

## **Boston College Postdoctoral Research Fellow Policy**

### **Introduction**

Boston College (“the University”) recognizes the importance of assisting Postdoctoral Research Fellows (“Postdoc Fellows”) as they develop into independent investigators. Postdoc Fellow appointments offer advanced degree recipients a period in which to extend their education and professional training. The breadth of the academic community together with the physical resources in its libraries and laboratories make the University an ideal environment for postdoctoral training.

While the University seeks to provide Postdoc Fellows with the opportunity to continue their academic training through on-site practice experience, many aspects of the relationship between the University and its Postdoc Fellows are also that of an employer employee relationship. Therefore, the University has adopted this Postdoctoral Research Fellow Policy (the “Policy”) to delineate the obligations and expectations of all parties involved in Postdoc Fellow training. All Postdoc Fellows and Faculty Mentors must comply with the requirements set forth in this Policy. Any questions about the Policy should be directed to the University’s Office of the Vice Provost for Research (“VPR”).

### **1. Definition, Purpose, and Eligibility of Postdoctoral Research Fellow**

**1.1 Definition and Purpose:** A Postdoctoral Research Fellow is an individual holding a doctoral degree or equivalent who is engaged in a temporary period of mentored research and/or scholarly training. The principal purpose of a Postdoc Fellow appointment is to acquire the professional skills needed to pursue an independent career path of the Postdoc Fellow’s choosing. A Postdoc Fellow is an employee of the University and shall work under the direct supervision and mentorship of the Faculty Mentor. The Faculty Mentor must hold a tenure-track position. Appointments primarily involve full time research or scholarship and may include teaching responsibilities. See Section 3.2 for further information on part-time appointments. The appointment shall be temporary.

**1.2 Eligibility:** To be eligible for a Postdoc Fellow appointment, an individual must hold a Ph.D., M.D., J.D. or equivalent terminal degree from a recognized institution of higher learning. Evidence of the degree must be provided to the VPR from the Faculty Mentor. When a candidate has completed all of the requirements for a degree, but the degree has not been conferred, the candidate may present evidence of completion of the degree, together with a statement of the date on which the degree is to be conferred. If the degree is not conferred by the projected date, the Postdoc Fellow appointment shall be terminated. Candidates with non-U.S.

degrees will be required to provide proof of degree equivalency as determined by each school at the University.

## **2. Appointment of Postdoctoral Research Fellow**

**2.1 Initiating Appointment:** In most cases, job advertisements for postdoctoral fellowship positions will be posted through Human Resources at Boston College. However, individuals interested in a Postdoc Fellow appointment may also directly contact the Faculty Mentor and the appropriate academic department in which the candidate is seeking the appointment to see if the Faculty Mentor anticipates being able to hire a Postdoc Fellow in the future. During the interview process, the terms and conditions of that appointment should be discussed and agreed upon by the Postdoc Fellow and the Faculty Mentor. This should include agreement on the anticipated length of appointment, scope of work (e.g., research project), training goals, expectations of an annual research progress and mentoring (e.g., publication expectations, teaching, etc.), sources and amount of salary/benefits and research support, and possibly other details such as plans or expectations to submit fellowship applications, office space, lab, and supporting equipment such as computers.

**2.2 Appointment Offer Letter and Approval Process:** When a Faculty Mentor makes the decision to appoint a Postdoc Fellow, the Faculty Mentor will create an offer letter using the template approved by the VPR and Human Resources (HR). This offer letter shall be made prior to the commencement of duties. The offer letter must include the following:

!The term, title, and schedule of the appointment;

!Duties and responsibilities of the appointee;

!

acknowledgment. A copy of the final letter will be sent to the department, faculty mentor, and the VPR.

### **3. Terms of Appointment**

**3.1 Full-Time Appointments:** Professional/administrative staff work on a full-time basis (35

#### **4. Extension and Termination of Appointment**

**4.1. Extension of Appointment:** At the end of the period set forth in the offer letter, the appointment may be eligible for extension based on satisfactory performance, the existence of funding, programmatic need, and continuing visa eligibility (for international scholars). The Faculty Mentor and Postdoc Fellow may agree to extend the Postdoc Fellow appointment beyond the term defined in the initial offer letter. However, the appointment is not to exceed four years, unless an extension is granted. In the case of an extension beyond four years, the Faculty Mentor shall submit a written request for approval to the VPR 60 days prior to the end of the appointment. Appointments may be extended on a yearly basis and will be reviewed annually by the VPR, up to six years total. In exceptional cases, the appointment may be

or her Faculty Mentor *and only* if such reproduction is permitted under the terms of any applicable grant agreements or other contracts. Moreover, future use of any such material and information by the Postdoc Fellow is limited by the terms of any applicable grant agreements or other contracts. Any confidential information obtained by the Postdoc Fellow during his or her appointment must remain strictly confidential and may be disclosed only in accordance with federal or state law, University policy, and the terms of any applicable grant agreements or other contracts.

## **5. Stipend Level**

Until 9/1/23, the University has formally adopted the NIH/NRSA guidelines as the minimum salary to be paid to Postdoc Fellows. The NIH/NRSA salary levels, which are adjusted annually, are based on the Postdoc Fellow's years of research experience prior to the appointment. Should the FLSA dictate a minimum salary threshold for exempt status that is above the NIH/NRSA guidelines, the University shall use the FLSA minimum salary as the minimum salary to be paid to full-

7+	\$70,070
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**Effective June 1, 2024:** Minimum Salaries for BC Postdocs

Years of Experience	Minimum Salary
0	\$65,000
1	\$66,300
2	\$67,626
3	\$68,979
4	\$70,358
5	\$71,765
6	\$73,201
7+	\$74,665

**Effective June 1, 2025:** Minimum Salaries for BC Postdocs

Years of Experience	Minimum Salary
0	\$66,000
1	\$67,320
2	\$68,666
3	\$70,040
4	\$71,441
5	\$72,869
6	\$74,327
7+	\$75,813

insurance coverage, family and sick leave policies, tuition remission opportunities, and a generous number of paid holidays and vacation days. The following link (<http://www.bc.edu/offices/hr/resources/handbook/hbk-benefits.html>) provides in detail the University's benefits program. Further information is available from the Benefits Office at 129 Lake Street on the Brighton Campus, U

!Hold annual one-on-one meetings that discuss professional development and mentoring.

Other encouraged practices by the Faculty Mentor:

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	6	13.5	2	15.5	39%
	9	20.25	3	23.25	58%

\*For example, two single credit courses totaling two credits OR one two credit course and one single credit course totaling three credits OR two three credit courses totaling six credits, etc.

## **Appendix II: Postdoctoral Research Associate Teaching Policy**

Some postdocs may wish to teach in order to gain more teaching experience as they prepare for a job in academia. This policy describes how postdocs may be paid for teaching courses. This policy applies to courses taught at any time of day, whether before 4 p.m. or in the evenings.

These teaching appointments are temporary and part time. Postdoc teaching appointments require approval and cooperation from two entities. First, the PI must approve the postdoc's teaching role, in accordance with the needs of the postdoc role. Second, a teaching position must be offered and approved by the department chair in the department staffing the course. Teaching positions are not guaranteed and are subject to the availability of courses in each department.

This policy applies