

Krieger School of Arts and Sciences and Whiting School of Engineering

Homewood Postdoctoral Fellows

Appointment Adjustments, Renewal, Probation, and Termination Policy

(Effective June 1, 2015)

The Krieger School of Arts and Sciences (“KSAS”) and the Whiting School of Engineering (“WSE”) full-time programs, centers and institutes establish the following policy for appointment renewals, adjustments and/or terminations for postdoctoral fellows (collectively referred to as “ASEN postdoctoral fellows”). This Policy addresses the procedures regarding the renewals or adjustments of postdoctoral fellow appointments; as well as the consequences of ASEN postdoctoral fellow underperformance, including probation and termination. This policy applies to all new and continuing ASEN postdoctoral fellows but does not apply to postdoctoral fellows in the Sheridan Libraries, Carnegie Institute, or any other non-KSAS/WSE division.

I. Postdoctoral Fellow Appointment Adjustments

ASEN postdoctoral fellows must be notified in writing (by electronic or first-class mail) by their PI/Advisor of any changes in appointment length or funding changes with as much advance notice as possible. If changes are due to performance issues, the postdoctoral fellow must be placed on probation before any changes may be implemented (see Section III below). Section IV (Fellowship Termination Notification) provides guidelines for appointment termination.

II. Postdoctoral Fellow Renewal

ASEN postdoctoral fellows must be notified in writing (by electronic or first-class mail) by their PI/Advisor of any appointment renewal or non-renewal at least three months in advance of their appointment end date. Given that funding scenarios can be uncertain, it is assumed that any declared intent of renewal is contingent upon available funding and has been made in good faith.

III. Postdoctoral Fellow Probation

If it is determined that a postdoctoral fellow has failed to meet the performance requirements as dictated by his/her PI/Advisor, he/she may be placed on probation. The notification that the postdoctoral fellow is to be placed on probation must be in writing (by electronic or first-class mail) by the PI/Advisor. Prior to such notification, the postdoctoral fellow and his/her PI/Advisor must meet to discuss the matter. A postdoctoral fellow may be placed on probation at any time during his/her

appointment. The probation period must span at least 4 weeks before a final decision can be made. PI/Advisors are at liberty to provide a longer probationary period.

The probation letter should:

- 1) outline the postdoctoral fellow's performance shortcomings;
- 2) indicate the corrective measures necessary to remain employed (this can include concrete deliverables);
- 3) state the length of the postdoctoral fellow's probationary period;
- 4) indicate clearly that (except in specific situations) the postdoctoral fellow will continue to be paid as per the original appointment letter for the length of the probation period;
- 5) set a date at the midway mark of the probation period to review (in a meeting, if possible) the postdoctoral fellow's progress and provide feedback;
- 6) set a second date within one week of the end of the initial probation period to review (in a meeting, if possible) the postdoctoral fellow's progress and to determine next steps.

A copy of the written probation notice should be forwarded to the office of the cognizant Dean (the Vice Dean for Science and Research in the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences or the Vice Dean for Education in the Whiting School of Engineering) as well as to the Office of International Student, Faculty, and Staff Services (OIS) when appropriate.

While on probation, the postdoctoral fellow retains his/her pay and benefits, and his/her visa status will not be affected until the probation process is complete.

IV. Postdoctoral Fellow Probation Appeal Process

A postdoctoral fellow may appeal the probation notice within five business days in writing (electronic or first-class mail) to the PI/Advisor stating why he/she feels this decision is unmerited. If the postdoctoral fellow does not receive a response (with an updated or reiterated decision) from the PI/Advisor within five business days of sending the appeal, or if the postdoctoral fellow disagrees with the final decision, he/she may then advance the appeal in writing within five business days to the cognizant Vice Dean—stating why he/she feels this decision is unmerited. Pending the appeal, the probation remains in place. The Vice Dean will make every effort to render a prompt decision upon receipt of the communication requesting the advanced appeal. This is the sole process for review of decisions denying probation. Throughout the appeal process, the postdoctoral fellow retains his/her pay and benefits. The postdoctoral fellow's visa status will not be affected until the appeal process is complete and a final decision is rendered.

V. Postdoctoral Fellow Probation Final Decision Process

Within one week following the conclusion of the stated probationary period, the PI/Advisor must inform the postdoctoral fellow in writing of his/her status based on whether he/she has met the requirements as stated in the probation letter.

The options are as follows:

- 1) remove the postdoctoral fellow from probation,
- 2) extend the probationary period, or
- 3) terminate the postdoctoral fellowship.

VI. Fellowship Termination Notification

If the PI/Advisor's decision is to terminate the fellowship, the postdoctoral fellow must be notified in writing (electronic or first-class mail), and such notification must cite the reason for termination. If possible, prior to such notification, a meeting between the postdoctoral fellow and his/her PI/Advisor should be scheduled. The terminated postdoctoral fellow should be offered at least four weeks of paid employment to conclude experiments and/or other facets of the fellowship. If the fellow declines this offer, his/her funding will cease at the end of one week.

A copy of the termination notice should be forwarded to the cognizant Dean and the Office of International Services (OIS) when appropriate.

VII. Termination without Probation

A postdoctoral fellow may be terminated without a formal probation period under two circumstances: (1) if he/she is found to have egregiously disregarded his/her research duties, or (2) if he/she has committed research misconduct and termination is deemed the appropriate sanction resulting from deliberations as outlined in the KSAS Policy on Integrity in Research or the WSE Procedures for Dealing with Issues of Research Misconduct.

Under these circumstances, programs are expected to follow the same procedures for termination as cited above (in Section VI). In addition, postdoctoral fellows are also subject to immediate dismissal (termination) on non-academic grounds in accordance with applicable policies at http://webapps.jhu.edu/jhuniverse/administration/minutes_policies_reports/policies/.

VIII. Termination Appeal Procedures

A postdoctoral fellow may appeal the termination decision in writing (by electronic or first-class mail) within five business days of receipt of the termination letter to the PI/Advisor, stating why he/she feels this decision is unmerited. If the postdoctoral fellow does not receive a response (with an updated or reiterated decision) from the PI/Advisor within five business days, or disagrees with the decision received, he/she may then advance the appeal within five business days to the cognizant Dean. The communication to the Dean should be in writing and should state why he/she feels this decision is unmerited. The Dean will make every effort to render a prompt decision upon receipt of the communication requesting the advanced appeal. In the case of pending funding withdrawal, the PI/Advisor will continue to fund the postdoctoral fellow during the appeal process, provided that the postdoctoral fellow continues with his/her duties. The postdoctoral fellow's visa status will not be affected until the appeal process is complete. If the postdoctoral fellow believes the decision was made in an arbitrary or capricious manner, he/she may file a grievance following the Homewood Grievance Policy (see http://www.grad.jhu.edu/downloads/HwGrievancePolicy_Final.pdf).