**Postdoctoral Scholars Regulation 10.10.8:**

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

The NC State University [Postdoctoral Scholars Regulation 10.10.8](http://www.ncsu.edu/policies/research/research_admin/REG10.10.8.php) was first issued on June 28, 2010. Since that time, the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPA) has received frequent questions regarding this new regulation. OPA has created a list of these FAQs as well as the responses to them as a way to better assist faculty and human resources personnel representatives with their hiring and management of postdoctoral scholars.

***Question: How is a “postdoc” defined?***

Answer: North Carolina State University’s definition of a postdoctoral scholar is outlined in [Section 2.1 of Regulation 10.10.8](http://www.ncsu.edu/policies/research/research_admin/REG10.10.8.php) and includes the need for the postdoc to have been awarded a doctorate no more than five (5) years prior to the appointment; the appointment involves substantial research and/or scholarship; the appointment is viewed as preparatory for a full-time academic or research career; the appointee works under the supervision of a scholar or a department in a university, laboratory, center, etc; and the appointee is expected to submit for publication the results of his/her research or scholarship conducted during the period of the appointment. In addition, the expectations of postdoctoral appointees are noted in [Section 6](http://www.ncsu.edu/policies/research/research_admin/REG10.10.8.php) of the regulation.

***Question: What is the amount of time that can pass between the time a potential postdoctoral scholar (or “postdoc”) is awarded their Ph.D. and then appointed as a postdoc?***

Answer: As outlined in [Section 2.2](http://www.ncsu.edu/policies/research/research_admin/REG10.10.8.php), an applicant for a postdoctoral scholar position must have been awarded a Ph.D. or equivalent doctorate no more than five (5) years prior to the appointment. There are some cases where an applicant was awarded their doctorate more than five (5) years ago; in these situations, the Director of the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs must approve the appointment, and a justification for hiring that particular applicant needs to be e-mailed to the Director at [rhonda\_sutton@ncsu.edu](mailto:rhonda_sutton@ncsu.edu).

***Question: How can a faculty mentor/principle investigator now recruit postdocs?***

Answer: Postdoctoral appointments are, by their very nature, training experiences that are meant to

strengthen the research and/or scholarship of postdocs. Postdocs are often identified directly through national or other academic professional channels. As stipulated in [Section 2.4 of Regulation 10.10.8,](http://www.ncsu.edu/policies/research/research_admin/REG10.10.8.php) academic departments are strongly encouraged to widely publicize postdoctoral vacancies but open recruitment and, therefore, full searches, are not required.

***Question: Is there a template for a postdoc appointment letter?***

Answer: Yes. The offer letter for postdocs was created by Human Resources and is available both on HR’s website (<http://www.fis.ncsu.edu/hr/employment/epa_letters/>) and on the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs’ Faculty Resources web page under “[Hiring a Postdoctoral Scholar](http://www.ncsu.edu/grad/postdoctoral-affairs/faculty-resources.html).”

***Question: What is the new minimum salary for postdocs?***

Answer: As of June 28, 2010, as outlined in [Section 5 of Regulation 10.10.8](http://www.ncsu.edu/policies/research/research_admin/REG10.10.8.php), all postdocs hired from that date forward must be compensated at a rate that is at least 60% of the minimum starting salary for an assistant professor in the appropriate/corresponding discipline as published in the University’s approved [faculty salary ranges established by Human Resources](http://www7.acs.ncsu.edu/hr/classcomp/salschedule.asp). An example: The minimum starting salary for an assistant professor in Biochemistry is, according to HR’s faculty salary ranges, $55,000. The required minimum starting salary for a postdoc in Biochemistry is, therefore, $33,000 (60% x $55,000).

***Question: Are postdocs eligible for salary increases?***

Answer: Yes, they are eligible for salary increases since their appointments are temporary in nature and their salaries are funded, for the most part, through grant awards. Faculty mentors/PIs may provide postdocs with salary increases as outlined in [Section 3 (page 5) of the January 10, 2011 Expenditure Guidelines](http://www.fis.ncsu.edu/rm/budget_central/documents/RevisedExpenditureGuidelines.pdf). Any salary adjustments to a postdoctoral scholar’s pay must be in compliance with any restrictions or guidelines of the authorized funding source

***Question: Are performance evaluations required of postdocs?***

Answer: Yes, all postdoctoral appointments are subject to annual performance reviews that need to be documented and placed in the postdoc’s personnel file ([Section 4.1.4 of Regulation 10.10.8](http://www.ncsu.edu/policies/research/research_admin/REG10.10.8.php)). The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPA) offers examples of [documents that can be used to evaluate a postdoc’s work performance](http://www.ncsu.edu/grad/postdoctoral-affairs/faculty-resources.html) under the “Performance Evaluations” section of OPA’s Faculty Resources web page.

***Question: Are postdocs eligible for the tuition waiver (that EPA and SPA employees have)?***

Answer: No. Unfortunately, since all postdoctoral appointments are temporary ones, they are not

eligible for this benefit. However, if a postdoc wishes to sit in on a class (and not receive a grade for the class), she or he may ask the permission of the instructor to do so.