

Davidson College Postdoctoral Positions Policy (approved by PAC on 05/12/16)

Background: Davidson College hosts postdoctoral positions (“postdocs”) in many different departments providing them with the opportunity to continue their academic training through on-site practice experience as part of their preparation for careers in their fields.

Purpose: The College has adopted this Postdoctoral Positions Policy to delineate the obligations and expectations of all parties involved.

Definitions:

POSTDOCTORAL APPOINTEE

- The Postdoctoral Appointee holds a PhD or equivalent doctorate.
- The term of the appointment is limited.
- The appointment is generally preparatory for a full time academic or research career.
- The Postdoctoral Appointee functions under the direction of a Faculty Mentor and/or an academic department at Davidson College.

A Postdoctoral Appointee can be categorized as a:

[A] Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow (faculty)

[B] Postdoctoral Research Associate (staff)

[A] Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow – Faculty Appointment

Examples: HHMI Postdoctoral Teaching Fellows (2 years); ACS Environmental Postdoctoral Teacher-Scholars (2 years); Writing in the Liberal Arts Postdoctoral Fellow; Mathematics and Computer Science Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow

- The Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow meets all elements of the definition of a Postdoctoral Appointee.
- The Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow is a faculty appointment.
- Purpose of Appointment: The Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow is a compensatory position primarily involving teaching. Funding for the position comes from an external grant awarded to Davidson College or internal college funds.
- Payment Method: The Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow receives payment through the Davidson College Payroll.
- Benefits: The full-time exempt Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow who meets eligibility requirements is eligible for Davidson College visiting assistant professor benefits.

[B] Postdoctoral Research Associate -- Staff Appointment

Examples: NSF-funded Biology Postdoctoral Research Associate; NIH-funded Psychology Postdoctoral Research Associate; NSF/VT-funded Biology Postdoctoral Research Associate; NSF-funded Biology Postdoctoral Research Associate/Visiting Assistant Professor

- The Postdoctoral Research Associate meets all elements of the definition of a Postdoctoral Appointee.
- The Postdoctoral Research Associate is a staff appointment.
- The Postdoctoral Research Associate may receive an adjunct teaching assignment, but the position category remains as staff.
- Purpose of Appointment: The Postdoctoral Research Associate is involved in full-time research or scholarship, and may also have teaching responsibilities. Funding for the position comes from an external grant awarded to an individual Davidson College faculty member.
- Payment Method: The Postdoctoral Research Associate receives payment through the Davidson College Payroll.
- Benefits: The full-time exempt Postdoctoral Research Associate who meets eligibility requirements is eligible for Davidson College staff benefits.

POSTDOCTORAL INDEPENDENT SCHOLAR

Example: NSF Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Biology

- The Postdoctoral Independent Scholar holds a PhD or equivalent doctorate.
- The term of the appointment is limited.
- Purpose of Appointment: The Postdoctoral Independent Scholar participates in a research training program for the principal purpose of developing the individual's research skills for his/her primary benefit.
- The activities of the individual in this role do not constitute performance of services (i.e., work). Therefore, the Postdoctoral Independent Scholar acting within the terms of such an award does not have an employer-employee relationship with the College. However, the Postdoctoral Independent Scholar is expected to abide by Davidson College policies as the host institution.
- Payment Method: The Postdoctoral Independent Scholar receives a stipend from a postdoctoral fellowship or grant paid directly to them by an entity other than Davidson.
- Non-Salary Coverage: Postdoctoral Independent Scholars are not employees. However, they may be eligible for limited benefits.

Policy:

Prior Approvals

Step 1: The department planning to host and/or the grant-funded faculty member planning to apply for a grant must contact the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty (VPAA) at the planning stage for prior approval. The category of the proposed postdoc, the responsibilities of the proposed postdoc, the responsibilities of the Faculty/Department Mentor, the proposed level of compensation, and the relationship with the college should be clearly defined and communicated to the VPAA, the Associate Dean of Faculty, and the Director of Human Resources at the planning stage.

Step 2: The department planning to host and/or the grant-funded faculty member planning to apply for a grant must contact Human Resources (HR) and follow the established process for hiring (except for Postdoctoral Independent Scholars).

Step 3: Grant-funded faculty members must provide the Director of Grants and Contracts with a copy of the position description prior to hiring or hosting the postdoc to ensure the period of appointment shall not exceed the period of time for which grant funding is guaranteed.

Step 4: All postdocs must receive an offer letter from HR or the VPAA's office prior to any commitment – verbal or otherwise – to the postdoc. The letter should be copied to the VPAA, the Associate Dean of Faculty, Department Chair, Faculty Mentor, and Director of Grants and Contracts (if funded through individual faculty grant).

The offer letter should include:

- Offer of postdoctoral position, specifying whether as a Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow, Postdoctoral Research Associate, or Postdoctoral Independent Scholar.
- Relationship of the postdoc with the college.
- The duties and responsibilities of the postdoc.
- The initial period of the position, with starting and ending dates.
- The salary/stipend level, if applicable, and the period of time for which funding is guaranteed.
- Statement of eligibility for health insurance and other benefits.
- Outline of access to facilities and resources.
- Request for proof of doctoral degree.
- Request for postdoc's signature and return of letter by given date.

Internal and external grant participation

Internal grant funding opportunities may be available for continuing Postdoctoral Teaching Fellows and Postdoctoral Research Associates as described on the "[Funding Opportunities for Faculty](#)" web site.

The Office of Grants and Contracts will provide support to Postdoctoral Teaching Fellows and Postdoctoral Research Associates applying for external grants. However, the college will not support applications which require an ongoing affiliation with the college that exceeds the Postdoctoral Appointee period of appointment.

Compensation

Postdoctoral Appointees are eligible for relocation funds up to \$1,000.

Postdoctoral Appointees may not be personally funded, i.e. funding for salary must not come from the Postdoctoral Appointee's personal funds or savings.

Based on the funding source and individual performance, the Faculty Mentor and/or hosting department, in consultation with the VPAA, will determine pay increases for Postdoctoral Appointees each year. Pay increases must be included in the grant budget at the proposal stage.

Health and Insurance Benefits

The cost of health and insurance benefits must be included in the grant budget or funds must be identified to cover these costs. The college will not be responsible for funding health and insurance benefits for Postdoctoral Appointees.

Postdoctoral Appointees who meet the Davidson College eligibility guidelines may enroll in benefit plans provided by the college.

Vacation, Sick, and Parental Leave

Vacation, Sick, and Parental Leave will be managed as outlined in the Employee Guide. Specific terms will be included in the offer letter.

Facilities

Internet:

Postdocs will be given an account for network services and e-mail and, as needed, Banner access.

Office:

Postdocs will be assigned office space, if available, or space within the faculty mentor's lab. Office space will be assigned in accordance with VPAA/DoF guidelines.

Computer:

At least a Tier II college-owned computer will be provided by ITS for the use of the postdoc.

Keys and Card Access:

Postdocs will have 24/7 CatCard access to the library, work-out facilities, the Lake Campus and academic buildings where they work. They will also be issued with office and lab keys as appropriate.

Housing:

Postdocs may be eligible for college housing in accordance with college policy.

Administration of Policy: The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty (VPAA/DoF) shall oversee this policy and review it at least once every two years. Changes to this policy shall be made in accordance with the college's Policy on Policies.

Date of Adoption: May 12, 2016

Last Revised: April 20, 2017

Sources:

Davidson College Faculty Handbook
Davidson College Employee Guide
Duke University Postdoctoral Policy