

OUHSC Graduate College
Office of Postdoctoral Affairs

Institutional plan for tracking career outcomes of former Postdoctoral Research Fellows.

The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs, housed within the Graduate College at The University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center (OUHSC), partners with the Office of Institutional Research at OUHSC to maintain a database of current and former postdoctoral fellows.

The Graduate College appreciates the need for mentors, programs, funders and prospective postdoctoral fellows to learn how effective our postdoctoral training has been in preparing postdocs to follow the career path of their choice. Our Tracking Plan extends for 10 years after a Postdoctoral Fellow has left their postdoc position.

Basic data are provided by the OUHSC Office of Institutional Research. This includes previous education, ethnicity, job title, mentor, Department or Program and dates of appointment. Postdoctoral appointments on this campus are for no longer than 5 years, after which the training period is considered complete and the person moves to a career position.

When a fellow leaves their postdoctoral position, we ask them to fill in an Exit Poll (Qualtrics). The poll asks for a “permanent” email address and an alternate email address. We request an ORCID ID which will help us track publications and we ask for social media contact information (LinkedIn, ResearchGate, Twitter, etc). We invite them to join the OU Alumni Association. In addition to benefits of membership, the Alumni office maintains a curated database of current information on members.

The Exit Poll includes a request to upload a CV, Biosketch or Resumé – as well as providing information, it shows us how they are listed as authors which will help us find later publications. If they do not wish to upload the CV, we ask about their contributions while they were a postdoc – how many publications, how many presentations at national meetings, and whether they received an independent Fellowship or a Training Grant position.

We ask if they held previous postdoctoral positions before their OUHSC postdoctoral fellowship. We ask what position they are moving to and its location.

Of course, provision of this information is voluntary; a well-recognized challenge for all institutions.

The most critical part of our plan is to contact each former postdoc every two years asking for their current employment and updates to publications, awards etc. We are coordinating with the Alumni Association Office so that duplicate requests are not sent out. If we do not have a working email address we will use social media. If there is no response, we ask the former mentor if they have information they can share. Online searches such as PubMed, Google and grants databases are often productive. The OUHSC Office of Institutional Research assists with storage and retrieval of information.