

THE DOWNLOAD:

Your New Career & Professional Development Rights as a UC POSTDOC



As postdocs, we are always looking to develop our professional skills and reach the next step in our careers. Our union and contract provide invaluable service in this regard by stabilizing our working conditions so that we can focus on research, build our professional networks, and find our next jobs. With our contract we achieved guaranteed salary minima and annual increases, stable health care and other benefits, and greater rights including maternity and parental leave, health and safety protections, job security, protection from non-discrimination, protection from unjust termination, and more — all of these help provide stability and security so we can move our research and careers forward.

Additionally, the union and its network of leaders on every campus (and former leaders who have gone on to careers in the academy, industry, government, and advocacy work) provide a great support group and set of relationships to help build our careers. The union and the contract also offer important help for career and professional development through the rights delineated in the articles listed below:

Individual Development Plans (Article 9)

An Individual Development Plan (IDP) is a planning process that identifies goals for your research, professional development, and career and engages your mentor to help you work toward these objectives. If you decide to do an IDP, your mentor must participate meaningfully in the process with you. See the union's website (www.UAW5810.org) for an IDP template that many postdocs find useful.

Progress Assessments (Article 9)

Progress Assessments are evaluations by the PI or mentor of a postdoc's progress and accomplishments. At the start of an appointment, the PI or mentor must first communicate expectations for that year (in writing if requested by the postdoc). Periodically throughout the appointment the PI or mentor must communicate how well the postdoc is meeting the initial expectations. The PI or mentor also provides the postdoc with a written Annual Review. This

is a comprehensive assessment of the postdoc's research progress and achievements and her/his professional development during the previous year.

Professional Development and Career Counseling (Article 20)

UC must continue to provide at least the same level of career counseling programs and professional development lectures/workshops specific to the needs of postdocs as they did at the time the contract was ratified. UC is encouraged to improve these resources and the union works with them to do so. Contact the union if you have ideas for improvement.

Training (Article 26)

UC must provide paid time for and pay any fees associated with attending required training, workshops, and courses necessary to perform duties you are assigned as a postdoc.

Travel Reimbursement (Article 27)

UC must reimburse all authorized expenses you incur during research-required travel, including travel for research and attendance at conferences, workshops and University events or courses. Additionally, UC may provide travel reimbursement for any of these purposes that are not required by the PI but may further the postdoc's professional development. UC may not unreasonably deny requests for discretionary travel funding.

Contact the union to learn more about using the contract to help your career move forward or to meet other current and past Postdocs in your field.