

## POSTDOCTORAL SCHOLAR INITIAL LETTER OF APPOINTMENT

[Place on your letter head]

(DATE)

NAME

ADDRESS

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

I am pleased to offer you the position of (*insert title and job code*) in my group at Florida State University.

### **Appointment**

Your appointment in (*insert unit name*) will be effective on (*insert date*). You will be supported on (*insert grant name and number or indicate other sources of funding*) at an annual rate of (*insert annual amount*), to be paid in accordance with the payroll schedules of Florida State University. This funding will commence on (*insert funding begin and end date*). This appointment is renewable each year and is contingent on satisfactory progress, mutual agreement, and available funding. University policies define the maximum tenure in a postdoctoral position as four years. **[Include the following if the appointment is for 30 hrs. or more each week-As a postdoctoral scholar working 30 hours or more each week you may be eligible for the benefits described in the Florida State University HR Regulations, available on the website- <http://hr.fsu.edu/>. Please refer to the benefits for (select one of the following based on job code used **OPS/ salaried employees**).**]

*\*The position you are being offered meets the criteria for exemption from the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA Exempt); thus, you will not be eligible to receive overtime compensation.*

**Responsibilities** (Provide a statement of your expectations and/or the responsibilities of the postdoctoral scholar. Also provide a statement of the responsibilities of the advisor and/or what the postdoctoral scholar should expect from the mentor. Be as explicit as possible.)

### ***Example of Postdoctoral Scholar Responsibilities:***

*I look forward to working together on (description of projects, responsibilities, and functions). To familiarize yourself with the features of this project, I recommend that you read the enclosed articles. This project will be conducted in collaboration with (insert names of colleagues) in (Insert name of department or unit – possible mention of work with animals).*

*My expectations for you include a willingness to contribute intellectually to the project, and to assist in the training of graduate students. I will serve as your mentor. I expect you to work independently, but as a member of the group; I expect my trainees to work on evenings and weekends, as needed. (Include in this portion explicit bench marks of successful progress, such as publication, presentation, etc., how and when they will be evaluated, information regarding attendance at meetings, use of office copy machines and phones, etc... as applicable)*

***Example of Mentor Responsibilities:***

*As a mentor, you should expect that I will provide funds to support your travel to one conference a year to disseminate the results of your research and for career building. I typically meet with my trainees formally on a biweekly basis but am available more frequently as needs arise. I will assist in your development in oral and written communication as well as training with [type of equipment, skill, technique, etc. – specify details and/or access to specialty equipment, intellectual resources]. We will develop a compact of mutually beneficial goals through your formulation of an Individual Development Plan (IDP) and our annual review process (see details below).*

[Provide language for responsibilities for postdoctoral scholars that have teaching responsibilities as well as research responsibilities, if relevant.]

***Example of Teaching Responsibilities:***

*Because your appointment involves a teaching assignment at either the undergraduate or graduate level, you must meet university-wide qualifications that include a doctorate in a field or specialty commensurate with your teaching duty, certification in the two day Program for Instructional Excellence, and demonstration of English language proficiency. Details of these qualifications can be found under the policy division of the FSU's Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPDA) website. Either myself, or [name teaching supervisor] will serve as your supervisor for instruction in the course [name course, if assignment made already]. You are encouraged to meet weekly with your teaching supervisor during the development of your course so that she/he can provide feedback on the oral delivery of your lectures, the style of learning and evaluation of your students, and other classroom-related questions you may have as you prepare to be a more experienced Instructor of Record.*

**Career Development**

An Individual Development Plan (IDP) is an important tool that can help postdoctoral scholars to identify their professional development needs and career objectives. Currently the National Science Foundation (NSF) requires postdoctoral mentoring plans when submitting new applications as part of the scoring metric. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) requires the development of postdoctoral IDPs as part of the non-competitive renewal process of ongoing investigator initiated (R01) mechanisms and as part of the non-competitive renewal process for training grants. Therefore FSU's Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPDA) highly recommends that you create an IDP and discuss it with your mentor. [If there are teaching requirements of this position, then add....] For your teaching responsibilities, you may also address your current teaching skills and goals in the IDP.

You may elect to complete your IDP using a template adopted by the FSU OPDA that can be found at – <http://opda.fsu.edu/Resources/Career-Development-Resources>, or you may complete your IDP using an online assessment method. If you would prefer to use an alternative tool please let me know. To begin your IDP using the interactive, online assessment tool, go to <http://myidp.sciencecareers.org/>. Create an account, and complete the initial assessments of your skills, interests and values, career exploration, goal setting and implementation plans. Once completed, use the left column and go to *My IDP Summary*. Click the “*Print My IDP*” tab, and select the following sections to share with me:

Mentoring Team, Career Exploration Pages, Career Goals: Plan A and Plan B, Career Advancement Goals, Project Completion Goals, and Goals Summary.

### **Orientation and Annual Review Evaluations**

Postdoctoral scholars are required to attend an orientation session once they arrive on campus. There is a half-day orientation program that is designed to assist you with development of your IDP, present postdoctoral policies, introduce you to resources on campus, connect you with the Postdoctoral Association (PDA), and assist you with enrollment in human resources and university-related benefits. This main orientation is designed for all postdocs that have been on campus for 1 year or less and is held annually in August. Because postdoctoral scholars commence employment throughout the year, there is access to a noontime program 4 times a year on the last Monday of January, April, July, and October that will also serve as the orientation requirement and allow you introduction to the PDA network and the director of the OPDA.

Each July, you will be provided an annual review administered and received by your Postdoctoral Departmental Coordinator or Director. You will therefore annually self-evaluate your progress, I will contribute my evaluation as your direct supervisor, and we will sign this compact to include upcoming research and professional development plans for the upcoming year. This compact is due annually on September 15<sup>th</sup> to your Departmental Coordinator or Director ([found here](#)) and can be used as a tool to monitor the continuation of your appointment.

For postdoctoral scholars with teaching duties, performance evaluations as Instructor of Record must be completed no later than three weeks after the close of each semester. Please consult, as needed, the FSU Policy on Evaluation of Instructors of Record (<http://policies.fsu.edu/>). Reappointment as an Instructor of Record is contingent on performance evaluation.

### **Documentation Needed**

This appointment is subject to the constitution and laws of the State of Florida and the rules and regulations of the Florida Board of Governors, the Florida State University Board of Trustees, and Florida State University. Please become especially familiar with the University policies on sexual harassment, outside activities, conflicts of interest, and intellectual property (<http://www.fda.fsu.edu/>). This offer is also contingent upon you providing the necessary documents to prove your identity and employment eligibility to satisfactorily complete Form I-9 of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, which will be completed in our (*department or unit*) at the time of employment. In addition, you will be obligated to complete the Employment Qualification Statement on Controlled Substance Conviction form as a condition of employment at Florida State University.

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You are advised that under Florida law, direct deposit of salary warrants by electronic funds transfer (EFT) is mandatory as a condition of employment for all new employees. Your acceptance of this offer commits you to complete the authorization form which will be provided and submit it to FSU Payroll Services at the time of hire.

If you accept my offer, please complete the following:

- sign and return the enclosed copy of this offer (*by when and what mode*),
- complete the attached information form,
- provide an updated copy of your CV,
- arrange to send me an official record of your diploma from your doctoral institution reflecting conferral of your doctorate and/or an official statement in English from the registrar or University official that shows that you have completed all degree requirements in order for your appointment to be processed.

The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs is an excellent resource for information regarding orientation, professional development workshops, postdoctoral travel awards, intramural grants program, networking with fellow postdoctoral scholars through the Postdoctoral Association (PDA) and other postdoctoral policy-related issues at FSU. Please visit their website at <http://opda.fsu.edu/> or contact them at [opda-info@fsu.edu](mailto:opda-info@fsu.edu). You may also join the Postdoctoral List Serv through [inquiry \(opda-info@fsu.edu\)](mailto:opda-info@fsu.edu) to receive weekly announcements of ongoing campus events and career opportunities.

*Optional: I am delighted at the prospect of you joining my group and I am confident that we have a great deal to offer you in terms of collegiality and intellectual community here at Florida State University. I look forward to hearing from you. This contract is void if not signed by (insert date).*

Sincerely,

(Insert your name, Department and Position)

Date

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I accept the offer as outlined above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

(Insert their full name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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**[\*Note to Hiring Departments:**

For additional information on FLSA status for Postdocs and minimum salary requirements, click [here.](#)]

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