

Graduate Student Professional Skills and Competencies Checklist

Skill/Competency	Importance	Ways to develop skill/competency	Developed?
Ability to convey complex information to a variety of audiences	Demonstrates the ability to communicate information to colleagues, the general public, and industry leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Instruct a class (including asking a professor if you can guest-lecture for a course, if you don't have the opportunity to lead your own course) ✓ Lead a workshop ✓ Make a presentation to a general audience (outside of your discipline-specific area) ✓ Attend workshops on oral communication and presentation skills 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to deal with ambiguity	Demonstrates the ability to be adaptable and confident in decision making in a complex work environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Handle multiple tasks at once ✓ Decide and act without having the total picture ✓ Tolerate and manage change effectively and be able to deal with complex personalities (see below) 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to deal with complex personalities	Demonstrates the ability to build teams around the right personalities and how to manage those personalities. Ability to view situations from a different perspective and be a good colleague and leader.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Take a personality inventory such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator ✓ Teach a class ✓ Work in groups (in and out of your discipline) 	<input type="checkbox"/>

Ability to meet deadlines	Demonstrates the ability to manage time for oneself, others, and a project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Create a research plan and stick to the scheduled deadlines ✓ Communicate these deadlines to others ✓ Attend workshops on time management ✓ Commit to projects with deadlines (paper proposals/presentations; publication deadlines; research workshops) and meet those deadlines 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to reach and defend conclusions	Demonstrates the ability to analyze and critically evaluate arguments and evidence appropriate to discipline or project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Defend proposal or research ideas to committee or team ✓ Submit grant and research proposals ✓ Present work, ideas, or projects to wider audience 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Analytical thinker	Demonstrates the ability to evaluate, articulate, and discover more efficient ways to perform a task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Conduct data analysis as part of your research ✓ Take courses that strengthen your logic and reasoning skills ✓ Manage a budget for a project or student organization 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clear and concise writing, editing	Demonstrates the ability to write easy-to-understand reports and papers based on data collections and findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Submit grant and research proposals ✓ Form peer-to-peer editing groups ✓ Attend workshops on grant/proposal writing ✓ Attend workshops on publishing ✓ Write in different formats and for different audiences – research papers, op-ed and other articles for a general audience, blog posts 	<input type="checkbox"/>

Collaboration	Demonstrates the ability to provide and receive constructive criticism, be reliable by following through on group tasks with minimal supervision, and provide support or encouragement to group members to accomplish a goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Participate in group projects and presentations ✓ Participate in a student organization ✓ Engage in collaborative research 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ethics & Integrity	Demonstrates the ability to understand and apply professional codes of conduct as they relate to research and work within and outside of one's discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Attend workshops on conducting ethical research ✓ Learn discipline specific code of conduct ✓ Communicate importance with undergraduate researchers ✓ Take or audit courses that analyze ethical issues and teach ethical thinking 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evaluation of individual and group dynamics and performance	Demonstrates the ability to form work groups and teams based on strengths of individuals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Take a personality inventory such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator ✓ Teach a class ✓ Evaluate (as a group or for oneself) group interactions and one's own contribution to group dynamics and performance 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extracting relevant material from large bodies of data	Demonstrates the ability to integrate and makes sense out of multiple sources of data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Attend workshops on data collection, organization, and analysis in diverse disciplines ✓ Learn about the big data initiatives on-grounds ✓ Work collaboratively with colleagues to understand tools and methods for using and applying data 	<input type="checkbox"/>

Full engagement with projects from inception to completion	Demonstrates the ability to identify problem, set goals, create an action plan, complete steps in order to see project to end	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Finish dissertation/thesis ✓ Submit grant and research proposals ✓ Manage a project for the full lifecycle for an organization or department ✓ Initiate and complete events for your department or beyond, including conferences, invited speakers, and workshops; respond to opportunities for leadership provided by Grad Studies and others 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leadership	Demonstrates the ability to set visions, motivate others and delegate tasks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Incorporate undergraduate interns into research program ✓ Assume a leadership role in a student or community organization ✓ Manage T.A.'s in your department ✓ Seek ways to provide leadership within your discipline (through national/regional scholars associations or other organizations) 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Power of persuasion	Demonstrates the ability to lead others through authority, goal-setting, and reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Practice goal-setting in a team environment ✓ Teaching a class ✓ Plan events or take on leadership roles that require management and persuasion of teams of people 	<input type="checkbox"/>

Presentation/public speaking skills	Demonstrates the ability to articulate and transmit information clearly between people and groups and accomplish a task or carry out an action in front of an audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Poster or oral Presentations in department, local, or national setting ✓ Attend workshops on presentation skills ✓ Join toastmasters or other organizations to develop public speaking skills ✓ Look for (or organize) opportunities for students in your department, or in interdepartmental groups, to give practice job talks and presentations 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Problem Solver	Demonstrates the ability to adapt quickly to a situation, anticipate the consequences of a course of action, and learn and grow from mistakes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Seek out new tasks or intentionally take on tasks that you don't feel fully prepared for ✓ Attend workshops on dealing with challenging teaching situations ✓ Engage in "Case competitions" and other competitions that require quick problem solving 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project management, organizational skills	Demonstrates knowledge of the project management process including defining goals and objectives, building consensus, identifying tasks that must be completed, creating and maintaining a budget, determining resources needed, developing a plan to carry out tasks, identifying issues and risks, communicating the project status effectively to all stakeholders, completing tasks correctly and in a timely manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Organize a conference or department event ✓ Manage undergraduates or volunteers during graduate research ✓ Create a timeline for your research 	<input type="checkbox"/>

Self-Motivated, Self-Starter	Demonstrates ability to work without direction to complete a task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Propose new policy or ideas for your department or student organization ✓ Identify original ideas for research ✓ Propose changes in the curriculum of a course you are teaching ✓ Seek out opportunities for self-directed work: organize events, teach your own course if possible, volunteer for research tasks 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strategic thinking	Demonstrates ability to leverage resources, clarify the direction and vision of a project, and identify understand how various relationships support the goal of the institution or organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Take on jobs, internships, or projects during graduate studies that require vision and strategy ✓ Talk to faculty members and administrators about their experiences working as part of an organization 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Successful in competitive environments	Demonstrates quick problem solving skills, effective communication skills, and productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Publish in a peer-reviewed journal ✓ Apply for (and win) grants/fellowships ✓ Participate in contests at the university level or beyond 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thorough and efficient research	Demonstrates ability to use knowledge and tools to develop new products, ideas, and applications; something here about analysis of all available data and communication to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Finish dissertation/thesis ✓ Submit grant and research proposals ✓ Manage a project for the full lifecycle for an organization or department 	<input type="checkbox"/>