
3071: GENERAL GUIDELINES

The following policies and procedures are intended to supplement the **Memorandum of Understanding** with the Postdoctoral Unit and the Academic Personnel Manual (**APM 390**) and have been developed to support the University's goal of recruiting the highest quality research team by ensuring appointments are based on the essential job functions of the position.

Postdoctoral Scholars contribute to the educational and research mission of the University. The creativity and expertise provided by these individuals support scientific and scholarly advances.

A Postdoctoral appointment is a temporary appointment designed to give individuals the opportunity to conduct research under the guidance of a faculty mentor. The time spent as a Postdoctoral Scholar is in preparation for a permanent position in academe, industry, government, or the nonprofit sector. For many, Postdoctoral work is a critical step in securing future employment.

A. DEFINITION

A Postdoctoral Scholar is an individual who:

- Has been awarded a doctoral degree (or equivalent) within the past ten years.
- Will pursue a full-time program of advanced training and research under the direction of a Principal Investigator (PI) with an appointment in an academic School or Organized Research Unit (ORU).
- Will be supported by campus research grants or contracts, by fellowships administered by the campus, or by other approved fund sources.
- Has not previously been a Postdoctoral Scholar for more than 5 years combined (this includes all institutions, domestic and international, as well as UC Merced).
- Has not previously held a tenured/tenure-track faculty position.

B. CATEGORIES OF POSTDOCTORAL APPOINTMENTS

Postdoctoral Scholar appointments differ with respect to compensation, benefits, and taxation. The source of support determines the category of the Postdoctoral Scholar. Members of all categories work with faculty mentors.

a. Postdoctoral Scholar - Employees (3252)

Paid a salary which may be supported by a) sponsor's research grants or contracts; b) general funds or opportunity funds; or c) other University discretionary funds (by exception only).

b. Postdoctoral Scholar - Fellows (3253)

Receives a stipend or fellowship from an extramural agency, administered through the University on behalf of the Fellow or the Fellow's faculty sponsor (e.g., NIH training grant).

c. Postdoctoral Scholar - Paid Direct (3254)

Has been awarded a fellowship or traineeship for postdoctoral study by an extramural agency. The agency pays the fellowship or traineeship directly to the Postdoctoral Scholar, rather than through the University.

d. Postdoctoral Scholar – Interim (3256)

An individual who recently graduated from UC Merced with a PhD degree or equivalent and who needs a short-term appointment to complete an existing project from his or her graduate educational program before moving on to other employment.

The maximum time a postdoc can be in this title is 12 months.

Postdoctoral Scholars may be assigned to more than one Postdoctoral Scholar title concurrently, depending on University and extramural funding agency requirements. The total of the combined appointments may not exceed 100% time.