

Annual mentoring committee meeting

Guidelines for the Mentoring Committee Meeting

The committee members meet with the student and their advisor(s) annually to provide guidance and assistance to the student on their path towards becoming a professional researcher. The purpose of the meeting is to establish a relationship and to encourage regular communication between the student and the committee members.

The meeting should be an opportunity for the student to share their research accomplishments, receive feedback on the progress they have made and guidance for their future steps towards completion of their dissertation and long-term career goals. It should not be considered an exam.

Students should not be required or encouraged to prepare any additional documentation for the meeting except for pre-filling some section of the meeting form and updating their CV. The meeting should be formulated as a discussion with the student and not a one-sided student report to the committee members.

The form completed during the meeting serves as an annual written feedback for the graduate student as required by the Graduate School.

Procedures for the Mentoring Committee Meeting

1. The out-of-field committee member should lead the discussion as the committee chair, while one of the in-field committee members acts as a scribe and fills out the form. On the form, the name of the chair should be indicated with an asterisk (*) and the name of the scribe – with a hash symbol (#).
2. **Fields marked with a black border** are primarily informational and contain information that can be obtained from the previous year's form or student's CV. These should be filled out prior to the meeting by the student in consultation with their advisor(s).
3. **Fields marked with a red border** are meant for discussion that should be summarized by the scribe during the meeting.
4. The student should email the pre-filled form and their current CV to the Graduate Administrator, who will share these documents and the summary of the student's academic progress with the committee via a Google Drive link available on the departmental website. As part of the feedback to the student, the committee should verify that the CV reflects student's accomplishments and provide comments on its form and content.
5. The meeting should be scheduled for 30 minutes and conclude with a **discussion between the student and committee without the advisor(s) present**. The discussion should remain confidential, unless reporting in accordance with Title IX is required, or the student requests that the discussion be shared with others (e.g., with the advisor(s) or the DGS). The purpose of the discussion is to address topics not covered by the form, e.g., relationships within the student's research group, ease of communication with the advisor, or general sense of progress in the student's research project.
6. After the meeting, the **scribe should electronically sign** the form on behalf of the whole group and submit it to the Graduate Administrator via a Google Form provided on the departmental website.
7. The completed form will be added to the student's Google Drive folder with forms from previous mentoring meetings, where it will be available to the student, advisor(s), and committee members for future reference.
8. All the documents and the submission Google Form can be found at: <https://physics.nd.edu/graduate/current-students/>

(Last updated July 2026)

Summary of the annual mentoring meeting

Date:

Student:

Advisor(s):

Committee members present at the meeting (indicate the scribe with # and the chair with *):

Student's status:

Year in the program:

What is the source of the student's funding? ☐ TA ☐ RA ☐ External Fellowship ☐ None

If not RA or External Fellowship, are there resources available for future RA support for the student?

Has the required coursework been completed? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If not, what is the expected time frame for completion of the coursework?

Has the candidacy exam been completed? ☐ Yes ☐ No

*If not, what is the expected time frame for the **candidacy exam**?*

*If yes, what is the expected time frame for the **defense**?*

Research plans:

Briefly describe the major goals of your research project. *If post-candidacy*, how has your dissertation project evolved since the previous meeting? Have there been any major changes to the project?

Feedback from the committee members:

How does the thesis provide a contribution that advances human knowledge? How does this thesis advance the research field? (Update as appropriate as the thesis project develops.)

Research goals:

What were the **primary tasks** towards completing your thesis that you set for yourself **in the previous year**? (These should be transferred from the previous year's form for discussion.)

What progress have you made towards accomplishing these tasks? Describe any changes to the tasks from last year and the impact of those changes on your research progress.

What do you think were the most important aspects of your research progress in the past year? If you were involved in projects that are not part of your thesis work, discuss those as well.

What are the **primary tasks** towards completing your thesis that you are setting for yourself **in the coming year**? (These will be transferred to next year's form for discussion.)

Are all necessary resources available to you to reach your planned goals and maintain progress towards completion of your thesis? Please comment on the items below and discuss any additional resources that are relevant to your research project:

- One-on-one discussions with the advisor,
- Advising from other faculty,
- Communication with external collaborators/experts,
- Equipment and/or software, access to research facilities,
- Textbooks/publications, external data,
- Funding for research-related travel / conferences,
- Healthy work environment (office space, personal interactions, etc.),
- Other (please specify).

List **publications** that you coauthored that have been submitted/accepted to a **scientific journal** since the last meeting. If needed, abbreviate the list of authors and journal name (full list of publications should be included in the CV). What are the plans for you to publish in the future?

Feedback from the committee members:

Pre-candidacy: Is sufficient progress being made toward defining research directions and formulating a plan for dissertation work?

Post-candidacy: In light of the progress so far, does the student have a clear plan for dissertation work going forward?

What can the advisor/committee members/DGS/department do to improve/maintain the student's progress?

Would an additional mentoring meeting in the fall semester be needed?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please explain why. A follow up meeting will be scheduled for the upcoming semester.

Professional development:

What **long-term career goals** are you considering (e.g., academic/industry/lab position)? How do your professional development and research project align with this goal?

List all the **conferences/meeting** that you attended last year. Did you **present** your research at those events (list those presentations here)? Are there plans for you to attend any meetings in the next year? Will you present your work there?

In what **schools** did you participate in the last year? Are there any schools that might be of interest to you in the near future?

What **fellowships** did you pursue in the last year? What is the status of your application(s)? Are there any fellowships that might be of interest to you in the near future?

Feedback from the committee members:

Does the mentoring committee have any recommendations for professional development opportunities that are relevant to the student's long-term goals?

Student's CV

Is the student's professional development accurately reflected in their CV? Is the CV appropriate for student's long-term career goals?

Other comments and recommendations:

Final discussion without the advisor(s) present

Are there any other topics you would like to share/discuss with the committee members?

The meeting without the advisor(s) present was held:

☐ Yes

Signature of the scribe

(On behalf of the student, advisor(s) and all the committee members)

Once the form is signed, please submit it using a Google Form available at: <https://physics.nd.edu/graduate/current-students/> in the Mentoring Committee Meetings Section. Please do not email it to the Graduate Administrator.