

III-17
POSTDOCTORAL SCHOLARS
(Revised 10/24)

I. Definition

Postdoctoral Scholar appointments are intended to provide a full-time (100%) training program of advanced academic preparation and research training under the mentorship of a faculty member (defined as ladder faculty or professional researcher). System-wide policies regarding Postdoctoral Scholars may be found in APM 390 and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Postdoctoral Scholar unit.

II. Appointment Criteria

Appointment to a Postdoctoral Scholar title requires a doctorate (e.g. Ph.D., M.D.) or foreign equivalent at the time of appointment.

III. Titles

Postdoctoral Scholars may be appointed into the following titles:

- Postdoctoral Scholar- Employee (3252)
Used 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. Payment for the appointment will be made via UCPATH. This title is also used to supplement Fellow or Paid-Direct appointments when the external funding amount is below the required salary level.
- Postdoctoral Scholar- Fellow (3253)
Used when the appointee has been awarded a fellowship or traineeship by an extramural funding agency that will be paid through a University account. The appointment in UCPATH may be with salary or without salary (funds paid as a stipend) depending on the fund source.
- Postdoctoral Scholar- Paid Direct (3254)
Used when the appointee is paid a fellowship or traineeship directly by the granting agency. Appointed without salary in UCPATH.
- Postdoctoral Scholar – Employee Non-Exempt (3255)
Used when the assigned appointment percentage (FTE%) is less than full-time and as a result the take-home salary falls below the FLSA overtime-exempt salary threshold. The appointment is non-exempt and the appointee is paid hourly on a bi-weekly basis. ([see FLSA FAQs](#))
- Interim Postdoctoral Scholar-Employee (3256)
Used when a UCSB graduate student has obtained their Ph.D. and needs a short-term appointment to complete an existing project from their degree program before moving on to other employment.

The [Chart Defining Postdoctoral Scholar Positions](#) may be helpful in determining if the candidate is appropriately appointed as a Postdoctoral Scholar, and if so, which of the Postdoctoral Scholar titles to use.

IV. Terms and Conditions of Employment

- A. Appointment must be made at 100% time. Exceptions may be granted by the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Personnel in the following circumstances

- a) Personal health
 - b) Family responsibilities
 - c) Employment external to the University
 - d) To accommodate a temporary teaching appointment or other University position at UCSB
- B. Postdoctoral Scholar appointments are temporary and have fixed end dates. The total duration of appointment in any combination of Postdoctoral Scholar titles, including prior postdoctoral service at other institutions (both domestic and foreign), may not exceed five years. Under unusual circumstances, the University may grant a sixth and final year of appointment.
- C. Appointments will be for the durations specified in the MOU as follows:
1. Postdoctoral Scholar- Employee
 - The initial appointment will be for a minimum of two years.
 - Subsequent reappointments will be for a minimum of one year.

Exceptions to the reappointment minimum will be granted if the programmatic work, work authorization or visa end date, or the five-year limit/sixth year exception on Postdoctoral appointments will occur prior to the reappointment minimum end date or if the Postdoctoral Scholar requests a short-term bridge to other employment.
 2. Postdoctoral Scholar- Fellow or Paid Direct
 - The appointment will be for the duration of the fellowship award or extramural funding.
 3. Interim Postdoctoral Scholar-Employee
 - The appointment will be for a minimum of three months at 100% FTE and a maximum of one year.
- D. Pursuant to [APM - 137-30-b](#), it is within the University's sole discretion not to reappoint a Postdoctoral Scholar

V. **Requests for Appointment, Reappointment or Modification**

- A. Appointments, reappointments, and modifications require submission of the completed and signed [Postdoctoral Scholars Appointment Form](#) along with the following documents:
- Initial Appointments
 1. UCSB Biography form
 2. An up-to-date Curriculum Vitae
 3. For a Postdoctoral Scholar Fellow or Paid Direct, a copy of the external funding agency's award letter and guidelines. The letter should include specific information regarding the salary support and the amount of funding available for coverage of health insurance and other required benefits. If the external agency will not provide funds for health insurance and other benefits, a departmental funding source must be provided.
 - Reappointments
 1. Annual evaluation form
 2. For a Postdoctoral Scholar Fellow or Paid Direct, an updated copy of the external funding agency's award letter and guidelines.
 - Modifications
 1. For a Postdoctoral Scholar Fellow or Paid Direct, an updated copy of the external funding agency's award letter and guidelines.

2. For a reduction in time, appropriate documentation supporting the reason for the reduction including the Postdoctoral Scholar's written request to the PI/Supervisor for a temporary reduction.
- B. The completed documents must be submitted to Academic Personnel at least 45 days prior to the start date of the appointment, reappointment or modification.
 - C. Upon notification of approval of the action from Academic Personnel, the Department must provide the Postdoctoral Scholar with the formal Written Notice of Appointment letter (WNA) along with appropriate attachments. Notification shall occur as soon as practical, but no later than seven calendar days following the start of appointment, or thirty calendar days prior to the start of reappointment.

The WNA may be extended to the candidate prior to the conferral of their Ph.D., however such offers are contingent on conferral of the Ph.D. prior to the start of the appointment.
 - D. The candidate must confirm their acceptance of the offer by signing and returning the WNA on or before the first day of employment. Upon receipt of the acceptance, the Department may enter the Postdoctoral Scholar into UCPath. A copy of the signed WNA must be forwarded to Academic Personnel.
 - E. The Hiring Department/Unit shall retain copies of the appointment, reappointment, and modification documents in the appointee's personnel file.

VI. Compensation

- A. All Postdoctoral Scholars must be paid at or higher than the minimum salary rate for their experience level, as indicated on the posted salary scale (Salary Scale 23/23N). If an extramural granting agency will provide less than the minimum salary for the experience level, the faculty mentor must arrange additional funding prior to the start of appointment in order to provide the minimum salary.
- B. When a Postdoctoral Scholar- Fellow or Paid Direct requires salary supplementation as described in A., the supplement will be paid using the Postdoctoral Scholar-Employee (3252) title.
- C. All months of prior postdoc service will be counted towards the placement of the Postdoctoral Scholar at their initial experience level. This includes prior postdoctoral service at other institutions (both domestic and foreign),
- D. Movement to the next experience level pay rate will occur based on the following time frames:
 - Postdoctoral Scholars with an initial start date between October 1 through April 1 will move to the next experience level on October 1 of each year.
 - Postdoctoral Scholars with an initial start date between April 2 through September 30 will move to the next experience level on April 1 of each year.
- E. Postdoctoral Scholars who are already above the new experience level rate shall receive either a 3% minimum salary increase or be placed on their next experience level minimum, whichever is the higher rate.
- F. Mid-year salary increases are allowed but do not negate the mandatory salary increase on the Postdoctoral Scholar's next experience level increase date.

VII. Benefits

- A. As a condition of appointment, Postdoctoral Scholars must have adequate health insurance coverage

for the duration of their appointment.

- B. Postdoctoral Scholars in all titles must have an appointment at 100% for a minimum of three months or at 50% or higher for twelve months to be eligible to participate in the Postdoctoral Scholar Benefit Plan (PSBP). NOTE: Postdoc Interim (3256) must have a 3-month appointment at 100% FTE to qualify for PSBP.

PSBP includes medical, vision, life AD&D, short-term disability, and voluntary long-term disability coverage.

- C. Postdoctoral Scholar Employees (3252) are required to contribute to the University of California Defined Contribution Plan (DCP) as Safe Harbor participants and pay Medicare taxes, and are not eligible for membership in the University of California Retirement Plan (UCRP). However, they are eligible to enroll and make contributions to any of the Voluntary University of California Savings Program plans.
- D. Postdoctoral Scholars in all titles may receive reimbursement of allowable child-care related expenses in accordance with the Childcare Article of the MOU.

For Fellows and Paid-Directs: Any childcare reimbursement provided by the extramural funding agency shall satisfy the requirements of the program and the amount shall be deducted from the annual maximum reimbursement amount. If the extramural funding agency provides for a greater childcare reimbursement amount than the MOU, the Fellow/Paid-Direct shall receive the full amount from the extramural funding agency and not have access to the childcare reimbursement program.

The Postdoctoral Scholar completes and submits the [Childcare Reimbursement Request Form \(UBEN 255\)](#) along with appropriate documentation to the hiring department for the reimbursement. Additional information regarding eligibility and the reimbursement process can be reviewed on the [Postdoc Childcare Reimbursement Program Factsheet](#)

VIII. Leaves

- A. Postdoctoral Scholars are eligible for 12 days of Sick Leave per twelve-month appointment period. All 12 days are available for use effective the first day of the appointment. Any balance remaining at the end of an appointment period is to be carried forward to any subsequent Postdoctoral appointment or other University appointment that provides sick leave. A Postdoctoral Scholar who is reemployed after a separation shall have part of or all sick leave accrual in accordance with Article 23, Section A.3. of the MOU.
- B. Postdoctoral Scholars are eligible for 24 days of Personal Time Off (PTO) per twelve-month appointment period. All 24 PTO days are available for use effective the first day of the appointment. Balances remaining at the end of an appointment do not carry forward to subsequent appointments.

For appointments longer than twelve-months: UCPath limits PTO accrual for a maximum of twelve months. Accruals will reset on the Postdoctoral Scholar's next anniversary date (every twelve-months from the initial start date of appointment).

Appointees with less than 12-month appointments are eligible for Sick Leave and Paid Time Off in proportion to the appointment period; at a rate of 2 PTO days and 1 Sick Leave Day per month.

- C. Sick Leave and Personal Time Off are both recorded in full day increments. Approved absences of less than one full work day do not require the use of personal time off or sick leave.
- D. Time off for Postdoctoral Scholar-Fellow and Postdoctoral Scholar-Paid Direct appointees may be paid

or unpaid, depending on the provisions of the funding agency agreement.

- E. Request to use Sick Leave and Personal Time Off must be communicated to the Postdoctoral Scholar's Supervisor ahead of time and may be required to be submitted in writing.
- F. Postdoctoral Scholars are also eligible for other leaves of absence as outlined in Article 12 of the MOU. Leaves of absence, other than use of personal time off or sick leave, require prior approval from the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Personnel. Leave of Absence request process is located at: <https://ap.ucsb.edu/leave.of.absence/>.
- G. Postdoctoral Paid Family Leave (PPFL) provides a maximum of eight weeks of paid leave per calendar year for the care of a family member with a serious health condition, to bond with a new born or adopted child, to provide Military Caregiver Leave, or Qualifying Exigency Leave.

IX. Reviews and evaluations

- A. The Supervisor or PI who serves as the Postdoctoral Scholar's mentor must, within a reasonable time after the beginning of each appointment communicate to the Postdoctoral Scholar the mentor's research and progress expectations for the period of the appointment. The Postdoctoral Scholar may request that the expectations be provided in writing.
- B. Mentors shall conduct an annual written review of each Postdoctoral Scholar's performance. [The evaluation form](#) must be submitted every 12 months or at the end of the Postdoctoral Scholar's appointment, whichever comes first. A copy of the evaluation must be provided to the Postdoctoral Scholar upon request and a copy kept in the appointee's personnel file. In addition, mentors and Postdoctoral Scholars must periodically engage in informal oral progress assessments.
- C. A Postdoctoral Scholar may elect (in some cases be required) to develop an Individual Development Plan (IDP) that identifies the Postdoctoral Scholar's research goals as well as professional development and career objectives. The Postdoctoral Scholar's mentor should, upon request from the Postdoctoral Scholar, engage in the process of reviewing and discussing the IDP with the Postdoctoral Scholar.

X. Layoff

Layoff may occur as a result of the loss of appropriate funding for the position prior to the stated end date of the appointment. A Postdoctoral Scholar will be given at minimum a 30-calendar day notice of layoff. Pay in lieu of notice may be given. The Postdoctoral Scholar may request a written summary concerning unavailability of funds. Consultation with Academic Personnel and Labor Relations is required prior to the initiation of any layoff action and should occur as far in advance as possible.

XI. Discipline and Dismissal

Discipline or dismissal may take place when, in the University's judgment, the Postdoctoral Scholar's performance or conduct merits such action. Dismissal is termination of the appointment, prior to the appointment end date based on conduct or performance such that continued employment is not justified. Discipline may take one of the following forms:

- A. Written warning informing the Postdoctoral Scholar of the nature of the problem, requirements for continuation of the appointment, and possible consequences if the problems are unresolved.
- B. Suspension from the training program, without pay, for a stated period of time. Unless otherwise stated, such suspension will include loss of other privileges such as parking, access to University property and library privileges.
- C. Dismissal from the Postdoctoral Scholar position.

Consultation with Academic Personnel and Labor Relations is required prior to initiating any disciplinary action.

XII. Approval Authority

Action
All actions

Authority
Associate Vice Chancellor, Academic Personnel