UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER

Arts, Sciences and Engineering

POSTDOCTORAL APPOINTMENT POLICY

Postdoctoral appointments in Arts, Sciences and Engineering are made in conformity with this policy.

Definition of Postdoctoral Appointee

A Postdoctoral appointment involves substantially full-time research or scholarship. It is a transitional position and is viewed as preparatory for an academic and/or research career. The appointee was recently awarded the PhD or equivalent doctorate, works under the supervision of a faculty member and has the freedom and is expected to publish the results of his/her research or scholarship during the period of the appointment.

- A **Postdoctoral Associate** is supported from research funds on grants or other external or internal funding sources and is expected to perform specific work for the University (work on a specific research project, teaching, etc.). A Postdoctoral Associate is an employee of the University and is paid through the University with a fringe rate collected on the salary.

- A **Postdoctoral Fellow** is supported from a grant that prohibits the individual from being considered an employee (as determined by Sponsored Research or other entity), or from a grant whose funding source does not permit collection of a fringe rate, or is being paid a stipend by an agency outside the University.

Please note: postdoctoral appointees with both types of funding dollars will need to have two appointments in HRMS. Administrators should review the document "Process for Appointing Postdocs with Dual Appointments" for more information.

General Conditions of Appointment

1. *Formal Written Offer*

All postdoctoral appointments are to be made through an offer letter that provides the specifics of the appointment and is signed by both the postdoctoral appointee ("Appointee") and his or her supervising faculty member ("Advisor").

The letter is to be signed by the faculty member Advisor as well as the PI of the grant that will be supporting the Appointee, if different. The department chair of the advisor should be copied on the offer letter.

The letter must include 1) the schedule for the appointment; 2) the level of stipend; 3) benefits provided; 4) a statement of the expected research and/or teaching requirements of the Appointee during the postdoctoral period; 5) the statement: "This offer is contingent on the Appointee's

ability to provide work authorization to the University of Rochester. Foreign nationals should refer to www.iso.rochester.edu/employment;" and 6) a link to this policy document. A template for such a letter is attached as an Appendix to this policy.

2. *Duration of Appointment or Re-appointment*

Postdoctoral appointments are for an agreed upon period, with a specific starting date. Assuming satisfactory performance and mutual agreement, reappointment is permissible when funding to cover the proposed appointment period is available.

In general, individuals shall serve no more than five years in the status of postdoctoral Appointee. Exceptions must be approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

3. *Stipend*

The Appointee's stipend is to be specified in an amount agreed to by the Appointee and the Advisor. The stipend level should be competitive to those offered in the field. The advisor must be prepared to justify the stipend level. Note that for Appointees in H1B or J-1 temporary work authorization status, there may be additional requirements on the stipend level the University provides. For H1Bs, federal law requires that the employer "pay nonimmigrants at least the local prevailing wage or the employer's actual wage, whichever is higher, and pay for non-productive time." (www.iso.rochester.edu/employment/workers/h1bwork.html) For J-1 Wage requirements, see www.iso.rochester.edu/employment/scholars/j-eligibility. Contact the International Service Office for more information.

4. *Benefits*

Postdoctoral Appointees are eligible to participate in a University Health Plan, either the plan offered to employees (for postdoctoral associates) or the plan offered to students (for postdoctoral fellows). The appendix shows the different benefits provided to postdoctoral associates and to postdoctoral fellows.

5. *Housing*

Postdoctoral Appointees are eligible to become a part of the University of Rochester graduate and family housing communities. Information about housing can be found here: http://www.rochester.edu/reslife/graduate/index.html.

6. *Annual Review*

At the end of each year of service, the Advisor is to provide to the postdoctoral Appointee a performance review.

7. *Resolution of Disagreements*

When the Advisor and postdoctoral Appointee cannot themselves resolve a disagreement relating to the appointment, the issue will be considered by the department chair or center director and, failing resolution at that level, the chair or director should refer the matter and a recommended

solution to the Dean of Graduate Studies. Ordinarily, the Dean of Graduate Studies' decision is final. However, if the matter is still in dispute, either party may submit it to the Dean of the Faculty for Arts, Sciences and Engineering, who may elect or decline to hear it. There are no appeals beyond this.

8. *Resignation*

If a postdoctoral Appointee elects to resign his or her appointment prior to the ending date indicated in the appointment letter or subsequent written understandings, the postdoctoral Appointee is expected to provide a minimum of one month's notice. If the Appointee is a foreign national in a temporary nonimmigrant worker status they should inform the International Services Office of the resignation by completing the Scholar Departure Form: www.iso.rochester.edu/travel/depart/scholar.

9. *Termination*

A postdoctoral Appointee may be terminated only after the Advisor has first notified the Appointee of his or her specific deficiencies. The notice should be made in writing, with a copy to the Dean of Graduate Studies. The notice should provide a reasonable period of time to remedy any deficiencies that can be remedied.

If the identified deficiencies are not remedied within the time allowed, then the Advisor will, with the advice and consent of the department chair (or center director), terminate the appointment of the postdoctoral Appointee.

In those circumstance in which the need to terminate a postdoctoral Appointee is more pressing than the process described above will allow, the matter may be presented to the Dean of Graduate Studies for review. If it is determined that an immediate termination, or suspension pending further investigation or procedures, is warranted, such immediate actions will be taken.

If the funding for the postdoctoral Appointee is terminated prematurely by an outside funding agency, the Advisor and/or department/program must immediately inform the Appointee of the change in appointment and continue the Appointee's stipend for a period of no less than 2 months.

If the Appointee is a foreign national in a temporary nonimmigrant worker status, the department should inform the International Services Office of the termination and request the foreign national to complete the Scholar Departure Form: www.iso.rochester.edu/travel/depart/scholar.

10. *Property*

When departing the University of Rochester, whether at the end of an appointment or by resignation or termination, the postdoctoral Appointee must leave behind with his or her Advisor all original laboratory notebooks, data, code, and University property. All these should be left in a condition that will permit uninterrupted continuation of the work.

11. *Other Policies*

Postdoctoral Appointees are subject to the generally applicable rules, regulations and policies of the University of Rochester and Arts, Sciences and Engineering, including but not limited to those relating to intellectual property, conflicts of interest, sexual harassment, respect for diversity, academic honesty and campus safety and security.

12. *Responsibilities of the Advisor*

The Advisor is expected to treat the postdoctoral Appointee as a colleague while at the same time mentoring him or her in the performance of high quality research leading to timely publication. Mentoring also includes encouraging and helping the Appointee to define and develop a career direction, and to prepare publications, presentations, and applications for extramural support.

The Appointee and Advisor may wish to jointly develop an Individual Development Plan (IDP) to guide the Appointee's professional development. The Appendix contains documents that provide information about the IDP, and an on-line, interactive resource for the development of an IDP can be found here: http://myidp.sciencecareers.org/.

13. *Responsibilities of the Postdoctoral Appointee*

Postdoctoral Appointees have obligations to their faculty Advisors, to Arts, Sciences and Engineering, and to the University of Rochester. These include conscientious and ethical efforts to accomplish the research and/or teaching responsibilities outlined at the time of acceptance of the appointment, and compliance with good laboratory practice, including the maintenance of adequate research records and care for unique facilities, equipment, and special materials. The Appointee must discuss research findings with the faculty Advisor and avoid disclosures without the Advisor's consent, behave with congeniality and respect for colleagues, and conform to applicable policies, as described above. The University of Rochester Policy on Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer (available at http://www.urmc.rochester.edu/technology-transfer/inventors/ip-policies.cfm), by which the University acquires, retains and protects rights in intellectual property and tangible research property produced by University personnel or with the significant use of University resources, applies to postdoctoral Appointees.

14. *Responsible Conduct of Research Training*

All postdoctoral Appointees are required to receive training in the responsible conduct of research as soon as possible after the start of their appointment. There are two options to fulfill this requirement: 1) Arts, Sciences and Engineering offers a 1-day workshop in January before the start of the spring semester; and 2) the School of Medicine and Dentistry offers a 0-credit semester long course in the fall, IND506: Ethics and Professional Integrity in Research.

15. *Changes*

Arts, Sciences and Engineering reserves the right to make changes to this policy from time to time. No period of advance notice is required to make such changes.

APPENDIX A: SAMPLE POSTDOCTORAL APPOINTMENT LETTER

Date

Dear XXX,

This letter is to offer you an appointment as a Postdoctoral [Associate, Fellow] in our research program and to describe the details of the appointment for your consideration. To accept the offer, you should sign and return this letter to me by [date].

You may find the Arts, Sciences and Engineering Postdoctoral Appointment Policy ("Policy") at the following link: http://www.rochester.edu/college/postdoc. This Policy sets forth additional information pertaining to your appointment. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Your appointment is for a period of _____, beginning _____. As described in the Policy, initial appointments may be renewed. Renewal depends on your satisfactory performance, availability of funds for salary support, and a mutual desire to continue the appointment.

Your research project will be that already discussed, _____[describe]_____. The project may be modified within the limits of the objectives defined by the supporting grant or other funds. I will be responsible for supervising you in this research program and also for providing guidance to you in your career development.

Your stipend in the first year will be $_____. Your stipend will be adjusted each year according to the additional year of experience you will then have. You will receive the following benefits as part of your appointment _____. This offer is contingent on the appointee's ability to provide work authorization to the University of Rochester. Foreign nationals should refer to www.iso.rochester.edu/employment.

I look forward to you accepting this appointment and to working with you.

Sincerely,

_____
[Title]

Accepted:

_____ _____
[Postdoctoral Appointee] Date

cc: Department Chair

APPENDIX B: CODING OF POSTDOCTORAL APPOINTEES

Postdoctoral Associate (0093)

A Postdoctoral Associate is supported from research funds on grants or other external or internal funding sources and is expected to perform specific work for the University (work on a specific research project, teaching, etc.). A Postdoctoral Associate is an employee of the University and is paid through the University with a fringe rate collected on the salary.

Benefit Eligibility with Paid Employment Lasting Longer Than 4 Months

Benefit	0093 Eligible?	Eligibility Information	Other Information
UR Medical Insurance	Yes	First day of month following the date of appointment or on the date of appointment if that occurs on the first of the month. *You have 30 days from your date of eligibility to make your plan elections.*	Choice of four plans that provide hospital, surgical, medical and pharmacy coverage. Please refer to the Health Program Decision Guide for further details: http://www.rochester.edu/working/hr/benefits/health/plan/
UR Dental Insurance	Yes	First day of month following the date of appointment or on the date of appointment if that occurs on the first of the month. *You have 30 days from your date of eligibility to make your plan elections.*	Choice of two plans that assists with dental expenses: The Traditional Dental Assistance Plan and the Medallion Dental Plan. Please refer to the Health Program Decision Guide for further details: http://www.rochester.edu/working/hr/benefits/health/plan/

Benefit	0093 Eligible?	Eligibility Information	Other Information
Flexible Spending Account (FSA): Health Care FSA, Dependent Care FSA, Limited Purpose Health Care FSA / Health Savings Account (HSA)	Yes	First day of month following the date of appointment or on the date of appointment if that occurs on the first of the month. HSAs and Limited Purpose Health Care FSAs require enrollment into the University's HSA-Eligible Health Care Plan. *You have 30 days from your date of eligibility to make your plan elections.*	Health Care FSAs allow pre-tax contributions that you can use to pay for eligible out-of-pocket health care, dental, or vision expenses. Limited Purpose FSAs allow pre-tax contributions to pay for eligible for out-pocket dental, vision, and co-insurance expenses (*cannot be used for deductible*). Dependent Care FSAs allow pre-tax contributions to pay for child/ dependent care expenses (e.g.: eligible daycare expenses). Please refer to the Health Program Decision Guide for further details and important IRS Regulations governing these accounts. http://www.rochester.edu/working/hr/benefits/health/plan/
Travel Accident Insurance	Yes	Immediate.	Provide insurance in case of accidental death or dismemberment while traveling on University business in capacity of University employee.
NYS Statutory Short-Term Disability	Yes	Immediate.	NY State Statutory only (half pay for 26 weeks, max of $170 per week)
Workers Compensation	Yes	Immediate.	
Retirement Plan 403b Employee Voluntary Tax-Deferred or After Tax Roth Contributions	Yes	Immediate. Employee voluntary tax-deferred contributions or after tax Roth contributions.	Four investment companies available: TIAA-CREF, T. Rowe Price, Vanguard, and Fidelity. Enroll for salary reduction and investment allocation online through Retirement Program Self-Service at www.rochester.edu/people or by telephone at 1-800-410-6497.
Employee Assistance Program	Yes	Immediate.	http://www.urmc.rochester.edu/eap/
Basic Life Insurance	No		

Benefit	0093 Eligible?	Eligibility Information	Other Information
Accident Death and Dismemberment	No		
Long-term Disability	No		
Tuition Benefits	No		

Postdoctoral Fellow (0095)

A Postdoctoral Fellow is supported from a grant that prohibits the individual from being considered an employee (as determined by Sponsored Research or other entity), or from a grant whose funding source does not permit collection of a fringe rate, or is being paid a stipend by an agency outside the University.

Benefit	0095 Eligible?	Eligibility Information	Other Information
UR Medical Insurance	No	Medical Insurance is available through University Health Services (UHS).	Arrange health benefits through UHS Student Insurance. http://www.rochester.edu/uhs/studentinsurance/postdoc.html
UR Dental Insurance	No	Dental Insurance is available through Eastman Dental.	Arrange dental benefits through Eastman Dental Student Insurance; enrollment period is September 1-October 31. http://www.rochester.edu/uhs/studentinsurance/dental.html
Flexible Spending Account (FSA) / Health Savings Account (HSA)	No		
Travel Accident Insurance	Yes	Immediate.	Provide insurance in case of accidental death or dismemberment while traveling on University business in capacity of University Postdoctoral Fellow.
NYS Statutory Short-Term Disability	Yes	Immediate.	NY State Statutory only (half pay for 26 weeks, max of $170 per week).
Workers Compensation	No		

Benefit	0095 Eligible?	Eligibility Information	Other Information
Retirement Plan 403b Voluntary Tax-Deferred or After Tax Roth Contributions Only	Yes	Immediate. Postdoctoral Fellow voluntary tax-deferred contributions or after tax Roth contributions.	Four investment companies available: TIAA-CREF, T. Rowe Price, Vanguard, and Fidelity. Enroll for salary reduction and investment allocation online through Retirement Program Self-Service at www.rochester.edu/people or by telephone at 1-800-410-6497.
Employee Assistance Program	Yes		
Basic Life Insurance	No		
Accident Death and Dismemberment	No		
Long-term Disability	No		

Employee contributions for the University Health Care Plan are based upon your annual salary, full-time/ part-time status and length of University service if part-time. Please refer to the Health Care Plans Premium Sheet found on the Benefits website. www.rochester.edu/working/hr/benefits/health/plan

The University reserves the right to modify, amend, or terminate the plans at any time, including actions that may affect coverage, cost-sharing, or covered benefits, as well as benefits that are provided to current and future retirees.

APPENDIX C: FASEB'S INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

www.faseb.org/portals/0/pdfs/opa/idp.pdf

This document was developed by the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB)'s Science Policy Committee. For more information, contact: Jennifer A. Hobin, Ph.D., FASEB Office of Public Affairs (301-634-7650 or jhobin@faseb.org)

Individual Development Plans (IDPs) provide a planning process that identifies both professional development needs and career objectives. Furthermore, IDPs serve as a communication tool between individuals and their mentors. While IDPs have been incorporated into performance review processes in many organizations, they have been used much less frequently in the mentoring of postdoctoral fellows. An IDP can be considered one component of a broader mentoring program that needs to be instituted by all types of research institutions.

Goals

Help individuals identify:

- Long-term career options they wish to pursue and the necessary tools to meet these; and
- Short-term needs for improving current performance.

Benefits

Postdoctoral fellows will have a process that assists in developing long-term goals. Identifying short-term goals will give them a clearer sense of expectations and help identify milestones along the way to achieving specific objectives. The IDP also provides a tool for communication between the postdoc and a faculty mentor.

Outline of IDP Process

The development, implementation and revision of the IDP requires a series of steps to be conducted by the postdoctoral fellow and their mentor. These steps are an interactive effort, and so both the postdoctoral fellow and the mentor must participate fully in the process.

BASIC STEPS

	… for Postdoctoral Fellows	***… for Mentors***
Step 1:	Conduct a self assessment	Become familiar with available opportunities
Step 2:	Survey opportunities with mentor	Discuss opportunities with postdoc
Step 3:	Write an IDP, share IDP with mentor and revise	Review IDP and help revise
Step 4:	Implement the plan Revise the IDP as needed	Establish regular review of progress and help revise the IDP as needed

Execution of the IDP Process

… for Postdoctoral Fellows

Step 1. Conduct a Self Assessment.

- Assess your skills, strengths and areas which need development. Formal assessment tools can be helpful. (Examples can be found in *Resources: Self Assessment* at the end of this document).
- Take a realistic look at your current abilities. This is a critical part of career planning. Ask your peers, mentors, family and friends what they see as your strengths and your development needs.
- Outline your long-term career objectives. (For useful information see *Resources: Career Opportunities* at the end of this document). Ask yourself:
    - What type of work would I like to be doing?
    - Where would I like to be in an organization?
    - What is important to me in a career?

Step 2. Survey Opportunities with Mentor.

- Identify career opportunities and select from those that interest you.
- Identify developmental needs by comparing current skills and strengths with those needed for your career choice.
- Prioritize your developmental areas and discuss with your mentor how these should be addressed.

Step 3. Write an IDP.

The IDP maps out the general path you want to take and helps match skills and strengths to your career choices. It is a changing document, since needs and goals will almost certainly evolve over time as a postdoctoral fellow. The aim is to build upon current strengths and skills by identifying areas for development and providing a way to address these. The specific objectives of a typical IDP are to:

- Establish effective dates for the duration of your postdoctoral appointment.
- Identify specific skills and strengths that you need to develop (based on discussions with your mentor).
- Define the approaches to obtain the specific skills and strengths (e.g., courses, technical skills, teaching, supervision) together with anticipated time frames.
- Discuss your draft IDP with your mentor.
- Revise the IDP as appropriate.

Step 4. Implement Your Plan.

The plan is just the beginning of the career development process and serves as the road map. Now it's time to take action!

- Put your plan into action.
- Revise and modify the plan as necessary. The plan is not cast in concrete; it will need to be modified as circumstances and goals change. The challenge of implementation is to remain flexible and open to change.
- Review the plan with your mentor regularly. Revise the plan on the basis of these discussions.

…for Mentors

Step 1. Become familiar with available opportunities.
By virtue of your experience you should already have knowledge of some career opportunities, but you may want to familiarize yourself with other career opportunities and trends in job opportunities (refer to sources such as National Research Council reports and *Science* career reviews; see also *Resources: Career Opportunities* at the end of this document).

Step 2. Discuss opportunities with postdoc.
This needs to be a private, scheduled meeting distinct from regular research-specific meetings. There should be adequate time set aside for an open and honest discussion.

Step 3. Review IDP and help revise.
Provide honest feedback - both positive and negative - to help postdoctoral fellows set realistic goals. Agree on a development plan that will allow postdoctoral fellows to be productive in the laboratory and adequately prepare them for their chosen career.

Step 4. Establish regular review of progress.
The mentor should meet at regular intervals with the postdoctoral fellow to assess progress, expectations and changing goals. On at least an annual basis, the mentor should conduct a performance review designed to analyze what has been accomplished and what needs to be done. A written review is most helpful in objectively documenting accomplishments. (An example is provided as an attachment – this can be modified to fit the needs of the postdoc and mentor).

Resources*

Self Assessment
Fiske, P. S. (2001). Put Your Science to Work: The Take-Charge Career Guide for Scientists. Washington, D.C.: American Geophysical Union.
Bolles, R. N. (2002). What Color is your Parachute? A Practical Manual for Job-Hunters and Career-Changers. Berkeley, Calif.: Ten Speed Press.

The Postdoc Experience
Kern, S. (2002). Fellowship Goals for PhDs and MDs: A Primer on the Molecular Biology Postdoctoral Experience. *Cancer Biology and Therapy* 1: 74-75.
National Academy of Sciences. (2000). Enhancing the Postdoctoral Experience for Scientists and Engineers: A Guide for Postdoctoral scholars, Advisers, Institutions, Funding Organizations, and Disciplinary Societies. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

Career Opportunities
American Association for the Advancement of Science. Science's Next Wave. [On-line]. Available: http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/
The Scientist. Archives: Profession. [On-line]. Available: http://www.the-scientist.com/fragments/careers/careers_about.jsp
The Chronicle of Higher Education. Career Network Advice Columns. [On-line]. Available: http://chronicle.com/jobs/
Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology. (1997). Graduate Education: Consensus

Conference Report. Bethesda, M.D. FASEB. [On-line]. Available: http://opa.faseb.org/pages/Publications/educationreport.htm
Heiberger and Vick, eds. (1996). The Academic Job Search Handbook (2nd ed.). University of Pennsylvania Press.
Reis, R. M. (1997) Tomorrow's Professor. Preparing for Academic Careers in Science and Engineering. New York: IEEE Press. 1997.
On-line Listserv: Tomorrow's Professor. Available: http://ctl.stanford.edu/Tomprof/index.shtml
Barker, K. (2002). At the Helm: A Laboratory Navigator. Cold Spring Harbor, NY: Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press.

Resources on Non-Academic Careers

Robbins-Roth, C. ed. (1998). Alternative Careers in Science. Leaving the Ivory Tower. San Diego, Calif.: Academic Press.
Kreeger, K. Y. (1999). Guide to Nontraditional Careers in Science. London: Taylor & Francis Group.

**these resources are not considered endorsements, per se*