

## Advising Graduate Students in the Department of Epidemiology

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### Master’s Degree Students

#### Synergistic Roles of the Graduate Program Coordinator and Faculty Advisor

The Department of Epidemiology has a **Graduate Program Coordinator** to provide individualized support for students on all logistical aspects of their graduate studies to ensure fulfillment of graduation requirements. Your Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC) is always available to discuss administrative logistics or solutions related to your program, student experience, Plan of Study, and other questions or comments you have. Your GPC is the best source for logistics questions, questions about when courses are offered, prerequisites for courses, and experiential learning requirements.

The Department of Epidemiology assigns an **academic faculty advisor** to help guide you in selecting elective courses that will both satisfy your degree and provide the foundation for your professional interests. The faculty advisor additionally can explain graduate school, aid in career exploration, teach students to navigate systems, and generally empower students. Faculty advisors can: provide information about various fields of study related to your interests, evaluate research and service opportunities, help you identify appropriate courses for your Plan of Study, provide advice if you have academic difficulty, write letters of reference for you, etc.

#### Mode and Frequency for Communicating with the Graduate Program Coordinator and Faculty Advisor

*Graduate Program Coordinator:* Some of your questions can be quickly answered via email. One-on-one meetings are also available. As a general guide, you may want to schedule one meeting per semester.

*Faculty Advisor:* You are responsible for contacting the academic advisor or their assistant to schedule meetings. All students will have different needs but meeting at least once per semester is recommended. Between meetings, email is typically a good way to communicate to finalize documents, get your advisor signatures, or get answers to simple questions. Complex questions topics should be reserved for one-on-one meetings.

**Important Note:** This document is describing academic advising. Master’s students who are planning on writing a thesis should develop a separate research advising meeting schedule with their thesis advisor. The thesis advisor may be the same as the academic advisor or someone else.

Topics and Timeline for Communicating with the Graduate Program Coordinator and Faculty Advisor

Below in two sections are (1) a brief listing of discussion topics arranged by semester in the program and by whether the topic is best addressed with the GPC, faculty advisor or both and (2) a more detailed description of the faculty advisor topics. While these are **merely suggestions**, and not representative of all of the ways that you and your faculty advisor and GPC can work as a team to help you meet your goals, the department recommends that you are pondering specific topics at various stages of your program, and reaching out to our team for thoughts and ideas.

*(1) Advising topics by semester and resource person*

This is a brief listing of topics. Section (2) provides more detail.

Timing	Graduate Program Coordinator	Faculty Advisor
Year 1: Fall Semester		
Within the first month of classes	<input type="checkbox"/> Refresher on Orientation, requirements, opportunities, resources	<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Introduction</a> Meeting
During the month of October	<input type="checkbox"/> Plan of Study Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Discuss and create <a href="#">IDP</a> . <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Plan of Study</a> Approval
Mid-late November	<input type="checkbox"/> Check in re: classes, curriculum, advising and student services needs, communication, etc.	
Year 1: Spring Semester		
Early	<input type="checkbox"/> Changes in registration, opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/> Recap of 1 <sup>st</sup> semester Review updated resume
March	<input type="checkbox"/> Review plan of study <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss summer plan <input type="checkbox"/> Check In	<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Summer plan</a> /ideas <input type="checkbox"/> Review and update IDP
Late April	<input type="checkbox"/> Review year 1	
Year 2: Fall Semester		
Early	<input type="checkbox"/> Changes in registration, MS final exam questions, advising or student services needs <input type="checkbox"/> Review student opportunities for upcoming year.	<input type="checkbox"/> Recap summer experiences, goals for second year. Review updated resume.
Later in the semester	<input type="checkbox"/> Review plan of study before spring semester registration. <input type="checkbox"/> Check In	<input type="checkbox"/> Review and update IDP <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Discuss Applied Practice/Preceptorship/Thesis ideas</a>
Year 2: Spring Semester		
Mid-semester	<input type="checkbox"/> Check in <input type="checkbox"/> Review graduate program	<input type="checkbox"/> Progress on Applied Practice/Preceptorship/Thesis <input type="checkbox"/> Poster Session and Written Report/Thesis Prep

<b>Later in the semester</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Career opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/> Check In/ <a href="#">Program Review</a> <input type="checkbox"/> Career opportunities
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*(2) Potential Meeting Discussion Topics with Faculty Advisor*

Topic Type	Discussion Topics
<b>Introduction</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Review the role of an academic advisor and discuss the scope of their guidance. <input type="checkbox"/> Review your resume with advisor. Discuss career goals and skills or experiences you want to gain in your degree program to position you to meet your goals. <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss plans to apply for assistantships and funding
<b>Plan of Study Review</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Get your POS reviewed by the GPC for administrative review before discussing with faculty advisor (to ensure it is possible, courses are sequenced properly, and will meet graduation requirements) <input type="checkbox"/> After administrative review, do you feel that a course should be waived due to prior experience or coursework, are you involved in other academic interests such as certificates that you need advice on? Sometimes it is possible to request permission to substitute another course for a required course. <input type="checkbox"/> Suggestions on electives
<b>Individual Development Plan Review</b>	<p>The Individual Development Plan (IDP) is a personal and flexible planning tool designed to help graduate students plan and achieve their professional goals. Students are encouraged to use one of the Graduate College <a href="#">IDP templates</a>.</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Academic goals <input type="checkbox"/> Career development goals <input type="checkbox"/> Skill development goals <input type="checkbox"/> Personal development goals <input type="checkbox"/> Money/funding goals <input type="checkbox"/> Building career mentoring team
<b>Summer Plan</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Courses and/or ideas on internships or other professional development opportunities
<b>Applied Practice/Preceptorship/Thesis</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Applied Practice Experience</a> <input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Preceptorship and Thesis Resources</a> <input type="checkbox"/> Poster session requirement <input type="checkbox"/> Written report requirement <input type="checkbox"/> Applications from courses to experience and deliverables
<b>Program Review</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Discuss what has gone well and what barriers you encountered at various points during your time in your master's program. <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss ways the department can continue to support your job search

## Doctoral Students

Students in the PhD program have completed a Master's degree. Advising is more individualized due to more opportunity for selecting electives and the heavy focus on developing the dissertation. At this stage, the faculty-student relationship increasingly shifts from advising (directing) to mentoring (guiding). The Graduate Program Coordinator continues to be the first stop for all administrative and logistical issues.