those of the student. This may include faculty from other campus units. Such a conversation is an ongoing one throughout the first year as students develop and refine their interests. Helping students to see possible areas of connection and encouraging them to initiate contact with faculty are essential needs of first-year students, and important to developing a useful IDP.
 - Proactively set up regular monthly meetings with the advisee (at least once a quarter).
 - If needed, identify major concerns for the student (e.g., funding, program fit), and inform the Program Director of these if appropriate.

Second and third quarters: regular meetings.

- Discuss procedural issues in relation to professional and scholarly development: while some areas will have been addressed in the first quarter, there is a need for ongoing follow-up discussion during the next two quarters
- Review the goals and steps in completing the Individual Development Plan to be submitted at the end of June.
- Assist the student in considering choices such as spring quarter and Year 2 research and social science classes, research and teaching practica options, and TA/RA possibilities. Procedural details about each of these are in the PhD manual.
- Begin discussion about forming a Supervisory Committee and what is involved in completing a Qualifying Paper (QP), including whether the advisor is well suited to being a Supervisory Committee Chair or member.
- Review scholarly and professional development issues such as writing for publication/conference presentations and receiving feedback,
- Depending on the student and faculty scholarship match, discuss the possibility of inviting the student to join a scholarly activity (e.g., providing literature support for a manuscript) and/or being part of a conference abstract submission as suggested by the Writing Guideposts ([see link](#)).
- Work with the student to include materials in their e-Portfolio. A link to the e-Portfolio can be found here: <https://socialwork.uw.edu/portfolio-development>.

End of Year 1 and beginning of Year 2.

- Complete the IDP with the student and submit it to the Doctoral Program Office for approval by June 30th.
- Discuss with the student the presentation of their IDP to the doctoral faculty in fall quarter of Year 2.

Expectations of Advisees:

- Contact your advisor if you have not heard from him or her by the third week of
- October.
- Confirm the first meeting by email.
- Follow up the first meeting by confirming regularly scheduled meeting times (at least quarterly).
- Clarify what you want to discuss in each first meeting. It is most productive to have an agenda for each meeting to focus your discussion.
- Come prepared to talk about your research interests and goals, what you are seeking to achieve.
- Be familiar with the PhD program manual on the doctoral program website. Review relevant content in that manual before meeting with your advisor about a specific topic, such as Research Practicum or the IDP.
- Complete the first draft of your IDP in late winter or early spring quarter before meeting with your advisor prior to the IDP.
- If something comes up and you are unable to attend one of your meetings with your advisor, be sure to email or call them in advance,
- If major issues arise that your advisor is unable to address, contact the Director or Assistant Director of the Doctoral Program.
- Enjoy the process of exploring your scholarly and teaching goals, learning about the University of Washington and interacting one on one with one of our outstanding doctoral faculty!

Advisors and advisees have other resources during Year 1 since all first year students are required to take the Integrative Seminar with the Director of the Doctoral Program and the new Professional Development Seminar with Dr. Paula Nurius (these each meet every other week), where some of these issues will be addressed by the instructors for these courses.