

~ Guidance for Faculty Offer Letters ~

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 regarding what should be included in this important document. Underlined sections below are linked to sample language later in the document for offer letter requirements. Language that changes depending on the appointment track is shown in *italics*.

- A) Position Overview:** Offer the position in a specific department, school, or college, specifying the [salary](#) and expected start date.
- 1) Specify the appointment track (e.g., tenure, clinical, research), rank, percentage effort (e.g., 100%), and [salary](#).
 - 2) For individuals who have not yet completed a required [terminal](#) degree, specify the pre-completion rank and salary, the date by which the University expects the degree to be conferred, as well as consequences if not earned.
 - 3) Include information about reimbursement of moving and relocation expenses, if applicable, and provide link to [UI Moving Expenses](#) policy.
 - 4) Specify the [probationary](#) period, third/fourth year review and reappointment date, and tenure review dates.
 - 5) Clearly identify the parameters around any [additional compensation elements](#) (e.g., transition payments, administrative differentials).
- B) Duties and Responsibilities:** Specify the faculty member's duties and responsibilities (e.g., teaching load or protected time for research). All faculty members are expected to abide by applicable laws and regulations, as well as University and/or departmental policies and procedures.
- C) Promotion:** In addition to information about review for promotion for tenure, [clinical](#) and [research](#) track faculty, insert a notice of [UI Procedural Guidelines for Promotion Decision-Making](#) and URL links.
- D) Employment Eligibility:**
- 1) [Credential check](#),
 - 2) [Criminal background check](#), if required by position,
 - 3) Appropriate [Work Eligibility Documentation](#), including I-9 and work authorization for international faculty.
- E) Research Expectations and Support:** Specify research support and expectations, including availability of [Career Development Awards](#) for nine- and twelve-month faculty positions and [Old Gold Summer Fellowships](#) for nine-month faculty.
- F) Employee Benefits:** Include a brief description of the University's benefits, including the importance of selecting a retirement plan within 60 days of the appointment start date, and reiterate that benefits will be discussed in the New Faculty Orientation. When offering UI health and dental benefits as part of a temporary faculty member's offer letter, offer language may follow three options. Please see [Benefits for Temporary Faculty](#) guidance below.
- G) Orientations:** Include information about the dates of the next Office of the Provost [New Faculty Orientation](#) for all faculty members, and [collegiate](#) new faculty orientation expectations.
- H) Conclusion:** Ask for an acceptance letter or signature on the offer letter indicating acceptance by a certain date. Include the mandatory ADA statement informing of the individual's right to [health or disability related accommodation](#)(s) needed for position

~ Sample Offer Letter Language ~

Salary

We are delighted to invite you to join our faculty beginning _____. Our departmental faculty members believe you have the potential and ability to achieve recognition as an outstanding scholar. On behalf of the Department of (_____), I am pleased to offer you a (X)% time, _____ track appointment as (**rank**) with a salary of \$ (**amount**). Your initial appointment will be for (*three/four*) 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.*

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.

Probationary

Each year you will be reviewed by the *tenure/clinical/research track* faculty in the department, and during the *third/fourth* year you will be formally reviewed for appointment renewal. The renewal of a faculty appointment and the recommendation on *tenure/reappointment* are based on an evaluation of your *teaching, scholarship or creative work [appropriate language for track]*, and service to the department and profession.

Reappointment/Promotion - Tenure Track

You will be reviewed annually and considered for reappointment during the [third/fourth] year of your appointment unless you receive notification prior to the [third/fourth] year that the [third/fourth] year 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 20__ - __ [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 <http://provost.uiowa.edu/faculty/policies/ptprocedures.pdf>.

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 (_____). Renewal following a positive review may be from three 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 Operations Manual for more policy information, <http://www.uiowa.edu/~our/opmanual/iii/10.htm#109>). The requirements for promotion within the Clinical Track include evidence of scholarship 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.

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 the final year 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, <http://www.uiowa.edu/~our/opmanual/iii/10.htm#1010>). 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.

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 comprised of the following: (_____).

Moving Expenses

The College will provide you with funds to reimburse actual moving expenses up to \$ (amount). Upon acceptance of our offer you will be contacted by the University's Business Manager regarding the University's moving policy. The University contracts with the local office of a national moving firm and will issue a letter of authorization. The University's moving policy is located at the following website: <http://www.uiowa.edu/~fusbm/moving.html>

Additional Compensation Elements

Several compensation items may be agreed upon in an offer letter to incentivize acceptance of an appointment and/or successful retention, assuming quality performance. 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.

- **Signing and Continuance Incentives:** The University of Iowa does not pay signing bonuses, but does acknowledge 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 service. Continuance payments must be time-limited (e.g., quarterly for the first year; annually for up to ___ years) and must be made at the end of a specified time frame (e.g., at the end of

the quarter, on a specified date each year). Example: “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 2013, which ends June 30, 2013. Eligibility will depend on your continued service in good standing as Division Director at the time the payment is made.”

- **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. This is different than *reimbursable* moving expenses (see above).
- **Employment Agreement-Other:** Payments for business-related expenses for which an explanation, stated in the offer letter and/or employment agreement, is required when processing the payment on the Special Compensation workflow form (e.g., car allowance).
- **Administrative Differential:** If an administrative differential is part of the starting salary, there must be a statement about the disposition of that differential should the person conclude administrative service but remain on the faculty. For example, “Should you leave the job of Department Head but 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) it should be included in the letter accompanied by any contingencies or constraints (e.g., usual teaching obligations must be completed or the degree must be completed within three years). Reimbursement is made after verification of satisfactory completion of each course is provided. Such payments are taxable income for the faculty member.

Duties and Responsibilities

Your duties and responsibilities will include (**describe teaching, research, and service**). All faculty members are expected to abide by applicable laws and regulations, as well as University and/or departmental policies and procedures.

Old Gold Summer Fellowships

As a new faculty member on a nine-month appointment, you are eligible for an Old Gold Summer Fellowship (OGSF), which is a faculty development program that provides recipients funding for summer work on an approved developmental project. In the summer of 20XX, 20XX or 20XX [insert your college’s 2 or 3 year plan], the University will grant you an OGSF on the basis of a proposal for teaching and/or research development during the Fellowship period. Each Old Gold Summer Fellowship is expected to result in at least one project for publication, exhibit, performance, or instructional use. OGSFs are a fixed amount of \$6,000 given in this 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 (e.g., if you are requesting to receive the Old Gold Summer Fellowship during the summer of 2013, you will apply for it in Fall 2012).

<http://provost.uiowa.edu/faculty/fachandbk/facdev/policies.htm#oldgolds>

Career Development Awards

The University has a competitive Career Development Awards Program designed to support faculty development projects for one semester at full salary or two semesters at half salary. Faculty members are eligible for an award after completing a minimum of ten semesters 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. Information about faculty development awards is located at: <http://www.provost.uiowa.edu/faculty/fachandbk/facdev/policies.htm#cda>

Employee Benefits

The University of Iowa offers a full array of benefits to its employees that adds significantly to the value of your compensation package. Information about the University's flexible benefit options can be found on the UI Human Resources site, <http://www.uiowa.edu/hr/benefits/benefits11/index.html>; specific questions may be directed to the University Benefits Office (319.335.2676).

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. 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-College Retirement Equities Fund (TIAA-CREF). 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-CREF plan is a Defined Contribution plan and retirement income depends upon your individual retirement investment returns. **If you do not select a plan within the 60 days window, you will automatically be enrolled in IPERS.** The University Benefits Office will be sending you additional information about these plans and a Retirement Plan Election Form following your acceptance of this offer.

As a condition of employment, you will be required to receive all payments by direct deposit. You may sign up for direct deposit on the University self service web site shortly after you begin your appointment. <http://hris.uiowa.edu/selfservice/>.

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/or your family. Single coverage is free to you, while you will share in the costs of insuring your family. This cost of family coverage will depend on your choice of plan and the family members included. Coverage 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) for an application and to have any questions answered. In addition, you will be required to participate in the State of Iowa Retirement Plan, IPERS, and you will be required to contribute to that plan, unless you are excluded by state law.

OPTION B:

A contribution for health and dental insurance will be provided. The Department will contribute 100% of the cost for the coverage that you need for yourself and/or your family. Coverage 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) for an application and to have any questions answered. In addition, you will be

required to participate in the State of Iowa Retirement Plan, IPERS, and you will be required to contribute to that plan, unless you are excluded by state law.

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 your choice of plan and the family members included. Coverage 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, you will need to contact the Benefits Office (319-335-2676) for an application and to have any questions answered. In addition, you will be required to participate in the State of Iowa Retirement Plan, IPERS, and you will be required to contribute to that plan, unless you are excluded by state law.

University Benefits Orientation

You are strongly encouraged to inform yourself of 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 invite you to attend an orientation session shortly after you are hired, 2) the Provost Office New Faculty Orientation in August includes a substantial overview of University Benefits, and/or 3) you may review UI Benefits information on-line: <http://www.uiowa.edu/hr/benefits/fpsmse/index.html>

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. [See below for combined credential and criminal background check.]

Employment Eligibility: Criminal Background Check (if relevant)

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 for 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 form to verify your eligibility for employment. The University expects this form to be completed prior to your employment whenever possible, or on the day you begin work. Please be prepared to present the documents necessary to complete this form and confirm your eligibility (see I-9 information [<http://www.uiowa.edu/hr/immigration/I9/index.html>]).

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.

New Faculty Orientation – Office of the Provost

The Office of the Provost offers a New Faculty Orientation and the President and Provost's Welcome Reception each year during the week before the Fall semester begins. All 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 upcoming Provost Office New Faculty Orientation here. **2013 dates:** August 20th for orientation; August 21st for reception] for this campus-wide event. The Provost Office New Faculty Orientation is designed to complement collegiate orientation efforts and 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 can be found at: <http://provost.uiowa.edu/faculty/newfaculty.htm>.

Attendance at the Provost Office New Faculty Orientation is optional, but strongly encouraged. For more information, contact the Office of the Provost Faculty Development Programs at newfaculty@uiowa.edu, or via phone: 319.335.0256.

Collegiate Orientation

College of (_____) Orientation. You will also be expected to participate in the College of (_____)’s own Orientation for New Faculty on (**date**). The College will contact you directly by (_____).

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 _____