

Postdoctoral Affairs Office 2024 Annual Report

Letter from the Associate Dean for Postdoctoral Affairs

It is my pleasure to present the 2025 Annual Report for the Postdoctoral Affairs Office (PDO) at UT Southwestern. Over the past academic year—from Fall 2023 through Summer 2024—we have worked tirelessly to elevate the postdoctoral experience through innovative programs, expanded resources, and strengthened community connections. Our collective efforts have not only supported scholars in their current research endeavors but also prepared them for diverse career pathways beyond the bench. As we look ahead, we remain committed to fostering an environment where every postdoctoral scholar feels empowered, recognized, and equipped for success.



Mission, Vision & Value Proposition

Mission: The mission of the Postdoctoral Affairs Office is to support and enhance the development and experience of the postdoctoral scholar community at UT Southwestern, including their faculty mentors and departmental partners. We contribute to the university’s mission to educate, discover, and heal, promoting health and a healthy society that enables individuals to achieve their full potential.

Vision: We envision and aspire to a community where all postdoctoral scholars are empowered, valued, recognized, and supported in their current endeavors and future goals.

Value Proposition: The PDO serves as a knowledgeable, central resource for postdoctoral scholars, mentors, and departmental partners. We guide scholars through administrative processes, provide certificate training programs, facilitate mentorship and networking, and ultimately enhance the postdoctoral journey and readiness for future careers.

2023–2024 Key Metrics

Metric	Academic Year Total
Postdocs Hired	198
Postdocs Departed	172
Average Enrollment per Semester	540
Courses Offered	76
Total Course Enrollments	3,027
Postdoctoral Training Certificates Awarded	171



Professional Development

- Monthly New Postdoc Orientation sessions ensured informative onboarding and community building.
- Hosted three F32 and K99 grant information sessions, empowering scholars with competitive funding insights.
- Launched the Future Faculty Fridays series to prepare postdocs to apply for faculty positions.
- Continued Lunch & Launch small-group career advising events, facilitating small-group guidance.

Awards

- Awarded the 2024 Brown-Goldstein Award for Excellence in Postdoctoral Research to Simon Lebek, M.D.
 - Awarded a Dean's Discretionary Award to Sabareesan Thody, Ph.D.
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Recruitment & Outreach Initiatives



- Migrated our postdoc website to a refreshed platform and updated the ad template for consistency.
 - Implemented a QR code linked to an interest form, increasing lead capture at events.
 - Introduced a transitional scholar job title to recognize displaced or returning postdocs.
 - Revamped the Postdoc brochure for clarity on benefits, resources, and programming.
 - Represented UT Southwestern as an exhibitor at ASBMB, ASCB, and BMES professional society meetings
 - Hosted a Pathway 2 Postdoc virtual recruiting event, broadening our candidate pool.
 - Delivered Postdoc Training & Benefits presentation to O'Donnell Brain Institute visitors.
 - Updated the Postdoc Handbook with streamlined policies and resource links.
 - Sent welcome emails to all new basic science faculty to introduce the PDO and our resources for faculty.
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Community Building & Events

- Postdoctoral Association (PDA):
 - Hosted 11 Work-in-Progress seminars,
 - Oversaw Travel Award judging resulting in 12 travel awards,
 - Hosted 7 social gatherings and a Townhall.
 - Published 20 Postdoc Informer (PDI) newsletters to highlight opportunities and resources.
 - Collected survey results of postdocs satisfaction and needs
 - Celebrated National Postdoc Appreciation Week 2024 with:
 - A "Choosing a Career Path" talk by Jennifer Heemstra, Ph.D.
 - Presentation of the Excellent Mentor Award to Maralice Conacci-Sorrell, Ph.D.
 - Breakfast with Champions networking breakfast
 - Postdoc Research Symposium with keynote Scott Lowe, Ph.D., and poster presentations
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Partnerships & Governance

- Convened a meeting of the Postdoc Advisory Committee in May 2024 to provide updates and receive feedback on initiatives
 - Organized quarterly meetings with peer Postdoctoral Affairs offices across Texas to share best practices.
 - Contributed to the 6-year strategic plan outlining goals for postdoc recruitment, professional development, and community engagement.
 - Launched updated Graduate School Information (GSIS) database for tracking postdocs and alumni.
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Outlook & Goals for 2025

- Develop Interfolio system for postdoc position advertising to broaden candidate pool and easier application process
 - Enhance assessments of postdoc competencies
 - Pilot a mentorship matching platform to streamline mentor–mentee connections
 - Strengthening collaborations with external industry partners for professional development
 - Incorporate action items from the 6-year strategic plan, such as training in Artificial Intelligence to enhance research
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Postdoctoral Affairs Office

SGSPostdocOffice@UTSouthwestern.edu

<https://www.utsouthwestern.edu/research/postdoctoral-scholars/>



Deirdre Brekken, Ph.D.

Associate Dean for Postdoctoral Affairs

Deirdre.Brekken@UTSouthwestern.edu



Daria Clark

Program Coordinator

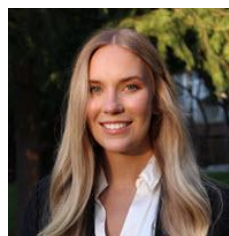
Daria.Clark@UTSouthwestern.edu



Rebekah Craig, M.P.H., CRA

Director of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs

Rebekah.Craig@UTSouthwestern.edu



Kendall Garms

Program Coordinator

Kendall.Garms@UTSouthwestern.edu