GSA Webinar Series

Finding and Getting the Most Out of Your Postdoctoral Fellowship Experience

SUPPORTED BY THE GSA INNOVATION FUND: GENERATIVITY EFFECT
Webinar Speakers

Jasmine Travers, PhD, AGPCNP-BC, RN, Postdoctoral Fellow National Clinician Scholars Program Yale University Schools of Medicine and Nursing

Ryon J. Cobb, PhD, Assistant Professor of Social Work University of Texas at Arlington

Julene K. Johnson, PhD Associate Dean of Research University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) School of Nursing Associate Director UCSF Institute for Health and Aging
"Life After the PhD: Preparing for a Postdoc"

Jasmine L. Travers, PhD, AGPCNP-BC, RN
Postdoctoral Fellow
National Clinician Scholars Program
Yale University Schools of Medicine and Nursing
Webinar Agenda:
Preparing for a Postdoc

- What
- Why
- When
- How
- Pros/Cons
- Where
What Is a Postdoc?

“A ‘postdoc’ is a temporary position awarded in academia, industry, a nonprofit organization, or government primarily for gaining additional education and training in research.”

— National Science Foundation
Where Do Postdocs Take Place?

- Academic Institutions
- Clinics/Health Care Settings/Industry
- Not-For-Profit Settings
- Government (e.g., AHRQ, NIH)
- Think Tanks (e.g., RAND)
- Veterans Administration
In Public...

Behind Closed Doors...
Don't talk to me.
Over 1,000 nurse researchers, deans of nursing schools, presidents of medical schools, faculty, senior management of health-related associations, corporate and community leaders as well as members of Congress and their health care and legislative staffs!
Why Do You Want a Postdoc and/or What Do You Hope to Accomplish?
My Postdoc Plan

**Scholarship**
- Get predoc papers out
- Submit grants
- Work on projects and manuscripts

**Teaching**
- Teaching methods
- Teaching experience

**Service**
- PA Coalition for Action Diversity
- BPC Symposium Planning Committee
- Penn Research Committee
- LDI SUMR Mentor

**Training**
- Policy
- Aging
- Summer enrichment
- Study abroad
- Opportunity to take courses
When to Begin the Postdoc Search

- Depends on dissertation defense/graduation date

- Networking and researching: 12 months to 24 months
  - Connect with potential mentors
  - Identify key dates
  - Understand application materials/requirements
  - Learn about postdoc expectations (e.g., start date flexibility)

- Applications: 9 months to 12 months+
  (know deadlines)
Where to Begin the Postdoc Search

- Conferences/Meetings/Programs
- Mentors
- Institutional Sites
- Inquiries
- Networks
- Listserves/Emails/Notices/Organizational Sites
- NIH Reporter/Reference Lists
How are Academic Postdocs Funded?

- T32 (Institutional) or F32 (Individual)
- University-Funded (e.g., Research Scientist)
- Provost Fellowships
- Teaching Fellowships
- Diversity/Administrative Supplements
- Mentor’s Grant
- Private/Discretionary Funds

Typically salary ranges from $47,000-$80,000+
Academic Postdoc Application Process Essentials

- CV (publications, presentations, grant funding, awards)
- Job Talk
- Interviews
- Research Plan
- Training Plan
- Career Goals
- Identified Mentors
- Writing Sample
- Internet
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>APPLICATION MATERIALS</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RESUME/CV</strong></td>
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<td>Action words, indent, bullet points</td>
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<td>Formatting matters</td>
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<td>Skills are important</td>
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<td>Have someone review</td>
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<td><strong>COVER LETTER</strong></td>
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<td>Show that you know the mission/vision and why you share it</td>
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<td>Why do you want to work for them?</td>
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<td>Point out things that show that you have the criteria</td>
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Academic Talk

- First impression
- Attention grabber
- Why is your work exciting and unique?
- TELL THEM what you’re going to tell them, TELL THEM, then TELL THEM what you told them
Postdoc Need to Knows

- Expectations: courses, teaching, research assistantship, how are postdocs viewed, grants, manuscripts, committees, etc.
- Package: benefits, research and travel funds
- Resources: postdoc council, internal grant support, grant office, software, computers
- Mentorship: a match, frequency of meetings, length, support, seniority
- On-sight requirements: in office vs. out of office
- Flexibility of training: think ahead, create timeline
- Culture and investment in postdocs
# Postdoc Pros and Cons

**PROS**

- Flexibility
- Salary
- Dedicated time
- Level of independence
- Training and mentorship
- Networks

**CONS**

- Period of in-betweenness
- Salary
- Level of independence
- Navigating the intricacies of being a postdoc
- Possibility of being taken advantage of
## My Traditional Postdoc 2016-2018

### WHAT IT CONSISTED OF

- Joint Postdoc: 3 years
- Relocation support
- Research support: $5,000
- Travel support: $4,000
- Option to take classes
- Room to tailor my training to my needs
- Overwhelming support and resources
- Situated within a Center

### EXPECTATIONS

- Manuscript development
- Grant submission
- Maintain focus
- Commitment of 2 years
My Non-Traditional Postdoc 2018-2020

WHAT IT CONSISTS OF

Postdoc: 2 years
Research support: $5,000-$10,000
Travel support: $2,000
Community, clinical, and policy experiences
Some room to tailor my training to my needs
Overwhelming support and resources
Master’s degree

EXPECTATIONS

Completion of two projects w/ corresponding manuscripts
Career exploration
Maintain focus
Become a leader in something
Resources

National Postdoctoral Association

- http://www.nationalpostdoc.org

Office of Intramural Training and Education

- https://www.training.nih.gov/for_trainees_outside_the_nih

The Chronicle of Higher Education

- http://www.chronicle.com

National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity

- https://www.facultydiversity.org
Resources cont.

https://postdocjobs.com

http://www.findapostdoc.com

https://www.higheredjobs.com
Questions?

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GSA Webinar Series

"Selecting the Right Postdoctoral Position"

Ryon J. Cobb, PhD
Assistant Professor
School of Social Work
University of Texas at Arlington

SUPPORTED BY THE GSA INNOVATION FUND: THE GENERATIVITY EFFECT
ESPO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WEBINAR SERIES
Take a good look at the scholars you admire. Their careers are not due to chance. Instead, they are the byproduct of careful planning and execution.

Robert V. Robinson, PhD
Chancellor's Professor Emeritus of Sociology
Indiana University, Bloomington
Prior Training to Research Career

B.A. in Secondary Education
Ph.D. in Sociology
Postdoc Training in Aging
Prior Training to Research Career

**Career Path for a Ph.D. (or equivalent)**

- **T32**: Institutional training grant (NRSA) - has pre- & postdoc slots
- **F30** and **F31**: Individual predoc fellowship (NRSA) (some ICs only support Diversity F30/31s)
- **F32**: Individual postdoc fellowship (NRSA)
- **F33**: Sr. postdoc fellowship (NRSA)
- **R03**: Small Grant
- **R21**: Exploratory/Developmental Research Grant
- **R01**: Research Grant

**Diversity Supplements**

- **K02**: Independent Scientist Award
- **K22**: Research Scholar Development Award
- **K99/R00**: Pathway to Independence Award
- **R37**: Merit Award
- **P01**: Program Project Grant
- **U01**: Cooperative Agreement

**Graduate student** — **Ph.D.** — **Faculty Position** — **Independent PI**
Acknowledgements

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- Roland J. Thorpe, Jr., PhD
- Vern Bengtson, PhD

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Webinar Agenda

- Understanding the opportunities of postdoctoral training
- Choosing a postdoctoral mentor/s
- Succeeding as a postdoctoral scholar
**Postdoc Opps**

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**Teaching Postdocs**

**Consortium for Faculty Diversity**

**Mission and Goals**

The Consortium is committed to increasing the diversity of students, faculty members, and curricular offerings at liberal arts colleges with a particular focus on enhancing the diversity of faculty members and applicants for faculty positions.

The Consortium was founded as an association of liberal arts colleges committed to strengthening the ethnic diversity of students and faculty members at liberal arts colleges. The early goals of the Consortium with regard to faculty diversity included encouraging U.S. citizens who are members of under-represented minority groups to complete their graduate programs and to consider faculty employment in liberal arts colleges.

The Consortium invites applications for dissertation fellowships and post-doctoral fellowships from those who will contribute to increasing the diversity of member colleges by increasing their ethnic and racial diversity, maximizing the educational benefits of diversity and increasing the number of professors who can and will use diversity as a resource for enriching the education of students. Applicants must be able to provide evidence of U.S. citizenship or unconditional permanent residency status at the time of hire.

Appointments to the fellowships are made by the member institutions according to local needs and local program guidelines under the general framework for dissertation fellowships and post-doctoral fellowships described by the Consortium.
The National Center for Health Statistics Postdoctoral Research Program

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) is a unique public resource for health information. As the country’s principal health statistics agency, NCHS provides information to develop programs and policies that will improve the health of the American people. NCHS’ mission is to monitor the health of the American people, with activities mirroring the multifaceted aspects of the health and health care environment.

The objective of the NCHS Postdoctoral Research Program is to provide opportunities for postdoctoral candidates to conduct research in areas of their choosing that are compatible with the interests of NCHS.

General research areas include statistical theory, survey methodology, statistical computing, economics, demography, and social and behavioral science.

Conditions of Postdoctoral Research Appointments

- A Postdoctoral Researcher is a temporary resident employee of NCHS (Title 42, Subchapter E, Part 61 and Title 5, Part 213.3101R, Excepted Appointment). Postdoctoral Researchers are equivalent to fellows or similar temporary researchers at the postdoctoral level in universities and other organizations. These positions are not intended to be or
Multidisciplinary Research Training in Gerontology

The Multidisciplinary Research Training in Gerontology Program supports predoctoral and postdoctoral students whose research focus is on factors influencing human physical and mental health and aging. The aim of this program is to support the next generation of scientists working on aspects of aging. This program is supported by a grant from the Behavioral and Social Science Division of the National Institute on Aging to the Leonard Davis School of Gerontology Center at USC. It is directed by Eileen M. Crimmins, AARP Professor of Gerontology.

This program supports seven predoctoral trainees and five postdoctoral trainees per year. Postdoctoral trainees can be from a variety of fields with relevant research including Gerontology, Demography, Sociology, Economics, Public Health, Medicine, Public Policy, Psychology, Biology, Social Work and Neuroscience. Predoctoral trainees can be in the Gerontology, Medicine, Public Policy, Psychology, Biology, and Neuroscience. All trainees are expected to become familiar with the study of aging across multiple disciplines. Trainees are mentored by a member of the training faculty. These awards consist of fellowship stipends, tuition, health insurance, and a travel allowance.
Mentorship

Postdoctoral Mentors

- Active investigators in the area of the proposed research
- Committed both to the career development of the postdoctoral scholar
- Direct supervision of the Postdoc’s research
Research Independence
Research Independence

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K02- Independent Scientist Award
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Avoiding Pitfalls

- Temporary position with a stated goal
- Juggling job prospects with publication demands
- Communicating w/ research team
Thank You!

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General Tips from the Other Side

Julene K. Johnson, PhD
Associate Dean for Research
Associate Director, Institute for Health & Aging
UCSF School of Nursing
UCSF Center for Aging in Diverse Communities
Webinar Overview

- Knowing how your postdoc experience should prepare you to be an Assistant Professor
- Understanding expectations of an Assistant Professor position
- Characteristics of a strong applicant for a new Assistant Professor position
1. How should your postdoc experience prepare you for an Assistant Professor position?

- Get exposure to grants and grant-funded research *
  - Start planning your future grants and collect pilot data
- Build your colleague network
- Seek out a mentor(s)
- Learn to prioritize writing and publishing *
- Grow your leadership skills
- Find opportunities to teach/mentor
2. Understanding expectations of an Assistant Professor position

- Publish or Perish – How many? Which metrics?
- Finding Funding – Which, where, how much, by when?
- Teaching Effectiveness – What does this mean exactly?
- Academic Citizenship and Professional Service
3. Characteristics of a strong applicant for an Assistant Professor position

- Evidence of academic promise and future success
  - Consistent track record of publications (aim for 2/year)
  - Some experience with teaching and mentoring
  - Passion for science
  - Potential for future funding
  - Your future research fills an important research gap and/or overlap with research themes in school, department, and funding agencies
- Fit with department (departments seek a colleague; understand the department)
Identifying Research Gaps and Overlap

- To identify research gaps, stay current with the literature
- Attend conferences and don’t be shy 😊
- Sign up for funding agency grant lists (e.g., NIH, RWJ)
- Find strategic plans and priorities for funding agencies
- Become familiar with the research topics in school/departments and where you want to be an Assistant Professor
Things I wish I knew then...

- Strong writing skills are ESSENTIAL
- Strong verbal presentation skills are also ESSENTIAL
- Being a researcher is like being an entrepreneur
- “Front load” your career *
- You are in the driver’s seat of your career
  - Change it up if you’re not satisfied and have a Plan B
- Seek out feedback
- Don’t forget that publications and grants are the currency of research-intensive universities
Questions?

- We will not be using the “raise hand” feature today
- Please use the “questions” feature accessible on the right side of your screen
- If we do not get to all of the questions today, we will email responses after the webinar
GSA Professional Development Resources

- Publishing
- Careers and Positions
- Mentoring
- Grants and Research

https://bit.ly/2U5SV5a
Webinar Evaluation

In an effort for continual improvement, we would like to hear your thoughts. Please provide feedback by clicking the survey link at the end of the webinar.

Thank you again and we hope you enjoyed the program!
Thank You

GSA: Advancing Innovation in Aging

- The nation’s oldest and largest interdisciplinary organization devoted to research, education, and practice in the field of aging
  - 5,500+ interdisciplinary members around the world touching all facets of aging

- Mission
  - Promote multi- and interdisciplinary research in aging
  - Translate and disseminate research findings
  - Promote/advocate for education/awareness on aging across disciplines
  - Foster application of research into policy development

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