Syllabus
CTPS 6103
Career Planning for Postdoctoral Scientists

The AAMC Compact between Postdoctoral Appointees and their Mentors states:

Effective mentoring is critical for postdoctoral training and requires that the primary mentor dedicate substantial time to ensure personal and professional development. A good mentor builds a relationship with the trainee that is characterized by mutual respect and understanding. Attributes of a good mentor include being approachable, available, and willing to share his/her knowledge; listening effectively; providing encouragement and constructive criticism; and offering expertise and guidance.

This Mentoring & Career Development for Postdoctoral Scientists (Development Plan) course/program is designed to meet that goal and to help guide postdocs in their careers via regular meetings with and oversight by their research mentors. After completing the course, which must be repeated annually, postdoctoral scientists will have:

- Reviewed AAMC Compact between Postdoctoral Appointees and their Mentors, to which both parties agree upon their respective commitments and both parties sign: http://gsbs.utmb.edu/_pdf/CompactPlanForPostdocs.pdf.
- Conducted a series of assessments, using the MyIDP website http://myIDP.sciencecareers.org/
- Explored a variety of possible suitable careers options, as suggested on the website and in discussions with their mentors
- Set a variety of goals in discussions with their mentors
- Written an Individual Development Plan (IDP), following the guidelines established in the MyIDP website, http://myidp.sciencecareers.org/Plan/Summary.
- Begun to implement the plan.
- Reviewed the list of certificate tracks (http://gsbs.utmb.edu/_pdf/postdocs/CertificateList.pdf) and related courses to design a training plan for the next academic year
- Developed a curriculum vitae using an accepted U.S. university format

The course consists of individual self-assessment, career opportunities research and goal-setting by the postdoc and discussion, planning and implementation with the mentor. Grading for the first term will be based on a completed IDP, signed by the postdoc and mentor and returned to the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. After the first year of the development plan, the postdoc and faculty mentor will complete a mutual evaluation of the progress in meeting goals established in the IDP, successfully completing near-term goals, and keeping commitments outlined in the compact. A copy of the mutual evaluation signed by both parties and uploaded will demonstrate successful completion of the course.

Key commitments of the postdocs, as outlined in the compact, include:

- Career development
- Research plan, goals
- Ethical standards
- Respect

Last Revised: 21-Nov-13
Responsibility  Skills acquisition  Feedback  Departure  Lifelong learning

Faculty mentor commitments include:
- Specific training period
- Defined expectations
- Mutual trust & respect
- Ethical standards
- Skills acquisition
- Guidance
- Environment for growth
- Professional interaction
- Publication & recognition
- Appropriate options
- Being a supportive colleague

Steps required of the postdoctoral scientist in researching and drafting an Individual Development Plan, as outlined on the MyIDP website, http://myIDP.sciencecareers.org/:

Step 1. Conduct a Self Assessment.
- Using the website tools, assess skills, interests and values.

Step 2. Explore Career Options and Set Goals
- Using the website tools, consider career fit, read about the possible career opportunities, attend events, talk to people in those careers and, in conversations with your mentor select career path options.
- Set SMART goals for career advancement, skills to improve and research, writing and presentation projects to accomplish.
- Prioritize your developmental areas and discuss with your mentor.

Step 3. Write an IDP
The IDP website maps out the general path you want to take and helps match skills and strengths to your career choices. It is a changing document, since needs and goals will almost certainly evolve over time as a postdoctoral fellow. The aim is to build upon current strengths and skills by identifying areas for development and providing a way to address these.
- Using the website tools, draft your IDP summary.
- Discuss your IDP with your mentor.
- Revise the IDP as appropriate, both postdoc and mentor sign the IDP and upload, following the instructions for using BlackBoard.

Step 4. Implement Your Plan
The plan is just the beginning of the career development process and serves as the road map. Now it’s time to take action!
- Put your plan into action.
- Revise and modify the plan as necessary. The plan is not cast in concrete; it will need to be modified as circumstances and goals change. The challenge of implementation is to remain flexible and open to change.

Last Revised: 21-Nov-13
Review the plan with your mentor regularly. Revise the plan on the basis of these discussions.

**Steps required of the faculty mentor overseeing the postdoc’s first Individual Development Plan:**

**Step 1.** Become familiar with available opportunities.
Using the draft IDP, work with the postdoc to familiarize yourself with them, as well as trends in science-related jobs.

**Step 2.** Discuss opportunities with postdoc.
This needs to be a private, scheduled meeting distinct from regular research-specific meetings. There should be adequate time set aside for an open and honest discussion.

**Step 3.** Review IDP and help revise.
Provide honest feedback - both positive and negative - to help postdoctoral fellows set realistic goals. Agree on a development plan that will allow postdoctoral fellows to be productive in the laboratory and adequately prepare them for their chosen career.

**Step 4.** Sign and forward copy of IDP.
Once both of you agree on the final version of the IDP, sign and forward a copy to the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs in the GSBS, mail route 1050. Receipt of the document will signal the Graduate School that the postdoctoral scholar has satisfactorily completed the requirements of the course. After the first year of the development plan, the postdoc and faculty mentor will complete a mutual evaluation of the progress in meeting goals established in the IDP and successful completion of commitments outlined in the compact. A copy of the mutual evaluation signed by both parties and forwarded to the GSBS will signal successful completion of the course.

**Step 5.** Establish regular review of progress.
The mentor should meet at regular intervals with the postdoctoral fellow to assess progress, expectations and changing goals. On at least an annual basis, the mentor should conduct a performance review designed to analyze what has been accomplished and what needs to be done. A written review is most helpful in objectively documenting accomplishments.

**Steps required of the postdoctoral scientist and faculty mentor overseeing the postdoc’s plan for certificates and courses for the following year:**

Link to the list of postdoctoral certificates and required and applicable courses at [http://gsbs.utmb.edu/_pdf/postdocs/CertificateList.pdf](http://gsbs.utmb.edu/_pdf/postdocs/CertificateList.pdf). For full descriptions of the courses, with dates, times, locations and links to syllabi, link to [http://gsbs.utmb.edu/_pdf/CourseDescriptions.pdf](http://gsbs.utmb.edu/_pdf/CourseDescriptions.pdf). Review the certificate tracks, their required and prescribed electives for suitability for desired training objectives. Establish a training plan, listing courses, terms, etc. This plan may be entered in myStar >Student Center>MyPlanner, if desired.
Steps required of the postdoctoral scientist in revising the curriculum vitae:

In the first term of the course, the scholar also will transfer his/her current curriculum vita into an accepted U.S. university faculty CV format. The UTMB format is at this link: www.GSBS.utmb.edu/postdocs/current/docs/postdoc_CV.doc. The revised CV should be submitted electronically to the departmental administrative staff and to the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs, following the instructions provided at the beginning of the term.

Disability/Special Accommodations Statement: It is the policy of the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) at Galveston to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and state and local requirements regarding students and applicants with disabilities. Under these laws, no otherwise qualified and competitive individual with a disability shall be denied access to or participation in services, programs, and activities of UTMB-Galveston solely on the basis of the disability.

The University of Texas Medical Branch is committed to equal opportunity for students with disabilities. If you have a documented disability or would like to obtain information regarding services for students with disabilities, a complete copy of the “Student with Disabilities: Guidelines for Compliance” may be obtained from the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity.

UTMB Honor Pledge

On my honor, as a member of the UTMB community, I pledge to act with integrity, compassion and respect in all my academic and professional endeavors.

Student Conduct and Discipline

Student Conduct and Discipline policy in the Institutional Handbook of Policies and Procedures (IHOP), Section 7.1.3 (http://www.utmb.edu/policy/ihop/search/07-01-03.pdf). “General Responsibilities: It is the responsibility of every student, faculty member and administrative official to initiate a disciplinary complaint when scholastic dishonesty or other misconduct is involved” UTMB IHOP Section 7.1.3. Student Conduct and Discipline: General Responsibilities.