**Hiring a RESEARCH ONLY Postdoc**

*If you anticipate hiring a postdoc with instructional duties or plan to update current postdocs to include instructional duties you will need to work with Ms. Leslie Sitz at least four (4) months prior to the start date. These hiring proposals MUST reach Faculty Affairs at least 30 days, with no mistakes, 30 days before the appointment date.*

Postdocs are considered full-time, benefits-eligible staff and because the minimum salary of a postdoc is well over $40K they would fall under UGA’s current [critical hire process](https://hr.uga.edu/critical-hire/). Postdoc positions are considered protected. What this means is if you decide to terminate the position due to lack of funding or other means outside the employee’s control you will need to process a lay off request. The lay off request process needs to begin at least 6 months in advance of the effective date of lay off. You would be working with Jennifer Mathews on this, if it came to be. These positions are required to be evaluated annually and are subject to the UGA annual budget and salary guidelines for annual merit raises.

Postdocs earn annual and sick leave, neither of which is due as payout at termination or resignation. A postdoc appointee is eligible to move in to a faculty or staff position at the termination of their postdoc appointment of 5 years. If you decide to move the postdoc in to a regular staff or faculty position their leave balance from being a postdoc will carry over with them, as appropriate, and you would then be subject to leave pay out at the time of termination or resignation according to the new position policies. For cumulative information on postdocs, please visit the [Office of Postdoctoral Affairs website](https://research.uga.edu/opa/).

Below is the current process to request a postdoc position:

* Prepare Ecology’s posting form. This captures information we need to request the position (seat), fund the position and post the position (once critical hire is approved). Please remember to fill in the search committee member names at the bottom of page 4. Page 5 has additional information regarding postdocs.
* With this information our office will submit a position request to HR.
* If HR approves of the position (seat), you’ll need to process the critical hire form using information from the approved position request. Per Provost Office and HR, there can be absolutely no changes from the job posting form to the critical hire form or vis-à-vis. Any change at any point after the position (seat) is approved will require a new position request and/or a new critical hire form.
  + Our office will fill in the blanks on the critical hire form as much as possible then ask you to complete the rest. I am attaching a copy of that form for reference at this time. You will need to complete 100% of the **Justification Narrative** section and I highly recommend you review the critical hire process for tips on this. See first link above. Justifications should clearly indicate how the position will help fulfill UGA’s goal of research, instruction and/or public service.
  + *If your position is to be funded from a project, the Provost and HR will not submit your request for further review and approval until a formal award letter is available to submit****with****the critical hire form.*
  + After completing the form please return to our office for further processing.
* Our office will obtain required signatures and will continue processing the request on your behalf. We will let you know if/when your position is approved for posting. Note, critical hire forms are reviewed once per week and can take at least two weeks (or more depending on inquiries from central offices) before we receive approval to post the position.
* Postdocs can be direct hired or hired via search. If conducting a search, all qualified applicants must be considered for the position. I am attaching an “Interviewer’s Inquiry Guide” from the Provost’s website to help lead you in the right direction when it comes to interviews.
* Once you’ve selected your candidate you’ll need to notify our office so we can continue working with you to close the position and hire the chosen applicant. **Do not make any offers, verbal or written, to the candidate without discussing with our office first. The Postdoc Office has requirements that must be met. See below.**
  + Our office will require a hiring proposal form to close the position in the system.
  + The Postdoc Office will require:
    - An offer letter with signed acceptance. **This offer letter MUST be reviewed and approved by the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs before you can present anything to the candidate. Our office will work with you using OPA’s template.**
      * Note, even if you mention an end date in the letter, this does not constitute notice of lay off. It helps, but does not hold up for purposes of releasing someone from employment. If you specify an end date in the letter it is wise to provide an extension letter to your employee at least one month before the current end date OR provide a notice of termination at least 6 months in advance.
    - The applicant’s evidence of degree.
    - The applicant’s CV.
    - Further documents may be required if teaching is involved.

Please let me know if you have any further questions or concerns. If you anticipate hiring an international, we’ll need to keep that in mind. Typical visa requests, assuming offices are back to operating under normal hours, would need to be submitted at least 4 months out.

Related Documents:

[Job Posting Form](file:///D:\Desktop\OSE%20Job%20Posting%20Form%20STAFF%20TEMP%20POSTDOC_blank%2010.30.20.pdf)

[Critical Hire Form](https://hr.uga.edu/critical-hire/)

[Interviewer’s Guide](file:///D:\Desktop\WIX%20documents\Interviewer_Inquiry_Guide.pdf)

[Hiring Proposal Form](https://ugeorgia.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_exJ9rVqVHP5elwO)

[Offer Letter Template](https://research.uga.edu/opa/#1494870964300-ff8c4eba-a84b) – OPA website, Forms & Tools at bottom of page.

OPA Hiring Proposal Form – to be completed by Business Office

**Summary Table of Postdoctoral Position Details**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Postdoctoral Associate AD** | **Postdoctoral Associate AC** |
| BCAT Job Code | 471 | 206 |
| Description | Employee; research only duties | Employee; research and instruction (Instructor of Record) |
| Term | 5 years max | 5 years max |
| Compensation | Salary | Salary |
| Required Minimum | $47,476 (100% EFT) | $47,476 (100% EFT) |
| Income Tax Owed | Yes | Yes |
| Income Tax Withheld | Yes | Yes |
| UGA MyID | Required | Required |
| UGA Card | Required | Required |
| UGA Parking Eligible | Yes | Yes |
| UGA Services | Yes | Yes |
| Background Investigation | Required | Required |
| Right-to-Know Training | Required | Required |
| Lab Safety Training | Required | Required |
| Retirement Benefits | TRS or ORP (with employer match) | TRS or ORP (with employer match) |
| Health Insurance | Employee | Employee |
| Annual Leave | 10 hours/month | 10 hours/month (unless on academic payroll) |
| Sick Leave | 8 hours/month | 8 hours/month |
| Who do I work with? | Mica Turner | Leslie Sitz |
| When should I start the process? | as soon as possible | at least 4 months in advance |
| What if international? | Start at least 6 months in advance | Start at least 6 months in advance |
|  |  |  |

**Postdoc FAQs**

**Where can I find the postdoctoral policy and other postdoc-related documents, form and templates?**

The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs webpage (<https://research.uga.edu/opa/>) contains links to the Policy for Postdoctoral Appointments and other postdoc-related information under “Documents” at the bottom of the page.

Other postdoc-related documents on the OPA webpage include the offer letter templates, mid-year salary increase request form, hiring proposal cover form, this guide and others. Links to these documents can also be found on the main Office of Research Forms and Policies page (<https://research.uga.edu/documents/>) under “Postdoctoral Affairs”.

Prospective and current postdoctoral scholars can visit the Postdoc Portal (<https://postdocs.uga.edu/>) to find information and resources that will enhance the postdoctoral experience at UGA. Unit Administrators can also link back to the OPA webpage from the home page of the Postdoc Portal. NOTE: All UGA postdocs are automatically signed up to the UGA Postdoc Listserv by the OPA.

**What documents serve as “Evidence of Degree”?**

Postdocs are required to have a terminal degree in their field and hiring units must show evidence that the candidate for the postdoc position has received the degree. The evidence of degree does not need to be official transcripts as long as the postdoc BCAT is 471.

The 206 Postdoc Associate AC - Research and Teaching - postdocs DO require official transcripts since they will teach as Instructor of Record. In the case of the 206 postdocs, the official transcripts must be sent directly to the Office of Faculty Affairs. See the [appointment guide](https://14bqfg1p3mjhh4zo036hhmx1-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/documents/wp-content/uploads/sites/28/2019/06/PostdocUGAJobsApptProcedures.pdf) for full details on this.

For BCAT 471 the evidence of degree can be

1) copies/scans of transcripts that show the degree conference date;

2) an official letter from the major professor, grad school or other official at the institution stating all requirements were completed for the degree and on what date;

3) the defense “grade sheet” or other document that shows or certifies that the defense was passed and on what date. If the defense grade sheet is used and shows “pass with revisions”, then the sheet must be accompanied by verification that the revisions were submitted and accepted. Also, if this documentation is used, then the defense must have completed all outstanding requirements for the degree.

**Postdocs are required to have a terminal degree. Can the hiring unit give an offer and process the Hiring Proposal before a candidate completes all the degree requirements?**

If a candidate still needs to defend and/or complete other requirements then OPA has steps in place to help with extending an offer and processing the Hiring Proposal (HP):

1. Email our office at [opa@uga.edu](mailto:opa@uga.edu) with the candidate’s defense date and the target start date. The

defense date must be prior to the start date.

2. Then you can start the process as normal to appoint the postdoc.

3. The offer letter to the person must state “This offer is for a \_\_\_ year full-time appointment at an

annual salary of $\_\_\_\_\_\_ with a start date as early as \_\_\_\_\_ and is contingent on the successful completion of your \_\_\_\_ (Ph.D.) degree and upon completion of a background investigation demonstrating your eligibility for employment.”

4. When you submit the HP include the email communications with our office in lieu of the evidence of

degree in the HP documents.

5. Please also list in the Comments section in the HP the date the postdoc will defend.

6. Our office will review and approve the HP and make note that the evidence of degree is needed by

the start date.

7. When the evidence of degree is available after the defense date please send that to our office for the

postdoc’s file.

a. The evidence of degree can be an official letter from the major professor, grad school or other

official at the institution, the defense “grade sheet” or other document that shows or certifies that the defense was passed.

b. If the defense grade sheet shows “pass with revisions” then the grade sheet must be

accompanied by an official letter stating that the revisions were submitted and accepted.

**Our unit needs a current research-only postdoc to teach a class. How do I appoint an existing Postdoctoral Associate AD (research only) to a Postdoctoral Associate AC (research and teaching as Instructor of Record)? Remember to work with Leslie Sitz on this appointment.**

Normally, this would require a new position, posting and HP. However, this transition can now occur via an Evaluate action in UGAJobs. There are still some requirements that must be met. Please see the steps below.

1. Use the Evaluate action to change the BCAT of the postdoc from 471 to 206.

2. According to HR and the Critical Hire FAQs, since this is a changing of BCAT/title change and is adding

the duty of teaching **a Critical Hire approval is required**. The final approval documentation must

be uploaded with the Evaluate action.

3. Upload the required documents to appoint to this position to the Evaluate action:

a. Critical Hire final approval documentation

b. Postdoc HP Cover Form (Appointments to research and teaching/Postdoc Associate AC

positions must be signed by the Dept Head and Dean, as applicable to the college)

c. Offer letter with signed acceptance.

d. Updated CV

e. Official transcripts – these are to be sent directly to the Office of Faculty Affairs, preferably via

[ofatranscripts@uga.edu](mailto:ofatranscripts@uga.edu). Contact OFA if you have questions about this requirement.

4. Send the Evaluate action to the college level (if applicable) and then send to Office of Postdoc Affairs

(as the “Sponsored Office”). Office of Postdoc Affairs will review and then send to Office of

Faculty Affairs for review.

5. Important: Evaluate requests to reclassify a current Postdoc Associate AD (research only) position to a

Postdoctoral Associate AC (research and teaching) position should reach the Sponsored Office

workflow stop in UGAJobs at least 15 days prior to the effective start date of the new position.

This deadline will allow ample time for the position evaluation request to be fully approved in

UGAJobs prior to the start date of the new position. Please note, a Postdoctoral Associate AC

(Postdoctoral Research & Teaching Associate) must not teach, nor have any student contact, in

person or online until the position evaluation is fully approved in UGAJobs.

6. Follow the Instructor of Record Credentialing process for postdocs (Banner Load Request). Contact

OFA if you have any questions on that process. Note: For Ecology, contact the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

**Can I appoint a postdoc part-time?**

At this time, UGA postdocs are required to be 100% time.

**What are the salary requirements to appoint a postdoc?**

As of January 2021, Postdoctoral Associates, administered through UGA, must be compensated a minimum annual salary of $47,476.

In some disciplines, external funding agencies provide salary guidance that suggests higher minimum stipends and in those cases, our recommendation follows that guidance (e.g., in the biological sciences, the National Institutes of Health publishes guidelines).

**Before an offer is extended to a postdoc candidate, the unit should send the draft offer letter to** [opa@uga.edu](mailto:opa@uga.edu) **for review** (see the [postdoc appointment guide for full details](https://14bqfg1p3mjhh4zo036hhmx1-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/documents/wp-content/uploads/sites/28/2019/06/PostdocUGAJobsApptProcedures.pdf)). If the offered salary is 10% above the corresponding level on the NIH NRSA Postdoc Stipend Levels scale for the candidate’s years of experience, then a salary justification must accompany the offer letter draft. (The NIH NRSA stipend levels are subject to change by fiscal year. Check that you are using the most current scale.)

**Can I give my postdoc a mid-year salary increase?**

Mid-year salary increase requests can be considered, but are not guaranteed to be approved. The research mentor/supervisor should complete the required mid-year increase request form, obtain appropriate approvals through the unit reporting hierarchy and then submit the form to the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs via email to [opa@uga.edu](mailto:opa@uga.edu). UGA postdocs are considered staff and are subject to the UGA annual budget and salary guidelines for annual merit raises.

**My postdoc is nearing the end of their 5 year appointment. May I continue them on payroll?**

The maximum term of appointment for a postdoctoral appointee at this institution is five years. This limit is based on federal guidelines and the tenet that postdoctoral appointments are primarily for training, which has a natural duration. The term refers to the total, cumulative time spent at UGA as a postdoctoral appointee and does not include time spent at the University as an undergraduate or graduate student or as a postdoctoral appointee at other institutions. However, strong justification will be required if five years at UGA exceeds ten total years of postdoctoral training. The five-year term limit may be interrupted for extended medical or family leaves. Exceptions to the five-year term limit will be considered by Office of Postdoctoral Affairs; *these are expected to be rare, are restricted to up to one additional year and will be approved only in cases with strong justification based on the need to complete additional training and not to complete additional work*.

Appointing units should ensure that postdoctoral appointees do not exceed the five-year term limit. Office of Postdoctoral Affairs will periodically review postdoctoral appointments to ensure compliance. If the maximum term of appointment is reached, an appointee must be moved into an established position or separated with a minimum ninety-day notice, starting the process with your unit at least 6 months in advance as your unit is required to work with UGA-HR to ensure good faith efforts.

Established positions that may be appropriate after a five-year postdoctoral appointment include:

•Senior Research Associate – this staff position is the most appropriate for a postdoctoral scholar who remains with the same research group beyond the five-year training period. With appropriate permission, Senior Research Associates may act as Principal Investigators in submitting proposals for research funding.

•Assistant Research Scientist – this non-tenure-track research faculty position is analogous to the assistant professor position; appointment requires approval by unit faculty (<http://research.uga.edu/docs/policies/research/Research-Scientist-Appointment-Promotion.pdf>). Note that Assistant Research Scientists are appointed within units (e.g., departments, schools, centers, institutes), not within research groups. Appointment to these positions should be reserved for those postdoctoral appointees who are on a trajectory for independent accomplishment. Standard advancement within a research group would usually involve appointment as a Senior Research Associate (above).

•Lecturer/Instructor – Postdoctoral appointees may be appointed to one of these non-tenure-track faculty positions should they wish to pursue an academic teaching career. Lecturers and Instructors are appointed within units following standard faculty search and appointment procedures.

In Ecology, if you desire a move to a faculty line you are requested to present your proposal to the Dean well in advance. The Dean will review the request with Associate Deans and, potentially, the OPA and make a recommendation following. So long as the critical hire process is active at UGA, all current positions that ‘move’ to a new position will be subject to the critical hire process and will take additional time to process.