

CONDITIONS OF POSTDOCTORAL SERVICE

POLICY SUMMARY

This policy implements and supplements Arizona Board of Regents (“ABOR”) Policy 6-310, which constitutes conditions of Postdoctoral Scholar hiring and employment at Northern Arizona University. Every Postdoctoral Scholar Notice of Appointment must incorporate by reference both the ABOR and NAU Conditions of Postdoctoral Service and provide that acceptance of the appointment is recognition that ABOR 6-310 and this policy together govern the employment relationship between the Postdoctoral Scholar and the University.

REASON FOR THIS POLICY

Prudent and effective administration of the University requires that the employment relationship between the University and its Postdoctoral Scholars be clear, transparent, and properly articulated.

ENTITIES AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

- College of Arts and Letters
- College of Engineering, Informatics, and Applied Sciences
- College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
- College of the Environment, Forestry, and Natural Sciences
- College of Health and Human Services
- Franke College of Business
- Graduate College
- Human Resources

WHO SHOULD KNOW THIS POLICY

- Associate Vice President for Sponsored Projects
- Chief Human Resources Officer
- Deans, associate deans, and department chairs of the affected colleges
- Faculty mentors or others who hire, supervise, and evaluate Postdoctoral Scholars
- Human Resources personnel
- Office of Sponsored Projects personnel
- Office of the Vice President for Research personnel
- Vice Provost for Academic Personnel

DEFINITIONS

Postdoctoral Scholar: an individual who typically has recently completed their doctoral studies and who holds a short-term University appointment working under the guidance and direction of a faculty mentor as the individual prepares for a career as an independent researcher and/or teacher. Informally, Postdoctoral Scholars may sometimes be referred to as postdoctoral fellows or postdoctoral researchers.

Notice of Appointment: the contractual document by which an appointment is made to a Postdoctoral Scholar position at the University, which is signed by the President or the President’s designee.

POLICY

A. General

ABOR Policy 6-310, *Conditions of Postdoctoral Service*, constitutes the rules that govern Postdoctoral Scholar employment at the University. In accordance with and as a supplement to ABOR Policy 6-310, the University has implemented this policy. Jointly, these ABOR and University policies govern the hiring of and employment relationship between the University and its Postdoctoral Scholars, and may collectively be referred to as the University's "Conditions of Postdoctoral Service."

B. Hiring Requirements

Candidates for Postdoctoral Scholar positions must either have been awarded their doctoral degree or must have completed all their doctoral degree requirements prior to beginning work at the University as a Postdoctoral Scholar. University hiring officials must confirm that Postdoctoral Scholar candidates demonstrate compliance with this requirement by providing no later than seven (7) calendar days prior to the Postdoctoral Scholar position start date either of the following:

1. An official transcript from the institution awarding the doctoral degree that indicates conferral of the doctoral degree to the Postdoctoral Scholar candidate; or
2. A signed letter from the administrative unit charged with the responsibility of certifying degree completion at the institution awarding the doctoral degree that a) unambiguously certifies that the Postdoctoral Scholar candidate has successfully completed all requirements necessary to be awarded their doctoral degree; and b) provides the date that the Postdoctoral Scholar candidate's doctoral degree will be conferred.

C. Notice of Appointment

Each Postdoctoral Scholar Notice of Appointment shall incorporate ABOR 6-310 and this policy by reference and shall provide that acceptance of the appointment is recognition that these requirements (and all other applicable ABOR and University policies) govern the Postdoctoral Scholar's employment relationship with the University. Postdoctoral Scholar appointments that are dependent upon continuation of funding from a specific source other than state appropriations shall state in the Notice of Appointment that the appointment may terminate if funding is no longer available.

D. Appointment

Postdoctoral Scholars may be appointed for one academic or fiscal year, or portion thereof. Such appointments may be renewed on a year-to-year basis for not more than four (4) years after the initial appointment. Postdoctoral Scholars shall have no expectation of reappointment beyond the end of their current appointment period and are not eligible for tenure or continuing employment status. No oral or written communication made prior to or after the execution of a Postdoctoral Scholar Notice of Appointment that is inconsistent or in conflict with ABOR Policy 6-310 or this policy shall become part of a Postdoctoral Scholar's conditions of appointment.

E. Duties and Responsibilities

Postdoctoral Scholar duties and responsibilities shall consist of those assigned by the Postdoctoral Scholar's supervisor, who may be a principal investigator or supervising faculty member. The Postdoctoral Scholar's duties and responsibilities shall be related to the Postdoctoral Scholar's expertise and competence. Performance of assigned duties and responsibilities shall be subject to evaluation by the Postdoctoral Scholar's supervisor or other appropriate administrator and shall be considered in decisions relating to compensation, retention, termination, and reappointment.

F. Reappointment

Postdoctoral Scholars shall be given at least a sixty (60) calendar day notification of non-renewal prior to the end of their appointment period. Failure to provide a sixty (60) calendar day notification of non-renewal shall not constitute an automatic renewal of appointment. If notice of non-renewal is given less than sixty (60) calendar

days prior to the end of an appointment period, then the Postdoctoral Scholar shall be entitled to continuation of compensation for sixty (60) calendar days from the date of notification. If funding is no longer available or has been eliminated, a Postdoctoral Scholar shall be provided with a thirty (30) calendar day notification of termination of the appointment due to loss of funding.

G. Termination

Termination of a Postdoctoral Scholar appointment, or “interim action” consisting of suspension with pay pending dismissal, may only occur in accordance with Section H of ABOR Policy 6-310.

H. Construction and Severability

All University policies must comply with all applicable superior authorities. Accordingly, if a conflict or inconsistency arises between ABOR Policy 6-310 and this policy, ABOR Policy 6-310 shall govern. If any part of this policy shall for any reason be held illegal or unenforceable, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of the policy. If any provision of this policy contains an ambiguity, which may be construed as either valid or invalid, the valid construction shall prevail.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Chief Human Resources Officer: maintains the University’s Postdoctoral Scholar job description in accordance with ABOR Policy 6-310 and this policy; represents Human Resources in matters relating to the University’s Conditions of Postdoctoral Service.

Deans and associate deans: ensure compliance with this policy.

Postdoctoral Scholar hiring officials: confirm that all candidates successfully demonstrate compliance with all applicable Postdoctoral Scholar requirements and as outlined in this policy and ABOR 6-310.

Vice Provost for Academic Personnel: represents the Office of the Provost in matters relating to the University’s Conditions of Postdoctoral Service.

PROCEDURES

There are no procedures associated with this policy.

RELATED INFORMATION

Forms or Tools

[Postdoctoral Scholar Job Description](#)

Cross-References

[Human Resources Policy Manual](#)

Sources

[Arizona Board of Regents Policy 6-310](#)

APPENDIX

None.