

Task Force on Postdoctoral Experience--Report July, 2008

In 2000, the National Academies published a report, *Enhancing the Postdoctoral Experience for Scientists and Engineers*. Since that time, research institutions have made some limited progress in addressing some of the issues that were identified in the report. At the state level, Arizona's Board of Regents reviewed its policies related to postdoctoral scholars employed within public universities in Arizona. More recently, the NRC Assessment of the Research Doctorate included an item simply asking for an accounting of postdoctoral scholars who work within the context of each of the academic programs being assessed because of the importance of the presence of these individuals to the overall doctoral experience of students. Responding to the NRC survey illuminated various issues at OSU (e.g. lack of central data, lack of common definition) and drew our attention to the manner in which OSU has mentored and managed postdoctoral research associates and pointed out the need for us to examine more carefully how this group of employees is mentored and managed.

To that end, the Task Force on the Postdoctoral Experience was appointed by President Ray in October, 2007, to focus on postdoctoral research associates at OSU. The task force was co-chaired by the Dean of the Graduate School, Sally Francis, and the Vice President for Research, John Cassady. Members of the task force were selected to represent a diversity of perspectives and included representatives of the Research Council and the Graduate Council. Committee members include:

Dan Arp, Botany and Plant Pathology
Abby Benninghoff, Environmental and Molecular Toxicology
Barbara Bond, Forest Science
Donna Champeau, Women's Advancement and Gender Equity
Larry Curtis, Environmental and Molecular Toxicology
Theo Dreher, Microbiology
Bob Duncan, Oceanic and Atmospheric Sciences
Jeri Hemmer, Human Resources
Louisa Hooven, Zoology
Becky Johnson, Academic Affairs
Mark Leid, Pharmacy

The task force was charged by President Ray to examine

- how to appropriately manage postdoctoral scholars;
- appropriate classification, appointment procedures, compensation and benefits;
- how the postdoctoral experience at OSU can be enhanced; and
- appropriate centralized support systems for postdoctoral scholars.

To inform its work, copies of the 2000 report of the National Academies, *Enhancing the Postdoctoral Experience for Scientists and Engineers*, http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=9831 were provided to members along with a brief list of references and resources. The Graduate Dean became a member of the National Postdoctoral Association. Membership includes access for all members of the OSU community

and yielded valuable resources. Two members of the Task Force, Sally Francis and Louisa Hooven, attended the 2008 national meeting of the National Postdoctoral Association in Boston, April 25-26.

Following discussion at its initial meeting, the Task Force decided to organize into three subcommittees around three general themes: 1) appropriate classification, appointment procedures, compensation and benefits; 2) how to appropriately manage postdoctoral appointees and appropriate centralized support systems for postdoctoral appointees; and 3) how the postdoctoral experience at OSU can be enhanced. The work of the Task Force was accomplished within the subcommittees and integrated through large group discussion.

INVENTORY

An inventory of postdoctoral appointees on campus was conducted and the data were compiled (see Table 1, page 3). To conduct the inventory, the Task Force adopted the definition of postdoctoral appointee used by the AAU (see <http://www.aau.edu/reports/PostdocRpt.pdf>, p. 2) because this definition was adopted for use in the recent NRC Assessment of the Research Doctorate:

- The appointee was recently awarded a Ph.D. or equivalent doctorate (e.g. Sc.D., M.D.) in an appropriate field; and
- The appointment is temporary; and
- The appointment involves substantially full-time research or scholarship; and
- The appointment is viewed as preparatory for a full-time academic and/or research career; and
- The appointment is not part of a clinical training program; and
- The appointee works under the supervision of a senior scholar or a department; and
- The appointee has the freedom, and is expected, to publish the results of his or her research or scholarship during the period of the appointment.

Using this definition, the Graduate School conducted a campus wide survey of department heads. The Office of Human Resources then pulled institutional employment data. The two data sets were cross walked to check for duplications and omissions. This procedure resulted in the data presented in Table 1 (page 3).

Table 1 reveals a total OSU postdoctoral population of 113 individuals who have been in their current jobs an average of 28 months. 38% are women. Twenty-five percent earned their highest degree at OSU. The average age at the time of the postdoctoral appointment is 34 years. The postdoctoral population tends to be clustered in the College of Agricultural Sciences and the College of Science, College of Oceanic and Atmospheric Sciences, and, to a lesser extent in the College of Forestry. Nationally, the postdoctoral population has a very substantial presence in medical schools and universities with medical schools, research institutes/agencies (e.g. NIH), and national laboratories).

Post Docs in Active Positions on December 28, 2007
 (where "Post Doc" is within Job Title <or> Faculty Type = P in Banner)

Total Count **113**

	Age at Job Begin Date	Job Duration (months)*	Latest Hourly Rate	University Degree Information				Citizenship			Gender	
				OSU		PHD/DVM/XD		C		F		
Min	25.00	2.00	\$12.50	28	25%	103	91%	45	40%	43	38%	
Max	52.00	104.00	\$28.85	83	73%	3	3%	27	24%	70	62%	
Average	34.42	28.24	\$19.47	2	2%	5	4%	7	6%			
				Null		2	2%	34	30%			
						Null		0	0%			

1	141417	TEX - Ext Klamath Co Office
1	150040	RIP - Radiation Center
5	154230	RDR - Linus Pauling Institute
4	154250	RDR - CIMRS (Inst/Marine Res)
3	211100	AGD - Crop and Soil Science
3	211200	AGD - Horticulture
2	211400	AGD - Food Science and Techno
2	211600	AGD - Fisheries and Wildlife
1	212200	ARA - Rangeland Ecology & Mgmt
6	212500	ATX - Enviro / Molecular Toxic
12	215100	ABP - Ag Botany / Plant Path
4	215300	AMB - Microbiology (Ag)
1	217130	AGS - EOARC - Union Exp Sta
1	217500	AGS - Hermiston Exp Sta
2	218110	AGS - COMES - Newport Exp Sta
1	219100	AMM - Marine Mammal Institute
3	231100	FOR - Forest Resources
1	231200	FOR - Wood Science / Engr
1	231300	FOR - Forest Engineering
6	231500	FOR - Forest Science
1	251100	SBB - Biochem / Biophysics
8	251300	SBP - Botany and Plant Path

Table 1. Postdoctoral Appointee Inventory

CAMPUS-WIDE SURVEY

The Task Force determined that a campus wide survey of postdoctoral appointees was needed in order to more fully understand issues and needs of current OSU employees. Sally Francis and Donna Champeau led the development and administration of the survey. A small group of postdoctoral research associates was invited to meet with Francis and Champeau to review survey instruments that had been used by other institutions/organizations. From this review, specific items were recommended for use in the OSU survey. The group also recommended data collections procedures. A draft questionnaire was developed and reviewed by the Task Force and finalized through electronic discussion. The questionnaire was administered by Business Solutions Group during winter term, 2008.

The target population consisted of all employees who had been identified in the inventory compiled earlier. An email message was sent to each employee inviting him/her to participate in the survey. A total of 44 responses were received. Twenty-seven out of the forty-four survey respondents indicated that they had been in their current postdoctoral position at OSU for 1-2 years. Six respondents indicated that they had been in their current position more than 5 years. Three respondents indicated that their job title was something other than “postdoctoral research associate;” they indicated their title was research associate or faculty research associate.¹

Respondents were provided with NIH postdoctoral salary guidelines and were asked to compare their salary to the NIH guidelines. 50% (n=22) indicated that their current salary was below the NIH guidelines; 23% (n=10) reported that their salary was at NIH guidelines; and, 27% (n=12) reported salaries above the NIH guidelines. OSU data indicate that the average hourly rate for the 113 current postdoctoral appointees to whom the survey was sent is \$19.37 per hour or \$40,290 on an annual basis. In regard to benefits, on a 5-point scale (1=Important; 5=Not Important) 66% of respondents indicated that participation in an OSU sponsored retirement plan was “Important.” On the other hand, 77% indicated that they would choose a higher salary over an equivalent contribution to a retirement plan. Fifty-seven percent (n=25) of respondents to the survey reported that they worked 50 or more hours per week including hours outside of the university lab, office, or other facilities. Of total hours worked, 43% of respondents reported working less than 5 hours at home; the same proportion of respondents reported working 6-10 hours at home.

Of 17 respondents who reported that they have responsibility for a child, only 29% (n=5) rated availability of childcare programs as adequate (1 or 2 on 5-point scale). Fifty-three percent (n=9) of respondents with children reported that their mentors were supportive (1 or 2 on 5-point scale) of their family life.

Respondents were asked to indicate the adequacy (1=adequate; 5=inadequate) of their opportunities to engage in selected professional development opportunities. The highest ratings ($\mu=1.79$) were associated with opportunities to attend professional meetings and conferences. Opportunities to prepare research grant proposals ($\mu=2.70$), mentor graduate students ($\mu=2.43$), and to supervise research staff members ($\mu=2.39$) received fairly low ratings. The Task Force

¹ NOTE: We had learned that individuals other than the specific target population had become aware of the survey and had indicated an interest in responding. These individuals were invited to respond and their responses were incorporated into the tabulation of responses.

generally considered supervision of staff and graduate students to be activities outside the normal job expectations associated with a postdoctoral position. However, the National Postdoctoral Association generally believes that adequate training of postdoctoral appointees must include development of such skills in order for the individual to be successful in his/her future career.

About 1/3 of respondents (n=15) indicated that they had not presented their research outside of their group on campus during their postdoctoral appointment at OSU; an equal number reported that they had presented their research once. In contrast, only 18% (n=8) reported that they had not presented their research outside of OSU during their postdoctoral appointment. The vast majority of respondents (89%) indicated that they typically receive financial support when presenting their research outside OSU at conferences. This support was reported to typically come from their PI's grant.

Seventy percent (n=31) of respondents indicated that their scientific mentoring is provided mainly by the PI under whom they work. One respondent indicated that scientific mentoring was provided by someone other than the PI who had been designated as mentor. Four respondents indicated that no one provided scientific mentoring.

Similarly, 50% (n=22) of respondents indicated that their career mentoring is provided mainly by the PI. A troubling finding was that more than one-third of the respondents reported that no one provided career mentoring for them at OSU.

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed (1) or disagreed (5) with a list of fourteen characteristics of the quality and nature of the mentoring they are receiving during their postdoctoral appointment at OSU. Items that received the highest agreement (i.e. lowest mean score) included access to mentor ($\mu=2.00$), regular meetings with mentor ($\mu=1.95$), discussion of training goals with mentor ($\mu=2.30$), clarity of mentor's expectations ($\mu=2.18$), encouragement to grow/develop as scholar/researcher ($\mu=2.16$), mentor's acknowledgement of contributions to research effort ($\mu=2.18$), mentor's introductions/discussions with scientists outside my lab ($\mu=2.18$), and mentor's critiques are useful ($\mu=2.16$). Respondents indicated that they did not feel exploited by their mentors ($\mu=3.98$). Respondents indicated that they did not receive an annual official performance evaluation by their mentor ($\mu=2.84$).

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed (1) or disagreed (5) with a list of ten characteristics of their relationship with their department and with OSU. Items that received the highest agreement (i.e. lowest mean score) included health coverage ($\mu=1.68$) (although responses to this item tended to take a bipolar distribution), vacation/sick leave ($\mu=1.77$), health/safety concerns ($\mu=3.43$) – the higher mean reflects a low level of agreement with this item. They tended to agree with the perception that postdoctoral positions keep down the cost of research at the University ($\mu=1.86$). A fairly even distribution but with a noticeable spike at the “disagree” end of the scale was observed regarding satisfaction with salary ($\mu=3.18$); responses to this item appeared to be more evenly distributed than was the case for the remaining nine items that were assessed.

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed (1) or disagreed (5) with a list of seven items dealing with their professional/career goals. The vast majority of respondents

indicated that they were in their current postdoctoral position in order to train for an academic/research position ($\mu=1.64$) and did not expect to remain in their postdoctoral position for more than 5 years. They also indicated that they did not accept their postdoctoral position because they could not find a job ($\mu=3.91$) nor did they report their career as being secondary to that of their spouse/partner ($\mu=3.18$). 25% ($n=11$) of respondents indicated that their stay at OSU had been prolonged because of difficulty in finding a job. 18% ($n=8$) of respondents indicated that they perceived their ability to find employment in their field at the end of their OSU postdoctoral appointment to be poor (4 or 5 on 5-point scale). All but one respondent who was looking for a permanent job at the time the survey was conducted ($n=29$) reported that he/she had received no job search assistance from OSU; information regarding whether or not these job seekers had sought job search assistance was not collected.

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of interest (1=interested; 5=not interested) in 9 professional development opportunities. Topics that received the highest interest ratings included job search ($\mu=1.48$), grant writing ($\mu=1.55$), publication process ($\mu=1.93$), conflict resolution ($\mu=2.09$), understanding benefits packages ($\mu=2.32$), and general financial management ($\mu=2.16$). They also indicated a high level of interest in having an OSU postdoctoral information manual ($\mu=1.75$). Generally, all topics were of interest to the respondents.

OSU PRACTICE

The Task Force had lengthy discussion around the issue of appointee classification. Of employees who have traditionally been categorized as “Research Associate—Postdoc” at OSU, two *different* types were identified². The Task Force characterized one type of appointment as typically being of indefinite length, possibly a career position and the second type of appointment as typically being of a limited duration immediately following completion of the PhD degree. We labeled the first type of appointment as “Research Associate” and the second as “Postdoctoral Scholar.” The following are full characterizations of these two types of appointments:

- Research Associate. A position of indefinite length, possibly a career position. Research associates are supervised by professorial faculty members and they provide support for faculty research programs. Research associates generally participate in grant writing and are authors and co-authors of papers, but the level of participation in these activities may vary widely from one person to another. The research associate position is a faculty position carrying normal benefits provided to all non-classified employees of the University.
- Postdoctoral Scholar. A mentored position that typically has a fixed duration with a maximum of three years. Like research associates, postdoctoral trainees are supervised by professorial faculty members and they provide support for faculty research programs. Unlike research associates, postdoctoral scholars are considered to be in a training position and, as such, it is the responsibility of faculty mentors and the University to provide training and appropriate experiences designed to help postdoctoral appointees become successful as independent researchers. The best measure of success for a postdoctoral trainee position is subsequent employment as a fully independent researcher.

² On rare occasions, postdoctoral scholars have been appointed in the job title Faculty Research Assistant.

The Task Force concluded that OSU should create job classifications to reflect this distinction between the two different types of positions. Past practice has been to classify *both* types of employees as research associates. The Task Force recommends that a new classification be established, Postdoctoral Scholar (see recommendations #1-2, pages 8-9). This new classification would be defined to be consistent with national practice and would be offered fully paid PEBB health and dental insurance equivalent to other unclassified OSU employees. Postdoctoral scholars would not accrue leave nor have access to PERS.

The relationship between a postdoctoral appointee and his/her mentor is unique. It is similar to the relationship between graduate students and their major professors in that it is a vital step in the career path for the postdoctoral scholar. It differs in that a postdoctoral appointee brings more academic maturity and technical experience to the relationship than does the typical graduate student and postdoctoral appointees are not awarded degrees or certification in recognition of their experience and/or efforts. Mentors benefit from the education and experience of the postdoctoral appointee and they also accept significant responsibility for the career development of the trainee.

Responsibilities of the Faculty Mentor

- A commitment to advancing the career of the postdoctoral scholar. This involves regular and thoughtful discussions of the strengths and limitations of ongoing research in the mentor's laboratory as well as attention to the development of skills and experiences that will advance the individual's career. Normally, this will include helping the trainee learn to write successful grant proposals and research papers and to develop mentorship skills.
- A commitment to a collaborative process of identifying clear and achievable research goals for the postdoctoral appointee. This includes setting timelines and assessing progress towards them in a regular and collegial manner. The mentor is responsible for providing performance evaluations to postdoctoral appointees in a timely manner so that corrective action may be taken if necessary and new goals can be set as old ones are either achieved or determined to be unattainable.
- Provide the resources necessary to conduct the agreed upon work.
- Recognize and publicize achievements of the postdoctoral appointee within the laboratory and the broader scientific community. This includes supporting the career advancement of the postdoctoral appointee.

Responsibilities of the Postdoctoral Appointee

- A commitment to advancing the science ongoing in the faculty mentor's laboratory. This involves demonstration of a strong work ethic and scientific integrity.
- A commitment to identifying clear and achievable research goals in concert with the mentor. This commitment involves setting and meeting timelines. If problems arise that preclude meeting agreed upon timelines, it is the responsibility of the postdoctoral appointee to request a new timeline of the mentor.
- Performance of research as a good colleague in the mentor's laboratory. Technicians, graduate students, and other postdoctoral scholars share the responsibility of advancing the science conducted in the mentor's laboratory. The mentor sets priorities for all members of the laboratory in cooperation with appropriate members of the group.

- Share personal career objectives with the mentor, including timelines for advancing one's career.

Responsibilities of the University

Because postdoctoral appointees are trainees and not employees, it is important that the University provide a program that is to the benefit of the postdoctoral appointee including supervised training, oversight, and mentoring.

- Training of postdoctoral trainees is in many respects an extension of the same kinds of training and mentorship provided for graduate students. The mission of the Graduate School should be expanded to include oversight of postdoctoral trainees.
- Like graduate students, postdoctoral scholars need access to a formal procedure for filing complaints and grievances if they feel that they are not provided the training and opportunities that meet the University's standards for postdoctoral appointees. The grievance process that is managed by the Graduate School should be expanded to include postdoctoral scholars.
- Departments will be evaluated for effective mentorship of postdoctoral scholars as part of the periodic Graduate Council Program Reviews.
- Faculty mentors of scholars will be evaluated for effective mentorship and oversight, following similar procedures used to evaluate effective mentorship of graduate students and effective teaching and mentorship of undergraduate students. Effective mentorship of postdoctoral scholars should be considered during Periodic Reviews of Faculty (PROFs), Promotion and Tenure, and Post Tenure review.

Stipend and Benefits

- The postdoctoral oversight office (i.e. PDO) will provide recommendations for postdoctoral scholar stipend levels consistent with disciplinary standards and standards established by funding agencies.
- The University will provide access to health and dental insurance.
- The University will provide and facilitate training opportunities for postdoctoral scholars such as grant writing workshops, job fairs, training in responsible conduct of research.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Adopt the AAU definition of postdoctoral scholar (see p. 2 at <http://www.aau.edu/reports/PostdocRpt.pdf>):
 - The appointee was recently awarded a Ph.D. or equivalent doctorate (e.g. Sc.D., M.D.) in an appropriate field; and
 - The appointment is temporary; and
 - The appointment involves substantially full-time research or scholarship; and
 - The appointment is viewed as preparatory for a full-time academic and/or research career; and
 - The appointment is not part of a clinical training program; and
 - The appointee works under the supervision of a senior scholar or a department; and
 - The appointee has the freedom, and is expected, to publish the results of his or her research or scholarship during the period of the appointment.

2. Create a new position title of **Postdoctoral Scholar**. This position should be distinctly different from the current appointment type of Research Associate employees. This new classification would be defined to be consistent with national practice and would be offered fully paid PEBB health and dental insurance equivalent to other unclassified OSU employees. Postdoctoral scholars would not accrue leave nor have access to PERS.
3. The postdoctoral oversight office (PDO) will provide recommendations for postdoctoral scholar stipend levels consistent with disciplinary standards and standards established by funding agencies.
4. Recognizing the need to provide further training and experience beyond the PhD degree and recognizing national practice, postdoctoral appointments should be limited to a maximum of **3 years** at OSU and over *all* postdoctoral appointments combined regardless of location or number of appointments.
5. When it is desirable to retain a postdoctoral scholar at OSU beyond the maximum 3-year time period, the individual's status may be reviewed for change to a **Research Associate** position subject to the University's standard operating personnel practices.
6. Establish a **postdoctoral oversight office** (PDO) as per NPA *Recommendations for Postdoctoral Policies and Practices* (http://www.nationalpostdoc.org/atf/cf/%7B89152E81-F2CB-430C-B151-49D071AEB33E%7D/Recommended_Practices.pdf). To staff the PDO, it is recommended that a faculty level director position should be established (0.25-0.50 FTE) and assigned to the Graduate School along with a modest operating budget including annual NPA membership dues. The following duties associated with addressing the needs of postdoctoral scholars are anticipated as being part of the director's responsibilities: providing leadership for all aspects of the postdoctoral scholar experience at OSU, leading establishment of policies relevant to the postdoctoral experience, establishing a training curriculum, setting stipend guidelines, facilitating professional development opportunities, representing OSU internally and externally in matters related to postdoctoral scholars, maintaining a current inventory of postdoctoral scholars, implementing a process for evaluating the quality of the postdoctoral experience at OSU, working with faculty mentors, and providing general coordination of activities related to the postdoctoral experience at OSU.
7. A postdoctoral **manual** should be created and maintained. A subcommittee of the Task Force worked with an example of such a manual (based on a document from UC Davis) which is presented in Appendix I of this report. Responsibility for completing and maintaining such a manual should be assigned to the director of the PDO.
8. The University should provide professional development opportunities and other training opportunities for postdoctoral scholars consistent with good practice recommended by the NPA.
9. If OSU postdoctoral scholars launch an initiative to establish an OSU postdoctoral association, it should be linked to the PDO.
10. Departments should be evaluated for effective mentorship of postdoctoral scholars as part of the periodic Graduate Council Program Reviews.
11. Faculty mentors of scholars should be evaluated for effective mentorship and oversight, following similar procedures used to evaluate effective mentorship of graduate students and effective teaching and mentorship of undergraduate students. Effective mentorship of

postdoctoral scholars should be considered during Periodic Reviews of Faculty (PROFs), Promotion and Tenure, and Post Tenure review.

POSTDOCTORAL SCHOLARS—MANUAL (DRAFT 5-5-08)

Introduction

At Oregon State University, the postdoctoral experience emphasizes scholarship and continued research training for individuals who have recently completed a doctoral degree. The Postdoctoral Scholar conducts research under the general oversight of a faculty mentor in preparation for a career position in academia, industry, government, or the nonprofit sector. Postdoctoral work provides essential training in many disciplines for individuals pursuing academic careers and may include opportunities to enhance teaching and other professional skills. Postdoctoral Scholars contribute to the academic community by enhancing the research and education programs of the University. They bring expertise and creativity that enrich the research environment for all members of the University community, including graduate and undergraduate students. The University strives to provide a stimulating, positive, and constructive experience for the Postdoctoral Scholar, by emphasizing the mutual commitment and responsibility of the institution, the faculty, and the Postdoctoral Scholar.

Policy

This policy defines and sets forth terms and conditions relating to the appointment of Postdoctoral Scholars. It applies to both (1) Postdoctoral Scholars who are employees of the University and (2) Postdoctoral Scholars who are appointed as fellows and are paid stipends by extramural agencies either directly or through the University.

Definition

Postdoctoral Scholar appointments are temporary positions with fixed end dates intended to provide a full-time program of advanced academic preparation and research training. Individuals pursuing clinical fellowships and residencies in the health sciences are excluded from appointment to these titles. Postdoctoral Scholars train under the direction and supervision of faculty mentors in preparation for academic or research careers. *In addition to pursuing advanced preparation in research, Postdoctoral Scholars may be approved to engage in other activities to enhance teaching and other professional skills. If formal teaching duties are assigned, a Postdoctoral Scholar must hold both a Postdoctoral Scholar title and an appropriate teaching title. Under this circumstance, the full-time Postdoctoral Scholar appointment percentage will be reduced accordingly.* [Needs discussion] Oregon State University allows Postdoctoral Scholars to serve as principal investigators on extramurally-sponsored contracts or grants, but individual units have their own guidelines which supercede the University permission.

Responsibility

a. Faculty mentors are responsible for guiding and monitoring the advanced training of Postdoctoral Scholars. In that role, faculty mentors should make clear the goals, objectives, and expectations of the training program and the responsibilities of Postdoctoral Scholars. They should regularly and frequently communicate with Postdoctoral Scholars, provide annual assessments of the Postdoctoral Scholar's performance, and provide career advice and job placement assistance.

b. Postdoctoral Scholars are responsible for their performance and maximizing the benefit of this training period to their career goals.

Titles

The title of a Postdoctoral Scholar appointment is determined by the requirements of the funding agencies.

a. Postdoctoral Scholar – Employee

An appointment is made in the title “Postdoctoral Scholar – Employee” when (1) the agency funding the salary requires or permits the appointee to be an employee of the University, or (2) whenever General Funds, Opportunity Funds or other University discretionary funds are used to support the position.

b. Postdoctoral Scholar – Fellow

An appointment is made in the title “Postdoctoral Scholar – Fellow” when the Postdoctoral Scholar has been awarded a fellowship or traineeship for postdoctoral study by an extramural agency and the fellowship or traineeship is paid through a University account.

c. Postdoctoral Scholar – Paid Direct

An appointment is made in the title “Postdoctoral Scholar – Paid Direct” when the Postdoctoral Scholar has been awarded a fellowship or traineeship for postdoctoral study by an extramural agency and the agency pays the fellowship or traineeship directly to the Postdoctoral Scholar, rather than through the University. Such appointments shall have a “without-salary” status.

d. Postdoctoral Scholars may be assigned to more than one Postdoctoral Scholar title concurrently depending on University and extramural funding agency requirements.

Appointment Criteria

Appointment as a Postdoctoral Scholar requires a doctoral degree (e.g., Ph.D., M.D.) or the foreign equivalent.

Terms of Service

a. Postdoctoral Scholar appointments are temporary and have fixed end dates.

Appointments are typically made for one year but may be made for up to three years, depending on suitable annual evaluation and funding availability.

b. The total duration of an individual's postdoctoral appointment may not exceed three years, including postdoctoral appointments at other institutions. By exception, the Director of the Postdoctoral Office may grant an extension, not to exceed a fourth year, subject to ordinary institutional personnel procedures. Transition from Postdoctoral Scholar to Faculty Research Associate or to Faculty (Senior Research) position is not uncommon.

c. It is within the University's sole discretion not to reappoint a Postdoctoral Scholar.

Appointment Percentage

a. Appointments to the Postdoctoral Scholar title are full time, based on the expectation that the Postdoctoral Scholar will be fully involved in scholarly pursuits. In special cases, upon written request of the appointee and concurrence of the mentor, an exception may be granted by the host academic unit when the appointee is unable to make a full-time commitment for reasons of health, family responsibilities, or employment external to the University. Such a request must take into account

extramural funding agency requirements, if any. When a reduced-time appointment has been approved, the mentor and Postdoctoral Scholar shall sign a written agreement specifying the reduction in hours of work and concomitant responsibilities.

b. When a Postdoctoral Scholar additionally holds a University teaching appointment or other University position, the percent time of the Postdoctoral Scholar appointment will be reduced so that the sum of the percent times of the two appointments equals 100 percent.

Notice of Appointment

a. A Postdoctoral Scholar shall be provided a written notice of appointment, which shall include the mentor's name, begin and end dates of the appointment, salary/stipend amount, source of funding, and work eligibility requirements for U.S. citizens and non-citizens. A copy of this manual and a summary of benefits, or corresponding website information, shall accompany the appointment notice. The Postdoctoral Scholar is required to accept the appointment in writing.

b. The University may require additional information in appointment letters, such as whether the appointment is renewable and the conditions for renewal.

Annual Reviews

a. In furtherance of fostering a Postdoctoral Scholar's career, the mentor shall conduct an annual review with the Postdoctoral Scholar. A written evaluation will be provided to the Postdoctoral Scholar.

b. The written evaluation will meet these requirements:

(1) An assessment of the Postdoctoral Scholar's progress to date, strengths, areas needing improvement, potential for a research career in the discipline, and a summary of expectations and activities for the following year;

(2) A written summary of the review shall be provided to and signed by the Postdoctoral Scholar;

(3) A review will be conducted whenever a salary increase is proposed;

(4) Any written evaluation will be maintained by the host academic unit.

Professional Development

Recognizing that the Postdoctoral Scholar is ordinarily engaged full-time in advanced academic preparation and research training, but that other activities that enhance teaching, proposal writing and research management are desirable in educating future professionals, Oregon State University provides a number of staff development and professional services that are available to Postdoctoral Scholars. Examples are (1) the Center for Teaching and Learning (<http://oregonstate.edu/ctl/>), (2) proposal writing, development and award management (<http://oregonstate.edu/research/>), and (3) mentoring, ethics (http://oregonstate.edu/dept/grad_school/). More information about professional development can be found through the PDO located in the Graduate School.

Equal Opportunity, Nondiscrimination, and Diversity

a. Oregon State University is committed to a university environment that provides equal opportunity and promotes a diversity of backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences among faculty, staff, Postdoctoral Scholars, and the student body.

b. The University strives to have an inclusive, supportive environment that provides

postdoctoral training opportunities and maximizes and values the potential of all Postdoctoral Scholars.

c. The University announces postdoctoral positions in order to promote equal opportunity for all candidates.

Grievances

Information about procedures for grievances, mediation, resolution, appeals, layoffs, corrective actions and dismissals can be found through the University offices of Human Resources (<http://oregonstate.edu/admin/hr/>) and Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity (<http://oregonstate.edu/dept/affact/>).