UI Office of the Provost Guidance for Faculty Offer Letters
Sample Text for Required and Optional Elements

The offer letter is a formal document that outlines the terms of appointment between The University of Iowa and a prospective faculty member. Additionally, the offer letter plays an essential role in setting the tone for welcoming a new faculty member, confirming the verbal agreement (between the faculty member and the University), and clarifying the expectations and commitments of both parties. While each college may develop their own unique offer letter language, we offer the following guidance, based on faculty classification, regarding what should be included in this important document. Underlined sections in the chart below are linked to sample text located later in the document for offer letter requirements.

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<tr>
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Updated 6/16/2021
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*applies to appointments 50% or greater

**applies to positions advertised with a Requisition on Jobs@UIOWA

Additional Offer Letter Guidance

- Emeritus Faculty and Temporary Employment: [https://provost.uiowa.edu/human-resources-administration/faculty-hr-administration/faculty-appointment](https://provost.uiowa.edu/human-resources-administration/faculty-hr-administration/faculty-appointment)

- Draft Offer Letter for Overload Teaching: [https://provost.uiowa.edu/extra-compensation-teaching-academic-courses-overload-teaching](https://provost.uiowa.edu/extra-compensation-teaching-academic-courses-overload-teaching)

[Return to chart]
~ Sample Offer Letter Text ~

Start Date, Percentage Effort, Appointment Track, Rank, and Salary

We are delighted to invite you to join our faculty beginning (______). On behalf of the Department of (__________), I am pleased to offer you a (X) % time, appointment as (rank) with a salary of $ (amount). Your initial appointment will be for (______) years beginning on (date). For Research-Track include unless your grant funding ends prior to that date. If that were to happen, your [termination] date will coincide with the end of your funding.

Duties and Responsibilities-

Your duties and responsibilities will include (describe teaching, and service). All faculty members are expected to abide by applicable laws and regulations, as well as University and/or departmental policies and procedures. For Instructional Faculty Track include: Your duties and responsibilities will include (describe teaching and service expectations), which represent XXX% teaching and XXX% service workload allocation (modify effort for administration or other functions, as needed).

Direct Deposit -

As a condition of employment, you will be required to receive all payments by direct deposit. After your appointment begins, you may sign up for direct deposit at the University Employee Self Service web site: (http://hris.uiowa.edu/selfservice).

Extensions –

Extensions to the Probationary Period: University policy states that upon relevant notification, a faculty member’s probationary period shall be automatically extended twelve months per child (up to two children) for “each minor child (e.g., biological, adopted, stepchild, or by guardianship) added to the family of a probationary faculty member from two years prior to the initial appointment through September 1 of the tenure decision year. Extensions for other reasons, including the addition of more than two children may be considered under the Discretionary Extensions provisions (e) (ii). For more information, please see the UI Policy: https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/faculty/tenure-and-non-tenure-appointments.
Terminal Degree –

If you have not received your Ph.D. degree by (start date of appointment), you will be appointed as an Instructor, at a salary of $(amount). Once you have submitted verification from your graduate institution that indicates (1) you have successfully completed all requirements for your Ph.D. and (2) the official date the degree will be conferred, you will be appointed to the rank of Assistant Professor and full salary on a pro-rata basis. If you do not receive your Ph.D. degree by (date), your appointment will not be renewed.

____________________________________________________________________________

Additional Compensation Elements -

Several compensation items may be agreed upon in an offer letter to incentivize acceptance of an appointment and/or successful retention. No payments can be made prior to the employee’s first paycheck and the conditions under which the payment will be received (e.g., distribution dates) must be specified. Please state in the offer letter that “transition payments are considered a taxable employee benefit by the IRS. Therefore, associated federal, state, and FICA taxes will be withheld from your paycheck.”

- Employment Agreement-Signing and Continuance Incentives: The University of Iowa does not pay “signing bonuses,” but does allow that a recruitment package may include an initial lump sum-separate from base salary-to incentivize the acceptance of an offer. Additionally, in certain circumstances, lump sum special compensation may be negotiated for continued quality performance. Continuance payments must be time-limited (e.g., quarterly for the first year; annually for up to (____) years and must be distributed at the end of a specified time frame (e.g., at the end of the quarter, on a specified date each year). Sample offer letter text: “You will receive an additional $30,000 per year for five years as a continuance incentive. Such payments will be made annually on or before the conclusion of the fiscal year beginning in fiscal year 2022, which ends June 30, 2022. Eligibility will depend on your continued good standing as Division Director at the time the payment is made.”

- Employment Agreement-Transition and Relocation: Payment for provisions such as relocation-related travel, housing and lab relocation are allowed. These payments may be warranted to ease the transition of the new faculty member. Sample offer letter text: “In addition to your salary, you will receive a one-time transitional payment of $10,000 within two months after your start date.”

- Employment Agreement-Other: Payments for exceptional business-related expenses (e.g., car allowance).

- Administrative and “At-Will” Language: If a faculty member is being appointed to an administrative role, the offer letter must state “at-will” language and include language about the disposition of the administrative differential should the person conclude administrative service, but remain on the faculty. Sample offer letter text: “This position is considered as “at-will” and
may be renewed at my discretion. Should this administrative role end and you remain on the faculty, the administrative differential will revert to the department and your salary will be reduced by that amount.”

- **Tuition Reimbursement:** If tuition for a course of study is part of the offer (e.g., MBA program), it should be included in the letter accompanied by any contingencies or constraints. Reimbursement is made after verification of satisfactory completion of each course is provided. Such payments are taxable income for the faculty member. Sample offer letter text: “You will receive tuition reimbursement for the completion of a MBA program through an accredited college or university. You are required to fulfill usual teaching obligations and the degree must be completed within three years. Additionally, you are required to make a three-year post-degree employment commitment to the College of (__________).”

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**Research Expectations** -

We expect faculty members to develop a research program, which is recognized at the national level and has an important impact on the field, and we offer resources that will permit such a result. You will be provided an office equipped with (__________________). As a faculty member in the Department of (__________), you will receive annual research development funding, currently $(_amount_) per year. In addition, you will be given a one-time start-up funding support package composed of the following: (______________________).

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**Research Survey –**

The Office of the Vice President for Research provides researchers, scholars, and creative artists with the resources, guidance, and inspiration they need to secure funding, collaborate, innovate, advance understanding, and forge frontiers of discovery that benefit Iowa and the world. Learn more about the service units available to support your research, scholarship, and creative activities [here](#).

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**Joint, Secondary, and Tertiary Appointments** -

On behalf of the Department of (__________), College of (__________), and the Department of (__________), College of (__________), we are pleased to offer you a (X) %, (track), joint appointment as a (an) (rank). The appointment is split (X) % in (primary department name), your primary department, and (X) % in (secondary department name). The initial term of the appointment is for (X) years beginning (date). The (academic or fiscal) year the appointment carries a salary of $(amount), (X) % provided by the Department of (primary department name) and (X) % provided by the Department of (secondary department name), plus a generous benefit package described below.
Soon after your arrival, we will arrange a meeting with both your departments to determine the roles and procedures to be followed during your annual and promotional reviews.

See https://provost.uiowa.edu/human-resources-administration/faculty-hr-administration/faculty-promotion. You will be considered for reappointment during the (____) year of your initial (____)-year contract as a (an) (rank). The term of renewal may be one to three years. Faculty members in our departments are normally expected to teach (____) courses per year. Because of the terms of your joint appointment in the Department of (primary department name), you will teach (____) course(s) per year in that Department and (_____ ) course(s) in the Department of (secondary department name).

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Moving Expenses -

The College will provide up to $xxx of relocation incentives for you, which will be paid as a taxable extra compensation payment with appropriate payroll tax withholding, after you begin your employment. The University’s moving policy is located at the following website: https://hr.uiowa.edu/pay/compensation-classification/professional-scientific-compensation/moving-relocation-assistance.

Pre-Move House Hunting Trips:
In addition, the Department will reimburse you according to the UI travel policies for actual expenses for one house-hunting trip to the Iowa City area (for you and your spouse/partner). This reimbursement will be paid as a taxable extra compensation payment with appropriate payroll tax withholding, after you begin your employment.

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Professional Development Awards -

The University has a competitive Professional Development Awards Program designed to support faculty development projects for one semester at full salary or two semesters at half salary. Tenure-track and clinical-track faculty members at Associate Professor rank and above are eligible for an award after completing a minimum of ten semesters (or four years for fiscal appointments) of full-time academic service (excluding summer terms). The timing of this award is at the discretion of the Department and the Dean so that it may be scheduled to prevent as little programmatic disruption as possible. A faculty member who accepts a professional development award must agree to return to their regular duties at the University immediately following the award period for at least twice the length of the award period. Information about faculty development awards is located at https://provost.uiowa.edu/faculty-resources/ui-faculty-awards/faculty-development-awards-program/professional-development.
Old Gold Summer Fellowships -

Tenure-track faculty members with nine-month appointments are eligible for an Old Gold Summer Fellowship (OGSF), which is a faculty development program provided by the University to support summer work on an approved developmental project. In the summer of 20XX, 20XX or 20XX [insert your college’s 2 or 3 year plan], you will receive OGSF support of $6,000 on the basis of an approved proposal in the following manner [insert your college’s dispersion plan stating whether the award will be given in salary, research funds, or a combination of both with a specific % split]. You will apply for the Old Gold Summer Fellowship in the Fall semester preceding the summer in which you want to receive the fellowship. Faculty members who accept an OGSF are expected to return to their regular duties at the University for the following Fall semester. Please consult the college for specific guidelines and information.

Tenured Faculty Reviews -

According to the OM III-10.7 Review of Tenured Faculty Members policy, all tenured faculty members shall receive an annual review conducted by the faculty member’s DEO or equivalent, and a five-year review conducted by her/his peers. For more information about the review procedures, please see [include name of collegiate and/or departmental document].

Review, Reappointment, Promotion - Tenure Track -

You will be reviewed annually and considered for reappointment during the [third/fourth] year unless you receive notification prior to the [third/fourth] year that it will be a terminal year. In the event of a negative review in your [third/fourth] year, you will be provided notification of non-reappointment consistent with the University’s policies and procedures. Following a successful review, you will be reappointed for [two, three or four years]. Your tenure review will take place no later than 20XX-XX [fifth, sixth or eighth] year following initial appointment. The Procedural Guidelines for Tenure and Promotion Decision-Making at the University of Iowa can be found at https://provost.uiowa.edu/human-resources-administration/faculty-hr-administration/faculty-promotion.

Review, Reappointment, Promotion - Clinical Track -

You will be reviewed annually and considered for reappointment during the final year of your appointment. Your performance will be evaluated according to written standards of competence and performance as described in Section (X) of the Policies and Procedures of the College of (__________). Contract renewal following a positive review may be from (one-to seven-years). In the event of a negative review or a change in economic circumstances, you will receive appropriate notification, consistent with the University’s
policies and procedures (see the *UI Operations Manual* for more policy information, [https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/faculty#10.9](https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/faculty#10.9)). The requirements for promotion within the Clinical Track include evidence of professional productivity and your role in the clinical enterprise. There are no deadlines for promotion through the ranks, and you need not be promoted in order to maintain your faculty position.

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**Reappointment, Promotion - Research Track -**

You will be reviewed annually and considered for reappointment during the final year of your appointment unless otherwise notified in an appropriate time frame prior to the final year that it will be a terminal year. Your performance will be evaluated according to written standards of competence and performance as described in Section (X) of the Policies and Procedures of the College of (__________).

Renewal following a positive review depends on the availability of external support. In the event of a negative review, you will receive notification of non-reappointment consistent with the University’s policies and procedures (see the *UI Operations Manual* for more policy information, [https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/faculty#10.10](https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/faculty#10.10)). The requirements for promotion within the Research Track include evidence of sustained research funding and your role in the research enterprise. There are no deadlines for promotion through the ranks, and you need not be promoted in order to maintain your faculty position.

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**Review, Reappointment, Promotion - Instructional Faculty Track -**

You will be reviewed annually and considered for reappointment during the final year of your appointment (20XX/20XX). Your performance will be evaluated according to written standards of competence and performance as described in Section (X) of the College of (__________)’s ([insert name of collegiate Instructional Faculty policy/procedures](https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/faculty#10.11)). Reappointment following a positive review may be possible at the discretion of the college. Notifications of nonrenewal and/or termination will be consistent with the University’s policies and procedures (see the UI Operations Manual for more policy information [https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/faculty#10.11](https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/faculty#10.11)).

[Insert the following section for Lecturers and Associate Professors]

Instructional faculty may choose to remain at current rank or may request a review for promotion. Promotion of instructional faculty shall occur during the regular faculty promotion cycle and shall follow both collegiate procedures and the Office of the Provost’s [Procedures for Instructional Faculty Promotion Decision-Making at The University of Iowa](https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/faculty#10.11). Please see ([refer to collegiate documents](https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/faculty#10.11)) for additional information about the requirements for promotion within the Instructional Faculty track. An instructional faculty member’s choice not to request promotion, or the DEO or dean’s decision not to review or promote, does not automatically require termination of employment.

[Return to chart]
Review, Reappointment, Promotion – Fixed Term -

[Insert collegiate guidelines governing the relevant review, reappointment, and promotion process appropriate to the rank (e.g., Adjunct, Lecturer-Fixed Term).]

University Benefits Orientation –

You are strongly encouraged to review the options available in the university’s excellent benefits package before making your selections. Depending on your hire date, several benefits education opportunities are available to you: 1) UI Human Resources will email you information to watch a new employee orientation video shortly after you are hired, 2) the Iowa New Faculty Orientation (INFO) hosted by the offices of the President and Provost is held each August and includes an overview of University Benefits, and/or 3) you may review benefits information online: https://hr.uiowa.edu/benefits.

Iowa New Faculty Orientation, hosted by the Office of the Provost –

The Office of the Provost offers a UI New Faculty Series each year beginning with the Iowa New Faculty Orientation (INFO) and the President & Provost New Faculty Welcome Reception during the week before the Fall semester begins. Faculty members hired since September 1st of the previous year are invited to attend. You will receive a formal invitation closer to the date, but for now please hold [insert dates] for this campus-wide event. INFO is designed to complement collegiate orientation activities and to provide you with an overview of the university community, an introduction to campus leaders and resources, and the opportunity to network with other new faculty members from across the campus. A sample agenda and other resources of use to new faculty members may be found at https://provost.uiowa.edu/info. Attendance at the Iowa New Faculty Orientation is optional, but strongly encouraged. For more information, contact the Office of the Provost Faculty Development Programs at faculty@uiowa.edu, or via phone: 319.335.0256.

Collegiate Orientation –

College of (____________) Orientation. You are expected to participate in the College of (____________)’s own Orientation for New Faculty on (date). The College will contact you directly by (______________).
Employee Benefits -

The University of Iowa offers a full array of benefits that add considerably to the value of your total compensation. To best suit your personal needs, you are able to select between various benefit options. Information about the University’s flexible benefit options can be found on the University Benefits site: https://hr.uiowa.edu/benefits. Specific questions may be directed to the University Benefits Office by calling 319.335.2676 or emailing benefits@uiowa.edu.

Serious consideration should be given to choosing a retirement plan because your choice of a retirement plan is an irrevocable decision that must be made within 60 days of your hire date (or eligibility date if transferring from an ineligible appointment). The University has two retirement plans from which you may choose: the Iowa Public Employees Retirement System (IPERS) plan or the University Funded Retirement Plan through Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association (TIAA). The IPERS plan is a Defined Benefit plan and retirement income is determined by a formula based on your years of service and salary earned. The TIAA plan is a Defined Contribution plan and retirement income depends upon your individual retirement investment returns.

Per Iowa State Code: **IPERS is the default retirement program; employees are automatically enrolled in IPERS unless they elect TIAA within 60 days of their hire/eligibility date. Following your hire date/eligibility date,** the University Benefits Office will email you with enrollment instructions. After receiving the email from the Benefits Office, we encourage you to login to Employee Self Service to verify your retirement plan enrollment deadline.

Partial Benefits for Temporary Faculty -

**OPTION A:**

A contribution for health and dental insurance will be provided. The Department will contribute toward the coverage that you need for yourself and your family (if applicable). Depending on the plan you choose, single coverage is free or low cost to you. You will share in the cost of insurance for your family. The cost is based on the plan you choose, and the family members covered. Insurance begins on the first day of the month following your hire date and will terminate on the last day of the last month in which you are employed. Information on the plans available to you can be found on the University of Iowa Benefits web page. You will need to contact the Benefits Office at (319-335-2676) with any questions.

In addition, if you are eligible to participate in a retirement plan, you will be notified via email by the Benefits Office. Based on your eligibility, you may have the option of electing either the State of Iowa Retirement Plan, IPERS, or the University Retirement Plan.
with TIAA. If deemed eligible, you will be required to participate. Serious consideration should be given to choosing a retirement plan because your choice of a retirement plan is an irrevocable decision that must be made within 60 days of your hire date.

**OPTION B:**
A contribution for health and dental insurance will be provided. The Department will contribute 100% of the cost for the coverage you elect for yourself and your family (if applicable). Insurance begins on the first day of the month following the date you begin employment and will terminate on the last day of the last month in which you are employed. Information on the plans available to you can be found on the University of Iowa Benefits web page. You will need to contact the Benefits Office (319-335-2676) with any questions.
In addition, if you are eligible to participate in a retirement plan, you will be notified via email by the Benefits Office. Based on your eligibility, you may have the option of electing either the State of Iowa Retirement Plan, IPERS, or the University Retirement Plan with TIAA. If deemed eligible, you will be required to participate. Serious consideration should be given to choosing a retirement plan because your choice of a retirement plan is an irrevocable decision that must be made within 60 days of your hire date.

**OPTION C:**
Health and dental insurance is available to you and your family. The Department will not contribute towards of this coverage. This cost will depend on the plan you choose, and the family members covered. Insurance begins the first of the month following your appointment and will terminate on the last day of the month in which your appointment ends. Information on the plans available to you can be found on the University of Iowa Benefits web page. If you are interested in purchasing this coverage or have questions, you will need to contact the Benefits Office (319-335-2676).
In addition, if you are eligible to participate in a retirement plan, you will be notified via email by the Benefits Office. Based on your eligibility, you may have the option of electing either the State of Iowa Retirement Plan, IPERS, or the University Retirement Plan with TIAA. If deemed eligible, you will be required to participate. Serious consideration should be given to choosing a retirement plan because your choice of a retirement plan is an irrevocable decision that must be made within 60 days of your hire date.
Employment Eligibility: Credential Check -

The Department is in the process of checking that you have the required credentials, as listed on your CV. Your appointment to this position is contingent upon successful verification. [Or see below for combined credential and criminal background check.]

Employment Eligibility: Criminal Background Check (if required by Operations Manual policy: https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/hiring-and-appointments/criminal-background-check-point-hire)

This offer is conditional upon the successful verification [of your education credentials] and a criminal background check. Please review the enclosed release form titled, Notification and Authorization for Release of Information for Background Checks, as well as the, Summary of Your Rights Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act, which govern the process. Complete the release form and return it to ______________ in the enclosed envelope.

Employment Eligibility: Work Eligibility Documentation -

You are also required by federal law to complete an I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification form to verify your eligibility to be employed in the U.S. The University expects this form to be completed prior to your employment whenever possible, or on the first day of your employment. Please be prepared to present the documents necessary to complete this form and confirm your eligibility (see I-9 information [https://hr.uiowa.edu/support/faculty-and-staff-immigration-services/i-9-information]).

For candidates who are not U.S. Residents: Special federal and state tax withholding rules apply for non-residents with immigration status F1, J1, J2, H1B, TN, O1, Asylee and Refugees. For more information regarding these rules, please contact the Payroll Office at 319/335-2381. This offer is contingent upon your having or obtaining the appropriate work authorization, and being able to maintain that authorization for the entire employment period.

Harassment Prevention Training -

The University of Iowa is committed to the creation and maintenance of a positive work environment for all. Toward this goal and per the University of Iowa’s Interim Policy on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct (https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/community-policies/interim-policy-sexual-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct), you are required to successfully complete an approved harassment prevention education course during the first two months (six months if not identified as an AAO per the policy) of employment and complete periodic trainings as outlined in the University’s Interim Policy on Sexual Harassment and Sexual

[Return to chart]

Updated 6/16/2021
**Misconduct.** To view your initial due date for completion of this course, log into UI’s Compliance & Qualifications website: [https://compliance.hr.uiowa.edu/](https://compliance.hr.uiowa.edu/). You may satisfy this requirement by completing an approved instructor-led or online course. You may register for these courses through UI Employee Self Service: [https://hris.uiowa.edu/](https://hris.uiowa.edu/). Further information about the education requirement and login instructions are available at: [https://diversity.uiowa.edu/programs/training-programs/harassment-prevention-education-course-information](https://diversity.uiowa.edu/programs/training-programs/harassment-prevention-education-course-information).

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**Post-Offer Self-Identification -**

As required by federal contracting regulations, the University of Iowa must provide persons who have been extended a job offer the opportunity to self-identify as a protected veteran and/or as an individual with a disability. This information is used to monitor and report on the university’s equal employment opportunity/affirmative action programs. Submission of this information is voluntary and refusal to provide it will not subject you to any adverse treatment. Please take a moment to visit the following website [https://jobs.uiowa.edu/postOffer](https://jobs.uiowa.edu/postOffer) and complete the voluntary self-identification form. If you prefer to complete the form by mail, please contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity (email: diversity@uiowa.edu or phone: 319-335-0705).

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**FERPA Training -**

To ensure the University of Iowa community is in compliance with FERPA regulations, all UI instructors are required to complete the online FERPA training module and quiz at least once during their employment at the University. After having completed the training, instructors are required to attest to an Annual Certification Notice on January 1st of each year in UI Self-Service.

**Please note:** Instructors who have not completed the online FERPA training module will not have access to the MAUI (student record information) system and access to the ICON (Iowa Courses Online) system will be deactivated two weeks after their first attempted log in until they have completed the online FERPA training module and quiz. This will include being blocked from online access to class lists and student records, including student ID card photos. All other instructors should complete the FERPA training module within the first two months of employment. For more information, see: [https://provost.uiowa.edu/sites/provost.uiowa.edu/files/2020-12/ferpa.pdf](https://provost.uiowa.edu/sites/provost.uiowa.edu/files/2020-12/ferpa.pdf).
Intellectual Property Policy -
As a condition of your employment, you are required to follow all university policies, including the University of Iowa Intellectual Property Policy under which the University of Iowa Research Foundation (UIRF) assumes ownership of qualifying inventions as that term is defined in section 30.3.b(2) of the University of Iowa Inventions Policy and of copyright in works described in section 30.4b(2)(b) of the University of Iowa Copyright Policy. Upon commencing employment at the university, you hereby assign all right, title, and interest in qualifying inventions and such copyrights to UIRF.

Conclusion -
I hope I have conveyed to you that we are very enthusiastic about the possibility of your joining our faculty. I would appreciate your response to this offer on or before (date). To accept this offer and to conform to the University's requirement for a written agreement regarding terms of appointment, I ask you to sign this letter and return it to me on or before (date).

We are very enthusiastic at the prospect of having you join us as a member of the faculty. We think you will find both the University and the local community an excellent environment in which to live and work. Upon your acceptance of this job offer, if you have a health condition or disability and need assistance related to your new position, please contact the department’s human resources representative. If you have questions, please contact me immediately. I would be glad to discuss any aspect of this offer with you further.

Sincerely,

(DEO’s Name)

I have read this offer and accept the terms of appointment described herein.

Signature ___________________________ Date ____________