

Policy

Preamble

The University of Massachusetts Dartmouth is committed to developing and maintaining a vigorous program for Postdoctoral Fellows that will simultaneously provide mentorship and professional development opportunities for participants and support and expand the university's research mission. Postdoctoral Fellows 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 Fellow, by emphasizing the mutual commitment and responsibility of the institution, the faculty, and the Postdoctoral Fellow.

Position Definition

Postdoctoral Fellow appointments are intended to provide a full-time program of advanced academic preparation and research training. Postdoctoral Fellows 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 Fellows may be approved to engage in other activities to enhance teaching and other professional skills. The appointee has the freedom and is expected to publish the results of his or her research or scholarship during the period of appointment. The appointee is expected to write proposals for grant funding jointly with the Faculty Mentor and may serve as a Co-Principal Investigator.

Terms of Service

1. Appointment as a Postdoctoral Fellow requires a doctoral degree (e.g., Ph.D., Sc.D., M.D.) or foreign equivalent awarded within the last 6 years.
2. Postdoctoral Fellow appointments are temporary and have fixed end dates. Appointments must be made for a minimum duration of three months and a maximum duration of two years. Postdoctoral Fellows may be reappointed subject to the same service constraints. Renewal is based on performance and funding availability. It is within the University's sole discretion not to reappoint a Postdoctoral Fellow.
3. The total duration of an individual's postdoctoral service may not exceed five years, including postdoctoral service at other institutions.
4. Appointments to the Postdoctoral Fellow title are full time, based on the expectation that the Postdoctoral Fellow will be primarily involved in research. If a Postdoctoral Fellow additionally holds a University teaching appointment or other University position(s), the percent time of the Postdoctoral Fellow appointment normally will be reduced so that the sum of the percent times of all appointments equals 100 percent.
5. Postdoctoral Fellows must be eligible to work in the United States.

EEO/AA

Hiring units should strive to have an inclusive, supportive environment that provides postdoctoral training opportunities and maximizes and values the potential of all Postdoctoral Fellows. Units are encouraged to announce opportunities in order to identify qualified candidates, however since Postdoctoral Fellow appointments are temporary positions they are exempt from formal recruitment documentation (see Hiring Process below). At a minimum, the hiring units should post on campus and within the department's website, and also utilize professional networks to the greatest extent possible in order to promote equal opportunity for all candidates.

Compensation

1. Generally, the Postdoctoral Fellow salary support is paid from external funding obtained by the faculty mentor or by the Postdoctoral Fellow, and may have been awarded as a fellowship or traineeship for postdoctoral study by an extramural agency or by the university.
2. Departments are responsible for determining the salary ranges appropriate for their discipline and establishing the criteria for determining the salary of individual Postdoctoral Fellows appointees. Such criteria may include, the individual's qualifications, number of years of experience, performance as a postdoctoral Fellow, funding availability in the discipline, and competitive salaries and stipends paid by other universities.
3. Salary increases may be recommended for Postdoctoral Fellows on the basis of merit and the availability of funding, and in conjunction with an annual review/reappointment review. Although the candidate's entire record may be considered, heavy emphasis will be placed on the evaluation of contributions since the last review.

Postdoctoral Fellow Responsibilities

1. Conscientious discharge of assigned duties;
2. Adherence to ethical standards;
3. Compliance with good laboratory practice and recognized University standards;
4. Observations of established guidelines for research involving biohazards, human subjects, or animals;
5. Open and timely discussion with the mentor regarding research progress, distribution of research materials, or any disclosure of findings or techniques privately or in publications,
6. Collegial conduct toward coworkers; and
7. Compliance with all applicable University policies and procedures

Faculty Mentor Responsibilities

1. Faculty mentors are responsible for guiding and monitoring the advanced training of Postdoctoral Fellows. In this role, mentors should make clear the goals, objectives, and expectations of the appointment and the responsibilities of Postdoctoral Fellows. Faculty mentors are also responsible to educate the Postdoctoral Fellow in Intellectual Property, Copyright, various other Sponsored Research guidelines, and other University standards. Faculty mentors should regularly and frequently communicate with Postdoctoral Fellows, provide regular and timely assessments of the Postdoctoral Fellows performance, and provide career advice and job placement assistance.
2. Faculty mentors are responsible to secure space, facilities, and other resources needed for the Postdoctoral Fellow to conduct the research envisioned jointly with the Faculty Mentor, and to assist in the publication process of such research.
3. Faculty mentors are also responsible for arranging for required funds to supplement salary to meet minimum pay rates for Postdoctoral Fellows, if necessary, and for identifying possible sources for funds to cover benefit costs.
4. Faculty mentors must conduct an annual review of the Postdoctoral Fellow. This review must be completed no later than the anniversary of the effective date and available to the Postdoctoral Fellow.

Grievances

Postdoctoral Fellows may follow the grievance processes outlined in Employment Policies for Non-faculty for resolution of employment related disputes.

Hiring Authority

1. The academic deans have been delegated the authority to approve appointments and reappointments to Postdoctoral Fellow positions.
2. The dean will notify the individual of the appointment in writing, with copies to the faculty mentor, the mentor's unit, and the Associate Provost for Graduate Programs.

Benefits Eligibility

Postdoctoral Fellows are eligible for health and leave benefits established for non-faculty employees. For those appointed as Fellows, faculty mentors must identify the funding source to cover the University portion of these costs. Postdoctoral Fellows are not eligible for retirement benefits.

References

The UMass Dartmouth Postdoctoral Fellow program incorporates elements of the following reports:

1. Committee on Postdoctoral Education, *Report and Recommendations*, American Association of Universities, March 31, 1998.
2. Committee on Science, Engineering and Public Policy, *Enhancing the Postdoctoral Experience for Scientists and Engineers*, National Academies Press, 2000.

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW HIRING PROCESS

Since the Postdoctoral Fellow is paid from a federal, state, or private grant obtained by a regular faculty member, the work to be done by the individual must be to support the grant deliverables. The faculty member who provides the funding (the PI) must have the flexibility to hire the best available candidate and the judgment must reside with the faculty member.

Recruitment for Postdoctoral positions should include measures for outreach as these positions can add to institutional efforts to enhance diversity and provide opportunities to underutilized groups. These steps may include advertising through electronic list-serves and mailing job descriptions and vacancy notices to universities and colleges. The hiring unit should maintain documentation supporting the department's efforts.

It is often the case that, in these types of employment situations, a specific person is desired or has been identified to fill the appointment because of a research imperative. Because of this, a search process is not necessarily required. However, wanting to appoint a post-doc does not preclude the hiring unit from conducting a search to fill such a position. In fact, searches are highly encouraged.

All activities, regardless of the means to identify and appoint the candidate, must be **documented** and the records maintained for a period of two years from the hire date of the successful candidate. The actions and notes of all search committees (if applicable) must be maintained within the department for two years. Additionally, hiring officials (Principal Investigators, etc.) who seek post-docs through professional contacts via mail, e-mail, phone or other such means must document all such efforts and must preserve all records. Furthermore, any "interviewing" or "screening" activities including reference checks of finalists – must be documented and the copies of records maintained in the department with originals of documents sent to EEO/AA and HR.

The following steps should be followed in recruiting/hiring Postdoctoral Fellows:

1. The PI/department completes a position authorization (including funding sources), position description (see sample), a draft position announcement/advertisement, and a search plan and forwards to the College Dean.
2. For those cases in which a search will be conducted, after the College EEO liaison certifies the search plan, the Dean will forward the recruitment documents to HR for approval, position numbering, and announcement posting. The HR office communicates the plan to EEO/AA Office.
3. Once a position number is assigned, the faculty mentor/PI proceeds with any advertising and selection process. Each applicant is asked to complete and return an Ethnic and Gender Referral form.
4. Prior to interviewing candidates, the Principal Investigator will send to the EEO/AA Office the names of all applicants noting names of the candidates selected for an interview. If necessary, the EEO/AA office may request additional information in the applicant pool. Note: All search waivers must be approved by the regular waiver process which is to send a memorandum to the appropriate Vice Chancellor and then the EEO/AA office, explaining why there is a need for employing an individual(s) without a selection process.
5. The PI/department prepares a hiring package that includes: a *Recommendation Form for Postdoctoral Appointment* approved by the Dean, curriculum vitae, degree certification (if new appointment), proof of employment eligibility. Degree certification may be in the form of a signed dissertation accompanied by letters from the faculty member that served as major professor for the incumbent and from the Dean of the Graduate School or equivalent from the granting institution. The hiring package is sent to EEO/AA Office for approval and the EEO/AA office forwards the package to HR who will generate the offer letter.
6. After the candidate accepts the terms of the appointment in writing HR will process payroll and benefits. Note: all required employment documentation must be received before the individual can be added to payroll.
7. The faculty mentor/PI works with the International Student & Fellow Center and HR to complete any visa or work authorization requirements.
8. On the first day of work, the Postdoctoral Fellow should be directed to HR to complete the required I-9 process and any other new employee orientations.
9. At the completion of the postdoctoral Fellow appointment, the originating department must send a termination notice to HR to remove the individual from payroll and terminate benefits.

Signature Director of HR _____

Date _____

For Graduate Program Office Use Only

Title Approved / Recorded

Postdoctoral Scholar

Postdoctoral Fellow

Postdoc Other

Visiting Scholar

Documents Recorded

Curriculum vitae

Personal statement

I-9 certification

Degree certification/transcript

By: _____

Date: _____