



# **Handbook for Postdoctoral Scholars at UT Southwestern**

**Postdoctoral Affairs Office  
UT Southwestern Medical Center**

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[www.utsouthwestern.edu/Postdocs](http://www.utsouthwestern.edu/Postdocs)

**UTSouthwestern™**  
Graduate School of  
Biomedical Sciences

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I welcome you to UT Southwestern Medical Center and if you are a potential postdoctoral scholar, I hope you will decide to join us here for your postdoctoral training!

UT Southwestern is committed to its strong postdoctoral training program. We recognize you as crucial participants in keeping UT Southwestern at the forefront of biomedical research. As one of the world's foremost research institutions, UT Southwestern fosters collaborative multidisciplinary research and rigorous scientific training in both basic and clinical research. UT Southwestern is recognized for its world-class faculty, including Nobel Laureates, members of the National Academy of Sciences, members of the National Academy of Medicine, Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigators, and a Shaw Prize recipient. The faculty research interests are diverse and comprehensive at UT Southwestern.

The Postdoctoral Affairs Office is here to assist with the appointment and training of almost 600 Postdoctoral Scholars in ~40 departments/centers. We work closely with the International Affairs Office since over 70% of our postdoctoral scholars are visa-holders. We also support the Postdoctoral Association (PDA) which publishes an electronic newsletter as well as hosting events to develop a sense of community, provide career development opportunities, and ease the transition of new, particularly international postdoctoral scholars. We have developed a Postdoctoral Certificate Training Program with the goal to provide a structured program to aid the transition of each trainee to career independence through the development of core competencies in professional and research skills.

We strive to meet the "best practices" identified by the National Postdoctoral Association in terms of offering competitive pay, excellent medical and retirement benefits, fitness and recreation participation opportunities at the Bryan Williams, M.D. Student Center, and access to career and professional development services.

The Postdoctoral Affairs Office has developed this handbook to help familiarize you with the policies and resources available to postdoctoral scholars at UT Southwestern and in the Dallas area. I hope that you will take full advantage of the opportunities available here to make impactful discoveries both in your research field and in your own personal experiences. We look forward to your contributions to our university mission to integrate pioneering biomedical research with exceptional clinical care and education.

Best wishes!



Deirdre Brekken, Ph.D.

Associate Dean for Postdoctoral Affairs

## POSTDOCTORAL TRAINING AT UT SOUTHWESTERN

A postdoctoral appointment is offered to an individual who has recently been awarded a Ph.D. or equivalent doctorate in an appropriate field and who will be involved in full-time research. The purpose of this appointment is to prepare the individual for a career as an academic or research scientist or other position requiring advanced knowledge and training in a scientific discipline. The postdoctoral scholar is supervised by a faculty member and has the freedom to and is expected to publish the results of their research during the period of appointment. This definition of the postdoctoral scholar closely follows recommendations from the American Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC). Time in postdoctoral training at UT Southwestern, combined with postdoctoral research from other institutions, is limited to six years.

### **Why UT Southwestern?**

You have a lot to consider. We have a lot to offer.

- World-renowned faculty
- Outstanding and diverse postdoc population
- Groundbreaking biomedical research
- Collaborative, cross-disciplinary environment
- Cutting-edge resources
- Innovative approach to postdoctoral training
- Dedicated, full-time career and professional development staff
- Competitive salary, benefits, and low cost of living
- Great city to call home

## APPOINTMENT PROCESS

### FINDING A POSTDOC POSITION

You may find postdoctoral training opportunities posted at <https://www.utsouthwestern.edu/education/graduate-school/postdoctoral-scholars/training/> or email faculty directly with whom you would like to train.

Candidates should have received their doctoral degree within the past 5 years.

### APPLYING FOR A POSTDOC POSITION & RECEIVING AN OFFER

Once a faculty member has decided that they would like to make you an offer to join their lab for your postdoctoral training, you'll be invited to apply for the position through our on-line hiring system. There will be pre-employment paperwork that must be completed within the hiring system once you accept the offer.

If you are offered any relocation expenses, it must be included in your offer letter.

Be aware that your postdoctoral training cannot exceed six years, including previous postdoctoral research at another institution.

### PART-TIME APPOINTMENT

The Postdoctoral Affairs Office may approve part-time postdoctoral scholar appointments for a limited duration. Please direct any questions and requests regarding part-time appointment to the Postdoctoral Affairs Office.

## OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT/ACTIVITIES

A postdoctoral scholar is generally prohibited from accepting outside employment during his or her appointment. Requests to accept outside employment must first be approved by the individual's postdoctoral mentor, the department chair/center director, and the Dean of the Graduate School or his/her designee. The Office of International Affairs must approve the request if the postdoc is a visa-holder. Any postdoctoral scholar that receives approval to accept outside employment must then adhere to all applicable UT Southwestern and UT System policies, including but not limited to **EMP-158 Outside Activities (Including Outside Employment or Board Service)**, **ETH-104 Conflicts of Interest, Conflicts of Commitment, and Outside Activities**, **FSS-601 International Employees, Interns, and Trainees**, and **RES-401 Financial Conflicts of Interest in Research, Disclosure, Management, and Reporting**. Information can be found at <https://www.utsouthwestern.edu/research/research-support/conflict-of-interest/oe-checklist.html>.

## VISAS AND THE OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

If you are offered a postdoctoral position at UT Southwestern Medical Center and need a visa to enter the United States, the **Office of International Affairs** will work with you and the inviting department to identify and secure appropriate visa classification.

The nature of your UT Southwestern activities as well as your prior U.S. immigration status, long-term professional goals, and institutional policy will be considered in determining the appropriate visa classification for you. The **Office of International Affairs** will contact you with detailed instructions and is available to answer your questions throughout the visa process.

## EDUCATION CREDENTIAL EVALUATION

To be appointed as a postdoctoral scholar at UT Southwestern, candidates with foreign doctoral degrees must provide an Education Credential Evaluation, regardless of the type of visa for which the candidate is applying. The International Affairs Office website lists **recommended private companies** who are authorized by the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services to provide evaluations of foreign educational degrees.

You will not be eligible to begin your postdoctoral training until your foreign degree evaluation is received and states that you have the equivalent of a US doctoral degree.

## ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

UT Southwestern Medical Center postdoctoral scholars whose native language or language of instruction is not English may participate in English as a Second Language classes. If interested, contact the **International Affairs Office**.

## CLASSIFICATIONS

There are currently three categories of postdoctoral scholars. It is important to know your category for tax and benefit planning purposes:

- Postdoctoral Researcher
  - Paid fully by UT Southwestern (typically by your mentor's research grant or your own fellowship that is paid through UTSW)
  - Academic Training Position employee of UTSW
  - Eligible for UTSW employee benefits if full time, but benefits eligibility depends on percent of employment if part time
- Fully Paid-Direct Postdoctoral Research Fellow

- 100% funded by an entity which is not UT Southwestern (such as Howard Hughes Medical Institute, Texas Health Resources, or a foreign institution or funding agency)
- Not an employee of UTSW
- Not eligible for UTSW employee benefits that are dependent on payment of a salary, but can purchase the **Academic Health Plan student insurance**
- Partially Paid-Direct Postdoctoral Researcher
  - Paid partially by UTSW and partially by a non-UTSW funding source
  - Percentage of position paid by UTSW determines benefits eligibility

## COMPENSATION

Postdoctoral scholars are paid on the first working day of each month. UT Southwestern pays its postdoctoral scholars in at or above the **NIH Pay Scale** as of the start of the fiscal year (September 1<sup>st</sup>).

## DEPARTMENT/CENTER PAY PLANS

While the minimum pay of our postdoctoral scholars is established by the Graduate School Dean, departments or centers may determine when during the year their postdoctoral scholars receive pay raises. If you have any questions regarding when annual raises occur, please ask your department or center administrator. Some departments or centers offer additional pay for receiving a competitive fellowship, certain publications, or certain skill sets. The amount of additional pay varies by department or center, so be sure to ask the administrator for a copy of the postdoc pay plan for your department or center.

## TAX INFORMATION

***Disclaimer: The tax information below is for information purposes only and does not constitute tax advice. The Office of International Affairs and the Postdoctoral Affairs Office do not provide tax advice of any kind.***

Everyone that earns U.S. income must file an annual tax report, or "income tax return," by the Internal Revenue Service deadline (generally April 15) for January through December of the previous calendar year. Those paid only from a source outside of the U.S. or whose U.S. income is exempt from federal tax under a tax treaty must still file a short tax form by the Internal Revenue Service deadline (generally June 15). The tax you owe is a percentage of the amount of U.S. income you earn. The amount of tax withheld by your U.S. employer is an estimate of the amount you may owe. Completing an annual a tax return allows for adjustments. The federal agency responsible for taxation is the **Internal Revenue Service (IRS)**. Non-residents for tax purposes usually file Form 1040NR or 1040NR-EZ.

## OTHER TAXES

Texas does not have a state income tax and the City and County of Dallas do not impose payroll or income taxes. An 8.25% sales tax applies to most retail purchases, except certain groceries and medicine. Social Security taxes will be withheld from your paycheck unless you are a nonresident exempt from Social Security tax for a specified period.

There is some helpful information provided by the Internal Revenue Service for **all individuals** and for **visa-holders**. There is also a **general guide for international postdocs** provided by the National Postdoctoral Association.

## BENEFITS

UT Southwestern Medical Center offers its employees a broad range of health, insurance, retirement, and leave **benefits**.

## HOLIDAYS, VACATION, AND LEAVE

### HOLIDAYS

The State of Texas Legislature designates **holidays** each fiscal year. The total number of holidays awarded to state employees fluctuates annually because when holidays fall on Saturday or Sunday, they are not observed.

### VACATION AND SICK LEAVE

UT Southwestern employees accrue vacation leave in accordance with the **Vacation Leave** policy. Using vacation leave requires prior approval by your immediate supervisor. The **leave accrual** rates start at 8 hours of vacation per month for a full-time employee. There is a six-month waiting period before a new employee can use accrued vacation time.

UT Southwestern provides sick leave to eligible employees for time away from work for certain reasons. Read the **Sick Leave** policy for more information. There is no wait time to use sick leave, and full-time employees accrue 8 hours a month.

Fully paid direct postdoctoral scholars do not accrue UT Southwestern Vacation and Sick Leave but should track their time off within their department or center.

### FMLA OR PARENTAL LEAVE

**The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)** provides up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave (up to 26 weeks for military caregiver leave) for eligible employees for certain qualifying reasons. You must be employed by the State of Texas for at least 12 months and have worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12-month period immediately preceding the leave to be eligible. Fully paid direct Postdoctoral Fellows are not eligible for FMLA at UT Southwestern.

Employees not eligible for leave for the birth of a child under **The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)** may be eligible for leave under **Parental Leave**. Parental leave provides up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for the birth of a child as well as the adoption or foster care placement of children under three years of age. Parental Leave for birth of child begins on the day of the natural child's birth.

## MEDICAL BENEFITS

An overview of employee benefits can be found [here](#).

The university pays the full medical insurance coverage amount for postdoctoral scholars who are full-time UT Southwestern employees. Eligible Postdoctoral Scholars can add coverage for their spouse and/or any dependents for an additional charge.

Fully Paid-Direct Non-Employee Postdoctoral Research Fellows may purchase UT Southwestern employee insurance with no premium sharing, **Academic Health Plan** medical insurance, or other insurance coverage. Keep in mind that visas may have additional insurance requirements.

### DENTAL, VISION, AND OTHER BENEFITS

UT Southwestern offers **dental plans** and **vision plans** with various limits and deductibles. If you are eligible for these benefits and elect coverage, the premium will be deducted from your pay. **Other benefits** that may be available include short term disability, long term disability, life insurance, accidental death and dismemberment insurance, flexible spending account, and long-term care insurance. Fully Paid-Direct Non-Employee Postdoctoral Research Fellows are eligible for benefits that are not tied to salary, but UT Southwestern will not pay any portion of the premium.



## RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Postdoctoral scholars who are benefits-eligible are required to participate in a **retirement plan**.

### REQUIRED

#### **Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS)**

All benefits-eligible employees at UT Southwestern Medical Center are automatically enrolled in TRS on their first day of employment. Contributions are pre-tax dollars. Employees are fully vested after five years of TRS service credit is attained.

or

#### **Optional Retirement Program (ORP)**

ORP is an alternate mandatory contribution plan available to Postdoctoral scholars who are benefits-eligible UT Southwestern employees that requires irrevocable 'opt out' from TRS within 90 days from appointment date.

### VOLUNTARY

**Voluntary Retirement Programs** are available to all employees of UT Southwestern.

**UT Saver TSA – Internal Revenue Code 403(b)** - Pre- and post-tax investment program. Choose from several financial services companies to supplement your retirement savings.

**UT Saver DCP – Internal Revenue Code 457(b)** - Pre-tax investment program. Choose from several financial services companies to supplement your retirement savings.

## ACADEMIC BENEFITS

### STUDENT CENTER

After enrolling in the Postdoctoral Certificate Training Program, you will have access to **The Bryan Williams, M.D. Student Center** at no charge. **The Bryan Williams, M.D. Student Center** houses fitness and recreation activities, and serves as a place where members can gather, interact, learn, and enjoy a sense of community.

The Student Center facility includes a weight and fitness room, cardio lounge, group fitness/yoga multipurpose room, indoor suspended track, racquetball court, lounge areas, and a gymnasium.

### STUDENT HEALTH/STUDENT WELLNESS AND COUNSELING

As a postdoctoral scholar, you have access to the **Student Health** and **Student Wellness and Counseling** facilities. All visits are confidential and are of little to no cost.

To schedule an appointment with **Student Health**, please call 214-645-8690.

To schedule an appointment with **Student Wellness and Counseling**, please call 214-645-8680.

### STUDENT PARKING

For all parking information, please visit the **parking services website**. **Parking Rates** change every September 1<sup>st</sup>, and there is no free parking at UT Southwestern. As a postdoctoral scholar you may choose to pay for parking in the staff

garages or lots for the staff fee (between \$180 - \$475 a year depending on garage or lot) or student garages or lots for the student fee (~\$120). The [campus map](#) indicates designated student, staff, and faculty parking garages or lots.

## COMPUTER SERVICES

The [Information Resources](#) (IR) department at UT Southwestern Medical Center develops and provides details about information resources and the campus computing environment.

Services available to enrolled postdoctoral scholars are located at this [intranet site](#). The [Research Software Core](#) provides a single site for users to determine which software packages are available to personnel at UT Southwestern Medical Center.

## NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION

New Employee Orientation (NEO), offered by Human Resources, is mandatory and provides employees with valuable information about UT Southwestern, our mission, our vision, and available resources. The Postdoctoral Affairs Office will set up a date for this orientation once you are cleared to start working. You will have additional training sessions to attend after you begin work.

## ID BADGES

UT Southwestern issues [identification badges](#) to new postdoctoral scholars during the onboarding process. This badge will be programmed to identify you and may only be used by you.

## INTRODUCTORY PRESENTATION TO POSTDOCTORAL TRAINING

On the second Friday of every month, the Postdoctoral Affairs Office holds an introductory presentation that is mandatory for all incoming postdoctoral scholars. Here you will learn the about the certificate program, more details on benefits, and other helpful information for your training at UT Southwestern. You will receive email communication with the specific date, time, and location within a couple of weeks of your appointment.

## THREE MONTH REVIEW

At the completion of the first three (3) months of appointment, the postdoctoral mentor shall provide the postdoctoral scholar with a written evaluation that documents research project goals and any need for scholar improvement. Postdoctoral mentors shall utilize the [evaluation form](#) created by the Postdoctoral Affairs Office. A copy of the completed evaluation form, signed by both the postdoctoral mentor and postdoctoral scholar, shall be placed on file in the office of the appropriate department or center.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

### POLICY HANDBOOK

The [Handbook of Institutional Policies and Operating Procedures](#) contains the official policies and guiding principles established for UT Southwestern Medical Center. [Chapter 10](#) of the Policy Handbook contains policies specifically relevant to postdoctoral scholars.

Everyone at UT Southwestern is required to follow the [Standards of Conduct](#).

## AAMC COMPACT

The relationship that you have between you and your mentor is extremely important. The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) created a **document** to facilitate communication for both parties of the mutually beneficial relationship.

## CORE COMPETENCIES

The **National Postdoctoral Association** (NPA) has established **six core competencies** that serve as objectives for effective postdoctoral training.

Some of these competencies you began in your doctoral program. Others you may need to strengthen.

1. Discipline-specific conceptual knowledge
2. Research skill development
3. Communication skills
4. Professionalism
5. Leadership and management skills
6. Responsible conduct of research

## INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (IDP)

You are required to complete an Individual Development Plan (IDP) with your mentor, approximately every two years. This is a great opportunity to have frank discussions about your research and career goals so the both of you understand what is wanted in the future. **Science Careers' myIDP** will help you create your IDP and lead the discussion with your mentor.

## PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES AND SERVICES

### POSTDOCTORAL AFFAIRS OFFICE

The Postdoctoral Affairs Office serves and advocates for postdoctoral scholars, the faculty who train them, and the administrators who assist them. We are located within the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences on the third floor of the C. Kern Wildenthal Research Building, also known as the "NL" building on the **North Campus**.

### FUNCTIONS OF THE POSTDOCTORAL AFFAIRS OFFICE:

- To advocate and provide guidance for postdoctoral scholars
- To develop and implement policy
- To direct the **Postdoctoral Certificate Training Program**
- To promote recruitment of postdoctoral scholars
- To answer your questions: **SGSPostdocOffice@UTSouthwestern.edu**

### POSTDOCTORAL WEBSITES

We have two websites full of information at your disposal. We offer an **external** site that can be accessed anywhere in the world with general information about our program, our office, and living in Dallas.

The other website we have is the **Postdoctoral Resources page** (on intranet) for resources internal to UT Southwestern. This site has resources with answers to the most frequently asked questions.

## POSTDOCTORAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

**Postdoctoral training opportunities** at UT Southwestern can be advertised on our website, with approval of the Postdoctoral Affairs Office, based on their departmental affiliation.

Not all faculty members will post a position even if they anticipate having an opening, so please contact the faculty directly if their research field is of interest to you.

## POSTDOCTORAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES & ASSISTANCE

**Funding opportunities** for postdoctoral scholars of all levels, from those just defending their Ph.D. to those transitioning to their first faculty position, are available. **Video recordings** related to grant writing are available on a campus networked computer.

Copies of several funded grant/fellowship applications and boilerplate text for applications are available to current postdoctoral scholars upon request from the **Postdoctoral Affairs Office**. We also offer grant writing workshops.

## VIDEO RECORDINGS

The Graduate School has collected over 350 **video recordings** of seminars, workshops, panel discussions relating to career development, grant writing, teaching skills, and research techniques topics which can be accessed from a campus-networked computer.

## CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

The UT Southwestern **Graduate School's Career and Professional Development Office** is accessible to all postdoctoral scholars. This office provides resources and opportunities including seminars, workshops, and one-on-one advising appointments, with the goal of helping postdocs identify and develop the practical skills required for a range of science careers, prepare for the academic job search, explore occupations and industries beyond academic research, and assess and reflect upon personal factors including values, strengths, and skills to assist in choosing a career path.

## POSTDOCTORAL ASSOCIATION

The **Postdoctoral Association (PDA)** provides a sense of community through scientific and social interaction, promotes effective training and career development, represents and addresses issues relevant to postdoctoral scholars, and eases the transition for new postdoctoral scholars, including international postdoctoral scholars.

The PDA is managed by an Executive board and is served by committees such as the Career Development, Communication, and Community committees. The PDA:

- publishes a newsletter
- offers travel awards twice a year
- co-sponsors the Postdoctoral Research Symposium
- offers career development seminars and workshops, Green Card seminars, and networking events
- represents the postdoctoral community on the University's Six-year Planning Committee

## NATIONAL POSTDOCTORAL ASSOCIATION

The **National Postdoctoral Association** is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing a “national voice” for postdoctoral scholars. As a postdoctoral scholar at UT Southwestern, you can become an affiliate member of the NPA at no charge. This entitles you to publications and web content to further enhance your postdoctoral and future careers. Once a year, members of the Postdoctoral Affairs Office and Postdoctoral Association attend a national meeting to stay current on events and trends that affect postdoctoral scholars.

The NPA has a great **survival guide** specifically aimed at helping international postdoctoral scholars get acquainted with life here in the United States. It goes over important information such as taxes, healthcare, and differences in lab culture.

## UT SOUTHWESTERN TRAINING AND RESEARCH RESOURCES

### POSTDOCTORAL CERTIFICATE TRAINING PROGRAM

The goal of the **Postdoctoral Certificate Training Program** at UT Southwestern is to provide a structured program that aids the transition to career independence for each postdoctoral scholar through the development of professional and research skills. Every postdoctoral scholar is required to register with the graduate school and enroll in a certificate program throughout their postdoctoral training.

The **Certificate in Research** is to be completed first. Upon completion, a continuing scholar chooses from additional certificate programs, which best suits his or her career goals: Advanced Research, Cancer, or Scientific Management. Guidelines differ for each certificate program. For each certificate, postdoctoral scholars register for three credit hours in the fall and spring terms and two credit hours in the summer term. A total of 15 credit hours are to be fulfilled within two years for completion of every certificate.

## REGISTRATION AND STUDENT STATUS

As a postdoctoral scholar at UT Southwestern, you will be enrolled in courses, many of which are online. Therefore, you will have a permanent transcript from this University. There are many benefits that are given to our postdoctoral scholars for enrolling such as free access to the student center, discounted parking, and access to the student health, wellness, and counselling facilities. There is a week of registration for each of the three semesters per year: Spring, Summer, and Fall.

## SPONSORED PROGRAMS ADMINISTRATION

The **Office of Sponsored Programs Administration (SPA)** helps researchers to obtain and manage fellowship awards that fund scholarly research and other activities. The SPA also provides support for proper stewardship of those resources.

You can **request an eRA Commons user account** from the SPA website. If you are funded by NIH funds, you will need access to **eRA Commons**.

## CORE FACILITIES

UT Southwestern has an impressive array of **core facilities** dedicated to providing the latest equipment and knowledge necessary to assist researchers in their work.

## TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT

The **Office for Technology Development** promotes and supports the research enterprise by creating collaborative relationships with the public and private sectors to develop, protect, transfer, and commercialize research results. The

Office for Technology Development is designated to negotiate those intellectual property terms on behalf of the University.

We are a member of the Blackstone LaunchPad & TechStars Network, the front door to entrepreneurial tools, programs, and resources on UT Southwestern's campus.

## LIBRARY SERVICES

The Health Sciences Digital Library and Learning Center supports the information needs of UT Southwestern's research, educational, and clinical activities. The Library maintains a large collection of electronic journal subscriptions and offers literature search and citation management training; and those are just highlights of the assistance and training offered.

## LIFE ON CAMPUS

### DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Through collaborations with the Office of Student Diversity and Inclusion, the Office of Institutional Equity & Access, the Student Wellness and Counseling Center, the Office of Women's Careers, and the Office of Graduate Career Development, we have developed outstanding resources for postdocs, with a wide array of academic and professional development and community events aimed at supporting, training, mentoring, and celebrating our diverse trainees.

There are several student organizations whose primary focus celebrates diversity, such as the Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics & Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) chapter, Out in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (oSTEM)), and The Association for African American Scientists (TAAAS) as well as others.

### WOMEN IN SCIENCE

The Office of Women's Careers is a division of the Office of Faculty Diversity & Development. Their mission is to promote the recruitment, professional development and career advancement of female faculty and trainees at UT Southwestern.

WISMAC is a UT Southwestern institutional standing committee composed of appointed representatives of the faculty, administration, fellows, and student body. The committee provides advice and initiatives on issues related to women in science and medicine, with the mission to improve UT Southwestern for everyone.

The Alliance of Women Scientists (AWS) is a group of graduate students and postdocs at UTSW, passionate about supporting the advancement of women in STEM. They focus on bringing mentorship from different scientific career paths to our UTSW community.

There are some Work/Life Resources available to help make balancing home and work life a little easier.

### CAMPUS SERVICES

- Campus Dining
- Post Office
- Campus Shuttles
- University Stores
- Pharmacy Services

### SECURITY

The UT Southwestern Medical Center Police Department personnel are available around the clock to serve the community.

Officers are available 24 hours a day, including weekends and holidays, for a personal escort. Officers will walk with anyone to any location on or near campus. To request an escort, call 214-648-8311. Give the dispatcher your name, phone extension you're calling from, and the location where you'd like the officer to contact you.

## NEWS AND MEDIA

UT Southwestern continues a strong tradition of covering its storied mission of excellence in higher education, world-class research, and clinical service via the [Newsroom](#).

Connect with UT Southwestern

- [Twitter](#)
  - [@UTSWnews](#)
  - [@UTSWScience](#)
  - [@UTSWPostdocs](#)
  - [@utswpda](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
  - [Postdoctoral Affairs Office LinkedIn](#)
  - [Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences LinkedIn Group](#)

## INFORMATION ABOUT DALLAS

- UT Southwestern Medical Center is located in [Dallas, Texas](#). Dallas is the ninth largest city in the United States and the third largest in Texas with a population of approximately 1.3 million.
- Dallas, along with its sister city of Fort Worth and the surrounding counties, make up what is called the Dallas/Fort Worth (DFW) Metroplex. According to Wikipedia, the [DFW Metroplex](#) has a population of over six million people.
- Dallas boasts a [pleasant climate](#) with low temperatures ~30 degrees Fahrenheit (~0 degrees Celsius) and highs in the upper 90's degrees Fahrenheit (~35 degrees Celsius).
- Use the [Cost of Living Comparison tool](#) to compare the cost of living between Dallas and another city. According to the Bankrate.com Cost of Living Calculator, an income of \$55,000 in Dallas is equivalent to earnings of \$95,941 in San Francisco, \$80,327 in Boston, \$81,722 in Washington D.C., or \$64,551 in Chicago.
- To get an idea of what Dallas life is like, [Dallas Life](#), [VisitDallas](#), and [DestinationDFW](#) will give you the highpoints.
- Dallas has several different and unique neighborhoods. D Magazine describes the [neighborhoods](#), including a map, so those who are new to Dallas can familiarize themselves with the location of these neighborhoods.

## MOVING TO DALLAS

Plan to arrive in Dallas ready to support yourself with at least two to three months' worth of living expenses. Expect your initial paycheck on the first day of the month [after](#) your start date.

If you are coming from a foreign country, the International Office has assembled helpful information in their ["Getting Settled in Dallas"](#) document.

The Postdoc Office also has information and a sample budget on the ["Before You Start"](#) website.

Your ability to purchase a car or home may depend on your ["credit score"](#).

## HOUSING

- A [survey](#) of the students on campus each year provides information about housing choices, costs, and commute times.

- Apartments
  - Information about off-campus housing can be found at <https://www.utsouthwestern.edu/education/students/campus-services/housing/off-campus-housing.html>.
  - There are also web resources where you can look up communities based on location, and even see how residents rate their experience. UT Southwestern cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information on these websites.
    - [Rent.com](#)
    - [ApartmentRatings.com](#)
    - [DallasApartments.com](#)
- Apartments are typically unfurnished. Although costly, furniture rental services, such as **Cort Furniture Rental**, can help you get started in a new home or apartment. Current trainees are often selling used furniture as they leave. Be sure to budget for the upfront cost of furniture rental or purchase.
- The **Med Park Apartments**, our campus housing, has a few 2-bedroom apartments available for temporary housing. They are completely furnished, including towels, bed linens, and kitchen equipment. All utilities, including telephone, cable television, weekly housekeeping services, and a 24-hour fitness center are included. The **application** can be completed and returned by **Email**.

## TRANSPORTATION

Approximately 25% of the postdocs commute to campus by walking and 65% live within 5 miles of campus. If you do not own a car or use public transportation, you may use ride-sharing services such as **Uber** or **Lyft** for local commuting.

## OPERATING A CAR

Approximately 65% of the postdocs commute to campus by car. The state of Texas will allow you to operate a vehicle with a valid, unexpired driver's license from another state or qualifying country for 90 days after **moving** to Texas. The process to change licenses is a little different than other states in that you have to have proof of Texas Liability Insurance and Texas Registration for each vehicle you own with you when you **apply**. Please be aware that you will also have to have other documents to prove your identity and citizenship status.

The Texas Department of Motor Vehicles allows you 30 days to **register your vehicle** in the state.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

**Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART)** services cities with HOV (high occupancy vehicle) lanes, **trains**, buses, and shuttles. They also have a partnership with **Trinity Railway Express (TRE)** for those commuters traveling to and from Fort Worth. For those who live in Denton County, there is the **A-Train** that will take you to a DART transfer point. Uptown residents can also use the **M-Line Trolleys** to get around the area as well as to DART transfer points.

The **reduced cost, subsidized DART Pass** is available to all full-time UT Southwestern employees and students. These passes can be purchased using payroll deduction on a pre-tax basis. Pending annual agreements with DART, the local pass is about \$300 a year and a regional pass is about \$600 a year.

## BICYCLING

Bicycling is a popular sport in the DFW area and with that come a lot of trails, bicycle lanes, and laws to protect bicyclists. The **Bike Club at UTSW** suggests riding routes to UT Southwestern and hosts group rides.



## ENTERTAINMENT

The Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex is one of the most exciting regions in the country to live in, offering a compelling blend of cultural, recreational, sports, and entertainment activities. You can explore some of these activities on our [Dallas Life website](#).

The Dallas Arts District is located just five miles from campus and regularly features major exhibits at the Nasher Sculpture Center and Dallas Museum of Art, plus theater, musical performances, and national touring shows at the AT&T Performing Arts Center and the Meyerson Symphony Center.

Pro and college sports are practically a religion in Dallas-Fort Worth, headlined by the Dallas Cowboys (NFL), aka “America’s Team,” which plays its home games at AT&T Stadium in Arlington. The Dallas Mavericks (NBA); Texas Rangers (MLB); Dallas Stars (NHL); and FC Dallas (MLS) all have huge followings, too, not to mention the TCU Horned Frogs and SMU Mustangs. Texas Motor Speedway revs up for NASCAR events several times a year, and the PGA and LPGA play multiple events in the area.

Dallas is home to more restaurants per capita than any other major U.S. city – so your options here are limitless. From five-star establishments and great ethnic finds to classic Texas barbecue joints and family-friendly choices, the Metroplex offers a dizzying array of flavors for every palate.

Although most people think of Dallas as a vibrant urban community, it also has plenty of spots for outdoor activity – including the 1,000-acre White Rock Lake and its surrounding park and neighboring arboretum, which offer a perfect setting for picnicking, hiking, biking, sailing, and bird watching. The Katy Trail also offers an attractive and accessible route for runners, walkers, and cyclists. In addition, the Dallas World Aquarium, Dallas Zoo, and Fort Worth Zoo have all earned national accolades. And the Perot Museum of Science and Nature is an architectural masterpiece that will spark wonder and curiosity in children and adults alike. For thrill seekers, there is the Six Flags Over Texas amusement park and Six Flags Hurricane Harbor water park in Arlington. And the historic Texas State Fair (with mascot Big Tex) is held in Dallas every fall.

## SEPARATION PROCESS

For a smooth transition at the **end of your postdoc training**, we recommend these important steps:

1. Meet with your PI. Organize all your reagents, samples, lab notebooks, and data before transferring them to your PI or another lab member.
2. Discuss your plans with the International Affairs Office if you are a visa-holder.
3. Provide a **resignation letter** to your PI, department administrator, the Postdoc Office, and the International Office (if applicable) once you are sure of your final day of work.
4. Review **next steps** to prepare to leave.
5. Get a **printed** or **electronic** copy of your official UTSW transcript.
6. Obtain verification of your employment at UTSW.  
The Work Number verifies employment for those employees who are currently employed or who have worked for UT Southwestern since fall 2013. They can be reached at **www.theworknumber.com** or **800-367-5690**. Our employer code is 13946.
7. Complete the Exit Survey that you receive from the Postdoc Office. This survey has two parts: One to gather information such as future career steps and address, and the second to get a better understanding of your experience while training here at UT Southwestern. The answers to the second part of the survey are completely

confidential. We hope to use your responses collectively to improve our training program for future postdoctoral scholars.

8. Stay in touch. **Connect with us on LinkedIn**, and provide contact information to the **UTSW Alumni Office**.

Ways an appointment can end include:

- A postdoc scholar may resign.
- A mentor may dismiss a postdoc scholar for any reason, with or without cause, with written notice.
- Postdoctoral scholars may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, for violation of standards of conduct in accordance with UT Southwestern's Student Conduct and Discipline policy and procedure.

## GRIEVANCES

A postdoctoral scholar may submit a grievance complaining of actions that affect the postdoctoral scholar/postdoctoral mentor relationship or that alter the terms of conditions of appointment (e.g., duties, job assignments, degree requirements, performance evaluations, progress reviews) in accordance with policy **EDU-602 Grievance Procedures for Postdoctoral Scholars** (on intranet).

## KEEP IN TOUCH!

We would like to know how your career progresses and changes after your postdoctoral experience at UT Southwestern. Keep in touch with us in the following ways:

**Email Us**

**LinkedIn**

**Twitter**