



This policy applies to scholars appointed as Postdoctoral Research Associates (P99805). It does not apply to other positions administered by the Office for Postdoctoral Affairs.

1. INTRODUCTION

Postdoctoral appointments offer recent advanced degree recipients a period in which to extend their education and professional training. The opportunity to carry out postdoctoral studies within the broad environment of research, scholarship, and creative endeavor that exists at the University of Notre Dame, can significantly broaden an individual's expertise, provide a period of more independent scholarship, and help define future career paths. Many disciplines are increasingly requiring postdoctoral experience as a prerequisite for professional placement and tenure track faculty positions. The breadth of the academic community, the institutes and centers, and state-of-the-art technologies and facilities found at Notre Dame, provide a particularly rich environment for postdoctoral training. In addition to deriving individual benefits, postdoctoral scholars make important contributions to the research and scholarly mission of the University.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

A. Definition of a Postdoctoral Scholar

Postdoctoral scholars may be appointed by and affiliated with a department, center or institute authorized to make non-faculty research appointments.¹ Postdoctoral scholar appointments are distinct from those of students, staff, or faculty. These appointees and appointments have the following attributes:

- The appointee was recently (typically five years or fewer) awarded a Ph.D. or the equivalent terminal degree in the field of consideration;
- The appointment is limited term;
- The appointment involves full-time research or scholarship. It is recognized that instruction is a key component of scholarship and that in some disciplines; a postdoctoral appointment could include a significant teaching responsibility during the course of the training and development program;
- The appointment is viewed as preparatory for a full-time academic or research career;
- The appointment is not part of a clinical training program;
- The appointee works under the supervision of a faculty member or a senior scholar;
- The appointee has the freedom, and is expected, to publish the results of his or her research or scholarship, which were obtained during the period of the appointment. This research or scholarship is subject to the [University policies on Intellectual Property and Data Retention and Access](#).

B. Requirement for Degree Completion

A postdoctoral scholar must possess a Ph.D. or the terminal degree in the field of consideration. International researchers must hold an advanced degree that is equivalent to those provided by U.S. institutions. If the scholar has completed all requirements toward the advanced degree, but has not received his/her degree, he/she must provide the documents certifying that the thesis has been approved in its final form, including all necessary signatures, and indicate the date that the degree will be conferred. In no case will a postdoctoral appointment be made unless the postdoctoral scholar's thesis has been formally approved by the degree granting institution. If a person cannot meet the requirements for degree completion, he/she may be eligible to be hired as a [Research Fellow](#).

C. Term of Appointment

Each postdoctoral scholar appointment is normally up to one year with the possibility of reappointment such that the maximum total term of appointments is five years. If a postdoctoral scholar has spent part of the training period at another institution or in another field, the maximum total term of appointment is six years, except in extraordinary circumstances. Requests for extensions may be granted in extraordinary circumstances (e.g., family leave, illness) provided these requests receive the appropriate University approvals.

D. Recruitment and Selection

Hiring units must observe all University policies on non-discrimination and make good faith efforts to develop broad and inclusive selection pools when undertaking searches.

E. Request for Appointment, Performance Evaluation, and Reappointment

i. Requests for Appointment

Postdoctoral scholar appointments are recommended by the supervising faculty member and approved by the chair or head of the academic unit or his/her designee, which may include the chair or director. Appointments to postdoctoral positions are made through the Office for Postdoctoral Affairs by the Dean of the Graduate School or his/her designee.

ii. Performance Evaluation

No less than 90 days prior to the end of an appointment, the supervising faculty member is expected to provide to the postdoctoral scholar a written evaluation of his/her performance. A supervising faculty member may use the performance evaluation form from the Office for Postdoctoral Affairs.

iii. Reappointment

If a supervising faculty member decides to extend the appointment of a postdoctoral scholar, he/she must submit the Request for Extension of Employment Form prior to expiration of the current term. If a decision is made not to offer reappointment, the postdoctoral scholar will receive a notice of nonrenewal from the supervising faculty member no less than 90 days prior to the end of the current appointment period.

F. Salary and Benefits

i. Salary

The minimum salary for the postdoctoral scholars should be based on National Institutes of Health (NIH) National Research Service Award (NRSA) twelve-month salary. The annual appointment salary will be pro-rated based on the NRSA monthly minimum for appointments shorter than one year. The salary typically reflects prior experience and what is customary for the field.

ii. Benefits

Postdoctoral scholars who are appointed by the University of Notre Dame and whose funding flows through the University are eligible for benefits as defined by the University and administered by the Office of Human Resources.

iii. Additional Employment and Compensation

A postdoctoral scholar should consult with the supervising faculty member and dean or head of the academic unit prior to engaging in additional employment activities such as consulting. These activities must comply with all relevant University policies including those on conflict of interest, conflict of commitment, and intellectual property.

iv. Application for Grants

A postdoctoral scholar may serve as the principal investigator (PI) or Co-PI for a grant, upon approval of the supervising faculty member, the chair or director, the dean or the head of the academic unit and the Vice President for Research or his/her designee.

G. Complaint Process

A postdoctoral scholar who believes that he/she is being treated unfairly has multiple avenues to seek resolution. The postdoctoral scholar may bring their concerns to the Office for Postdoctoral Affairs or may go directly to the supervising faculty member, director or chair. If a solution cannot be reached through the supervising faculty member, the director or chair, the postdoctoral scholar may next seek the assistance of the dean or head of the academic unit.

Complaints of sexual or discriminatory harassment or discrimination are the subject of separate University policies and complaint and resolution procedures. The postdoctoral scholar should refer to the policies and procedures contained at <http://equity.nd.edu/> and/or contact the Office of Institutional Equity to make a complaint and seek guidance as to resources and procedures to resolve such matters.

H. Separation During the Appointment Period

i. Separation during the Initial Appointment

During a postdoctoral scholar's initial appointment period, if the funding that supports the appointment is lost, it is the responsibility of the employing department or college to identify alternate resources to fund the balance of the initial appointment period.

A postdoctoral scholar may be separated during an appointment period for: (1) poor performance; (2) work related misconduct; or (3) violation of University policies or other serious reasons as determined by the supervising faculty member. A 90 day written separation notice should be issued to the postdoctoral scholar.

However, in situations where there is an egregious violation of University policy as determined by the University, a 90 day notice period prior to separation may not be provided. Further, there may be situations where it is determined by the supervising faculty member, along with the unit head or college dean, that the continued presence of the postdoctoral scholar on campus would interfere with the orderly functioning of the University. In these situations the postdoctoral scholar may be suspended with pay during the 90 day notice period rather than continuing his or her University duties.

A postdoctoral scholar who voluntarily resigns his or her appointment is expected to complete all instruction duties and to provide at least 30 days written notice to the supervising faculty member.

If a supervising faculty member determines that a postdoctoral scholar should be separated during an appointment period, the faculty member should consult with his or her chair or head of the academic unit. The chair may suggest as needed that the supervising faculty member consult with relevant resources, including the Office for Postdoctoral Affairs, Faculty Affairs Specialist, or a Human Resources Consultant.

If the supervising faculty member determines that there is a reason to proceed with the separation, the faculty member shall then provide a written notice to the postdoctoral scholar and the chair or head of the academic unit notifying them of the intention to separate the postdoctoral scholar. The chair or head of the academic unit may then consult with relevant resources, including the postdoctoral scholar in question. After this consultation, the chair or head of the academic unit may then issue a separation notice to the postdoctoral scholar with a copy to the supervising faculty member.

If a postdoctoral scholar disagrees with the reasons for the dismissal, he or she may, within five business days after receipt of the separation notice, submit an appeal to the collegiate dean, or the dean's designee, of the college or school where the supervising faculty member is primarily appointed, with a copy to the

supervising faculty member. Within ten business days after receipt of the appeal, the collegiate dean or his or her designee will issue a written determination, affirming, reversing or modifying the dismissal with the reason for the decision. The decision by the collegiate dean or his or her designee is final.

ii. Separation during a Subsequent Appointment

A postdoctoral scholar may be separated during any appointment period for: (1) poor performance; (2) work related misconduct; (3) violation of University policies or other serious reasons as determined by the supervising faculty member; and (4) loss of funding that supports the appointment. A 90 day written separation notice should be issued to the postdoctoral scholar.

However, in situations where there is an egregious violation of University policy as determined by the University, a 90 day notice period prior to separation may not be provided. Further, there may be situations where it is determined by the supervising faculty member, along with the unit head or collegiate dean or his or her designee that the continued presence of the postdoctoral scholar on campus would interfere with the orderly functioning of the University. In these situations, the postdoctoral scholar may be suspended with pay during the 90 day notice period rather than continuing his or her University duties.

A postdoctoral scholar who voluntarily resigns his or her appointment is expected to complete all instruction duties and to provide at least 30 days written notice to the supervising faculty member.

If a supervising faculty member determines that a postdoctoral scholar should be separated during an appointment period, the faculty member should consult with his or her chair or head of the academic unit. The chair may suggest as needed that the supervising faculty member consult with relevant resources, including the Office for Postdoctoral Affairs, Faculty Affairs Specialist, or a Human Resources Consultant.

If the supervising faculty member determines that there is a reason to proceed with the separation, the faculty member shall then provide a written notice to the postdoctoral scholar and the chair or head of the academic unit notifying them of the intention to separate the postdoctoral scholar. The chair or head of the academic unit may then consult with relevant resources, including the postdoctoral scholar in question. After this consultation, the chair or head of the academic unit may then issue a separation notice to the postdoctoral scholar with a copy to the supervising faculty member.

If a postdoctoral scholar disagrees with the reasons for the dismissal, he or she may, within five business days after receipt of the separation notice, submit an appeal to the collegiate dean of the college or school where the supervising faculty member is primarily appointed, or the dean's designee, with a copy to the supervising faculty member. Within ten business days after receipt of the appeal, the collegiate dean or his or her designee will issue a written determination, affirming, reversing or modifying the dismissal with the reason for the decision. The decision by the collegiate dean or his or her designee is final.

iii. Research compliance, data, records, products and intellectual property

All research is governed by the University of Notre Dame; The postdoctoral scholar must be familiar with and follow all University policies, guidelines, and procedures relating to the University's research compliance program, including those regarding Auditing, Animal Research, Biosafety, Conflict of Interest, Export Control, Freedom of Information, Human Research, Research Misconduct, and Responsible Conduct. Moreover, all data, software, research records, and other materials generated in the course of research at the University of Notre Dame remain the property of the University. The postdoctoral scholar must also be familiar with and follow the University policies on Intellectual Property and Data Retention and Access. Questions should be directed to the supervising faculty member.

¹ Notre Dame has chosen to use the AAU definition of postdoctoral appointments. Association Of American Universities, Committee on Postdoctoral Education, Report and Recommendations, March 31, 1998.