

LAMAR UNIVERSITY
MANUAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SECTION: Academic Affairs
AREA: Faculty

MAPP 02.02.10

Postdoctoral Employment

I. POLICY

- A. Lamar University (LU) strives to provide a positive and productive experience that ensures postdoctoral researchers and scholars (“postdocs”) contribute to LU’s research efforts while gaining independence, enhancing their professional skills, and preparing for future career success.

II. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

- A. This policy falls under the authority of all applicable federal, state, and Texas State University System (TSUS) statutes, rules, and regulations, including, but not limited to, the *TSUS Rules & Regulations*; Texas Education Code, Title 3, Higher Education; and Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Education.

III. DEFINITION

- A. **Postdoctoral Researcher or Scholar** (also known as a “**Postdoc**”). LU follows the definition and role of a postdoctoral researcher or scholar advanced by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the National Postdoctoral Association (NPA). According to the NPA, a postdoc “is an individual holding a doctoral degree who is engaged in a temporary period of mentored research and/or scholarly training for the purpose of acquiring the professional skills needed to pursue a career path of his or her choosing.”

IV. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Postdocs work under the supervision of a regular LU faculty member, who serves as a mentor to the postdoc. Within the confines of the particular focus assigned by the faculty sponsor, the postdoc functions with a considerable degree of independence and is clearly differentiated from full-time technical employees, grant-funded staff, and other positions at the University.
- B. Faculty mentors are expected to provide an orientation and development plan for postdocs, impart the realities and variety of careers available to postdocs, and encourage learning opportunities to broaden postdocs’ aspirations and experiences. Faculty mentors are also expected to discuss University policies with postdocs, including those related to responsible conduct of research, intellectual property, instruction, and other relevant matters.

- C. Postdocs are encouraged to access the services and benefits afforded to all faculty at the University, including development opportunities in grant writing, research design, career preparation, teaching, and other topics of interest.
- D. Postdocs fall under a special category of temporary employment. The appropriate Department Chair and College Dean are responsible for monitoring and applying policies that relate to postdoctoral appointments. Postdocs are appointed for one (1) year and may be renewed for additional one-year increments. Postdoctoral appointments are typically limited to no more than five (5) years in duration, with exceptions possible in extraordinary circumstances.
- E. Postdoctoral appointments are characterized by the following conditions:
 - 1. The appointee was recently awarded a PhD or equivalent doctorate (e.g., DSc, EdD, MD) or has successfully completed all requirements for the doctorate but has not received the diploma and has an official certification from the doctoral-granting institution stating that all degree requirements have been successfully completed prior to the assignment start date.
 - 2. The appointment involves substantial and full-time commitment to research, scholarship, teaching, and/or other professional activities.
 - 3. The appointee has the freedom and is expected to disseminate the results of the research, creative works, or scholarship accomplished.
 - 4. The appointment is designed and implemented as preparatory for a full-time academic or research career, including opportunities to broaden skills and knowledge.
 - 5. The appointment is temporary, typically renewable for up to five (5) years.
- F. The procedures for hiring faculty members apply to the hiring of postdocs.
- G. If a foreign national is selected for hire, a current curriculum vitae (CV) and appropriate paperwork should be submitted to the LU Office of Human Resources as early as possible to expedite the process. The faculty mentor is also responsible for ensuring that the candidate is working with Human Resources and other appropriate LU offices on Visa and related requirements for employment in the United States and State of Texas.
- H. LU will provide health care coverage, retirement benefits, and other benefits as appropriate and consistent with the requirements of Texas law and University policy.

V. REFERENCES

- A. National Postdoctoral Association (NPA). *What Is a Postdoc?* Accessed April 15, 2022 <https://www.nationalpostdoc.org/page/What_is_a_postdoc>

VI. REVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITY

Responsible Party: Academic Policy Advisory Council

Review Schedule: Every three years on or before the date the policy was last revised and/or approved.

VII. APPROVAL

 Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Date

 Lamar University President Date

POLICY LOG

Version	Date	Description of Changes
1		Policy draft completed.
		Reviews by constituency groups completed.
		Review by campus community completed.
		Policy approved by President.