

SAMPLE POSITION DESCRIPTION – POSTDOCTORAL SCHOLAR SERIES

Resources:

- APM 390: <https://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/files/apm/apm-390.pdf>
- POSITIONS EXEMPT FROM SEARCHES, #7: <https://academicpersonnel.ucmerced.edu/recruitment/waivers-and-exemptions>
- Postdoctoral Scholar Agreement: <https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/labor/bargaining-units/px/contract.html>

The following template should be used to create job announcements as well as position descriptions for the recruitment (including search waivers/exempt hires), appointment, and subsequent reviews for all Postdoctoral positions. See Article 2 of the Postdoctoral Scholar Agreement and APM 390 for a description of the types of Postdoctoral Scholar appointments. The position description should be reviewed and updated as needed.

Note: The total duration of an individual's postdoctoral service may not exceed five years, including postdoctoral service or other postdoctoral-equivalent mentored research training opportunities at other institutions. The postdoctoral scholar series is a non-career academic mentored research training position (supervision of others is NOT a responsibility allowed in this series).

Note: The position description should focus on a description of the position, including criteria for appointment (e.g., years of experience, degree requirement), duties, responsibilities, expectations and criteria for productivity. It should NOT include the qualifications of a specific candidate.

Tips for writing the position description:

Postdoctoral Scholar (Postdoc) position descriptions must accurately reflect the academic duties that are being assigned to the position, in addition to the technical/routine lab activities that may be required of the Postdoc to accomplish the research project. Please consider the following questions when developing the position description. Please note: The Postdoc in your unit may not perform all of these duties. These questions are intended to help determine what academic duties will be assigned to the Postdoc.

- In what specific ways will the postdoc in the position be actively and significantly involved in publishable research activities? What are their roles and duties?
- How will they assist the PI in project design, data collection and interpretation, project assessment, and project revisions?
- Postdocs are expected to be involved in creative work. PIs that need to hire individuals with a PhD that will only be responsible for maintaining instrumentation, data collection, or other such activities should be appointed in different classifications such as Project Series, Professional Research Series, or Specialist Series.
- In what ways will they contribute to research dissemination, such as manuscript preparation or presentations at conferences etc.?
- What (if any) participation will the postdoc have in appropriate professional/technical societies or groups or other professional development opportunities?
- What (if any) participation will the postdoc have in research mentoring and to whom?

Please note that it is not appropriate (and could create significant liability to the University) to include duties in the positions descriptions that will not actually be assigned to the postdoc.

If formal teaching is offered, the postdoctoral appointment must be reduced and an appropriate

teaching title added as a separate appointment and the employee's total salary may be more or less than the 100% rate for the postdoc appointment; the sum of all appointment percentages will not exceed 100% time.

Reminder: Postdocs do not have Principal Investigator (PI) status but may obtain permission by exception and/or collaborate with a current PI in preparing research proposals for extramural funding.

If you have questions or need additional assistance with writing the position description, please contact your School staff who can consult with Academic Personnel.

TEMPLATE POSITION DESCRIPTION
POSTDOCTORAL SCHOLAR
DEPARTMENT OF ()

NATURE AND PURPOSE

(The following general statement describes the role of a Postdoctoral Scholar (Postdoc) and should be updated for inclusion in all position descriptions.)

The position of Postdoctoral Scholar conducts research under the general oversight of a faculty supervisory who serves as a mentor supporting the Postdoctoral Scholar in preparation for a career position in academe, industry, government, or the nonprofit sector. Postdoctoral work provides essential training in many disciplines for individuals pursuing academic careers. Postdoctoral Scholars 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. Postdoctoral Scholars are required to have a doctoral degree or the foreign equivalent in (INSERT degree and any credential requirements related to the specialized area of research). The selected candidate must have the completed doctoral degree in hand or conferral letter at the start date of the appointment.

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES AND DESIGNATED AREAS OF EXPERTISE

(Specific responsibilities associated with the particular appointment and subject matter area should be developed. Following is a list of general responsibilities associated with the Postdoc position.)

- A. Collaborate with other research and extension personnel affiliated with research activities involving (INSERT: the project and certain types of research on the topic). The postdoctoral scholar is expected to engage in research activities or outreach activities, such as:
 - 1. Publications that acknowledge the Postdoc's significant and meaningful contribution to the work.
 - 2. Active dissemination of information (beyond the boundaries of the campus) through informal instruction, presentations of research at regional/national meetings, publications on which the Postdoc is an author, or other means stemming from the Postdoctoral Scholar's research accomplishments.
- B. Participate in appropriate professional/technical societies or groups and other educational and research organizations.
- C. Serve on advisory panels.
- D. Review research or grant proposals, journal manuscripts, and publications related to area of expertise.
- E. May liaison with and respond to the needs of various industry organizations, state and federal agencies, and other external groups on issues related to the project or, with the approval of the PI supervisory, other activities aligned with the postdoc's area of expertise.
- F. Participate in activities of committees within the department, college, campus and other University entities, as appropriate and with PI supervisory approval.

Supervisor's Signature

Date

Employee's Signature

Date