Postdoctoral Affairs Advisory Committee Notes

September 8th, 2022 3:00pm – 4:00pm, Zoom Link: <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/97790012384>

Second meeting for the 2022-2023 Term!

**Introductions/check-ins:** Jeannine, Jonathan, Kole, Jenna, Eleana, Carla, Jeremy, Rajani, Aida, Wayne

**Announcements/Updates**

UF Postdoc Association (UFPDA) and UF Scripps Postdoc Association

[National Postdoc Appreciation Week – Sept. 19-23](https://postdoc.aa.ufl.edu/programs/national-postdoc-appreciation-week/) – Check out the events calendar and share!

**Discussion topic:** Where do we want to focus our energy?

Listed in order of discussion, not priority

1. **Mock Grant Review Programming** to increase postdoctoral fellowships (namely F32)
   1. Since our meeting the OPA has received a request for support applying for an NSF postdoctoral fellowship.
2. **Postdoc Fellow Benefits** – Postdocs are reluctant to accept fellowships because of changes to employee status and thus benefits eligibility, including workers compensation.
   1. The NIH is aware of issues with Fellow Benefits. Please review the NIH’s [Update on the Postdoctoral Benefit Survey](https://nexus.od.nih.gov/all/2015/11/30/update-postdoctoral-benefit-survey/) from November 2015.
   2. The outcome from the last internal push to address the issue of Postdoctoral Fellows not being employees and thus not having the benefits eligibility of Postdoctoral Associates was a compromise to try to provide greater guidance (i.e. a brochure and a dedicated staff member in the UF HR Benefits office) to postdoc fellows that they are eligible for the [UnitedHealthcare Student Injury and Sickness Insurance Plan (SISIP)](https://www.uhcsr.com/school-year), which the UF benefits team determined is comparable to UF GatorCare.
   3. Based on the last push to address this issue, the question of how/who pays for the costs of employment if postdoctoral fellows are made employees, is the greatest barrier. NIH (most fellows are on NIH funding) does not allow for the costs of employment to be charged to fellowships (See [11.2.9.8 Allowable and Unallowable Costs](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps/HTML5/section_11/11.2.9_allowable_and_unallowable_costs.htm))
   4. This is a priority area for the [National Postdoctoral Association Advocacy Committee](https://www.nationalpostdoc.org/general/custom.asp?page=Advocacy)
3. **Postdoc Recruitment**– PIs at UF and around the world are having trouble recruiting postdocs. How can we help UF faculty with recruitment issues?
   1. Please read these two recent articles to facilitate discussion at our October meeting
      1. [Lab leaders wrestle with paucity of postdocs](https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-022-02781-x?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=CONR_NCARS_ENGM_GL_ONMO_CAREE_NAT&utm_content=070922v1&fbclid=IwAR0pqEMPBtGIfoXTkI6IHCD_uP-r-o6hdb2XB2D0f6HU1O246UFCep_7xtw) – Nature Career News, August 2022
      2. [As professors struggle to recruit postdocs, calls for structural change in academia intensify](https://www.science.org/content/article/professors-struggle-recruit-postdocs-calls-structural-change-academia-intensify) – Science Careers, June 2022
   2. Example Postdoc Recruitment Event: [Chicagoland Postdoc Recruitment Initiative](https://chicagolanddiversepostdocrecruitment.org/)

These three areas are clearly linked. We will use our October meeting time to discuss actionable ways to move forward in these areas. Please review the linked materials prior to our Oct. meeting.