

UC SANTA BARBARA POSTDOCTORAL SCHOLAR MENTORING GUIDELINES

At UC Santa Barbara, and across the UC system, the postdoctoral experience emphasizes scholarship and continued research training guided by a faculty mentor.

Faculty mentors are responsible for guiding and monitoring the advanced training of Postdoctoral Scholars. In that role, faculty mentors should make clear the goals, objectives, and expectations of the training program and the responsibilities of Postdoctoral Scholars. They should regularly and frequently communicate with Postdoctoral Scholars, provide regular and timely assessments of the Postdoctoral Scholar's performance, and provide career advice and job placement assistance. (APM 390-6 – Responsibility)



The [National Science Foundation Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide](#) (January, 2009 and April, 2009) includes a new requirement for postdoctoral mentoring plans in all research proposals requesting funding to support postdocs.

- **Proposals that do NOT include a section on mentoring activities will be returned without review.**

BEST PRACTICES AND RESOURCES FOR FACULTY WHO SERVE AS POSTDOCTORAL MENTORS

For additional online information visit

∞ UC Santa Barbara [Graduate Division's Postdoctoral Mentoring Resources](#) ∞

I. “Making the Right Moves”

An excellent resource is the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's “**Making the Right Moves: A Practical Guide to Scientific Management for Postdocs and New Faculty**,” (HHMI and the Burroughs Wellcome Fund). The complete book is available to download at <http://www.hhmi.org/educational-materials/lab-management/for-early-career-scientists>

What is Mentoring?

Scientific mentoring is a personal, one-on-one relationship between a more experienced scientist and a junior scientist through which the trainee receives guidance and encouragement that contributes to professional development.

Why Should You Be a Good Mentor?

Good mentoring should be viewed as an essential ingredient for ensuring that the postdoctoral-mentor relationship is professionally productive. Mentors also often mention deriving personal satisfaction in helping nurture the next generation of scientists.

Traits of a Good Mentor

- **Accessibility:** An open door and an approachable attitude.
- **Empathy:** Personal insight into what the trainee is experiencing.
- **Open mindedness:** Respect for each trainee's individuality and for working styles and career goals that may be different from those of the mentor.
- **Consistency:** Acting on your stated principles on a regular basis.
- **Patience:** Awareness that people make mistakes and that each person matures at his or her own rate.
- **Honesty:** Ability to communicate the hard truths about the trainee's chances of success.
- **Savviness:** Attention to the pragmatic aspects of career development.
- **Trust:** As a mentor you are privy to considerable information about your trainee, including accomplishments, failures, financial situations and possibly even personal information. Information should be treated as confidential so your trainees feel they can trust you and share their ideas and problems with you.

Strategies for Effective Mentoring in Your Lab

- Make everything a learning opportunity
- Set specific goals and measures of accomplishment
- Encourage strategic thinking and creativity
- Uphold professional standards
- Impart skills
- Provide networking opportunities
- Give moral support

II. UCSB Postdoctoral Scholar Mentoring Guidelines for Faculty Mentors

(Adapted from UCSD Office of Postdoctoral Scholars Affairs)

Orientation

- Introduce the postdoc to the research team, department administrators, and other colleagues.
- Ensure the postdoc is aware of policy and guidelines that apply to him/her.
- Familiarize the postdoc with the office/lab space, equipment, ordering supply process, lab procedures, and standing meetings of the lab.
- Discuss funding expectations. Is the postdoc expected to apply for fellowships or will s/he be supported on training and/or research grants?

- Discuss research expectations. What knowledge is s/he expected to have and what will be taught? What are the research milestones?
- In collaboration, download and complete an **Individual Development Plan (IDP)** for Postdoctoral Fellows <http://opa.faseb.org/pdf/idp.pdf>. This Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology's IDP is appropriate for and/or adaptable to any field. It provides a planning process that identifies both professional development needs and career objectives.

Education & Training

- Discuss the postdoctoral core competencies as outlined by the NPA (see below for more information): scientific knowledge, research skill development, communication skills, professionalism, responsible conduct of research, and leadership and management skills.
- Work toward improving and refining these skills during the postdoctoral training period.

Evaluation

- The mentor shall conduct periodic reviews with the postdoc but no less than once per year (APM 390-25-a) in order to assess the postdoc's performance and provide constructive feedback.
- The annual review should assess the postdoc's progress to date, strengths, areas needing improvement, expectations and goals, and potential for a research career in the discipline.
- [UCSB Postdoctoral Evaluation Form](#)

Career Preparation

- Assess the postdoc's talents and skills and discuss career options.
- Encourage the postdoc to engage in networking activities (introduce to colleagues at professional meetings, seminars, via email).
- Offer opportunities for the postdoc to develop supervisory skills by allowing him/her to supervise students or other research staff.
- Encourage research independence.
- Encourage senior postdoc to apply for NIH K99/R00, BWF-CASI or other grants that will provide bridge funding for independent research.
 - Sign up for Funding Alert Services : <http://www.research.ucsb.edu/research-development/find-funding/>
 - Attend Office of Research's Research Development Workshops, Sponsor Visits and Events <http://www.research.ucsb.edu/research-events/>
- Inform and encourage postdocs to participate and attend workshops and seminars provided by the [Graduate Division and other campus resources](#).
- Encourage postdocs to gain teaching experience by allowing them to give a lecture in the classroom, co-teach, present a seminar, or teach a summer session course. Workshops and an online [A Handbook on Teaching for UCSB Faculty](#) are available through the [Office of Instructional Consultation](#).
- Assist with the job search (review CV, applications, interview format and questions, presentation, and write letters of recommendation). [Making the Right Moves](#) has an excellent section on Obtaining a Faculty Job.
- Encourage postdoc to actively seek opportunities for professional experience and advancement (e.g., volunteer on committees, help organize meetings).

III. Mentoring Postdocs and the National Postdoctoral Association (NPA) Core Competencies

Postdocs are in training, yet they are highly skilled scientists. Therefore, it is important to strike a balance between directing postdoctoral work and treating them appropriately as colleagues. Encourage them and give them the help they need in setting research and career goals, but give them sufficient independence so that they can move toward an independent research career.

The [National Postdoctoral Association](#) developed a postdoctoral training and mentoring guideline called the Core Competencies. They are:

1. Scientific Knowledge
2. Research Skills Development
3. Communication Skills
4. Professionalism
5. Leadership and Management Skills
6. Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)

✪ UCSB NPA Membership ✪

The UCSB Graduate Division and Office of Equal Opportunity have provided funding for UCSB to be a sustaining member. This entitles the campus community—all UCSB postdocs, faculty, staff, graduate students, undergraduates and alumni—access to otherwise restricted NPA news and Web site content. All that is needed is a ucsb.edu email address to access the members' only pages.

IV. Online Resources

- **UCSB Graduate Division Postdoctoral Scholar Resources**
<http://www.graddiv.ucsb.edu/scholars/>
- **Women in Science and Engineering (WiSE)** at UCSB organizes a number of presentations that are relevant to postdocs, particularly women (<http://www.wise.ucsb.edu/>)
- UCSB has contracted with **Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI)** (www.citiprogram.org) to provide access to research training opportunities through an interactive online tutorial. It's free but requires users to set up a user name and password to log in.

The following online training opportunities, offered through CITI, are relevant to our campus, and RCR is particularly appropriate for postdoctoral mentoring:

- Human Subjects Protection
- Effort Reporting
- Stem Cell Research
- Laboratory Animal Welfare Courses for investigators and IACUC Members
- Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)

- **Entering Mentoring: A Seminar to Train a New Generation of Scientists**
(The Wisconsin Program for Scientific Teaching, supported by the HHMI Professors Program)
http://www.hhmi.org/resources/labmanagement/downloads/entering_mentoring.pdf
- **FASEB Statement on Including Postdoctoral Mentoring Plans in Research Grant Applications**
<http://opa.faseb.org/pdf/QReports/July-Sept08/MentoringRGrants.pdf>
- **Mentor-for-Mentor Program** (UCSF-GIVI Center for AIDS Research)
<http://cfar.ucsf.edu/cfar?page=education-mentor-binders>
- **Mentoring International Postdocs Guide Book and Videos** (Children's Hospital of Philadelphia)
US Department of Health and Human Services
http://www.ori.dhhs.gov/education/products/chop_mentoring/
- **Individual Development Plan** (Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology)
<http://opa.faseb.org/pdf/idp.pdf>
- **Mentoring and Training** (Responsible Conduct of Research)
US Department of Health and Human Services
<http://ori.hhs.gov/education/products/wsu/training.html>
- **Mentoring Standards** (Gladstone Institute at UCSF)
<http://gladstoneinstitutes.org/connect/postdocs/the-training-program/mentoring/mentor-standards>
- **MentorNet**
<http://www.mentornet.net/>
- **National Postdoctoral Association (NPA)**
<http://www.nationalpostdoc.org/>
- For postdocs and their mentors, **Science Careers' Academic Scientists Toolkit** provides a number of topics that a mentoring program might cover:
http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career_development/previous_issues/articles/0000/the_academic_scientists_toolkit/
- **The One-Minute Mentor** (Mitchell D. Feldman, MD, MPhil, UCSF)
<http://accelerate.ucsf.edu/training/mdp-seminar1-one-minute-mentor>