

The Postdoctoral Community at Oregon State University

January, 2014

This report provides a snapshot of the postdoctoral community at OSU as of January 2014. There have historically been six types of non-professorial appointments at OSU that require PhD's or similar advanced degrees. Three of these – Research Associate (postdoc), Postdoctoral Scholar, and Postdoctoral Fellow – fit the general description of “postdoc” (following recommendations established by the American Association of Universities, Committee on Postdoctoral Education, in 1998): temporary, non-clinical research appointments held by recent PhDs. This report focuses on these three postdoctoral appointments, but some information about Research Associates and Clinical Fellows is also included to provide perspectives on similarities and differences in the broader community. Brief descriptions of these appointments are provided in Table 1. Figure 1 shows the current distribution of postdocs among the different appointment categories.

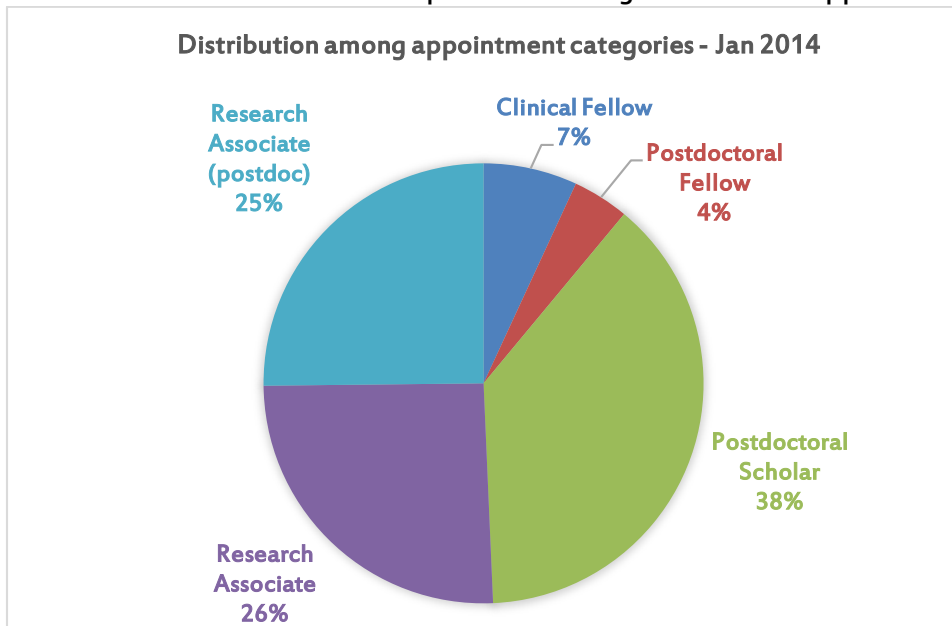


Figure 1

Size of the population and change since last year.

Since January, 2013 the overall community of postdocs and research associates decreased by about 2% (Table 2). However, within this relatively stable overall population there are some changes within specific appointment types. For example, the number of Postdoctoral Scholars increased by 11%, yet the number of Research Associate (postdocs) stayed constant. The previous year, a 25% increase in the number of Postdoctoral Scholars, was accompanied by a 21% decrease in the number of Research Associate (postdocs). OSU has also seen a significant increase in the number of Clinical Fellows in the past year (54%). In the past, a number of Visiting Courtesy Postdoc (22) were reported, but this is not currently an approved appointment category at OSU. Figure 2 illustrates the trend among the various appointment categories over the past 3 years. The steady increase in the number of Postdoctoral Scholars (83 to 104 to 115) following the establishment of this category was at first correlated with a decrease in the number of Research Associate (postdocs), but this category appears to have stabilized.

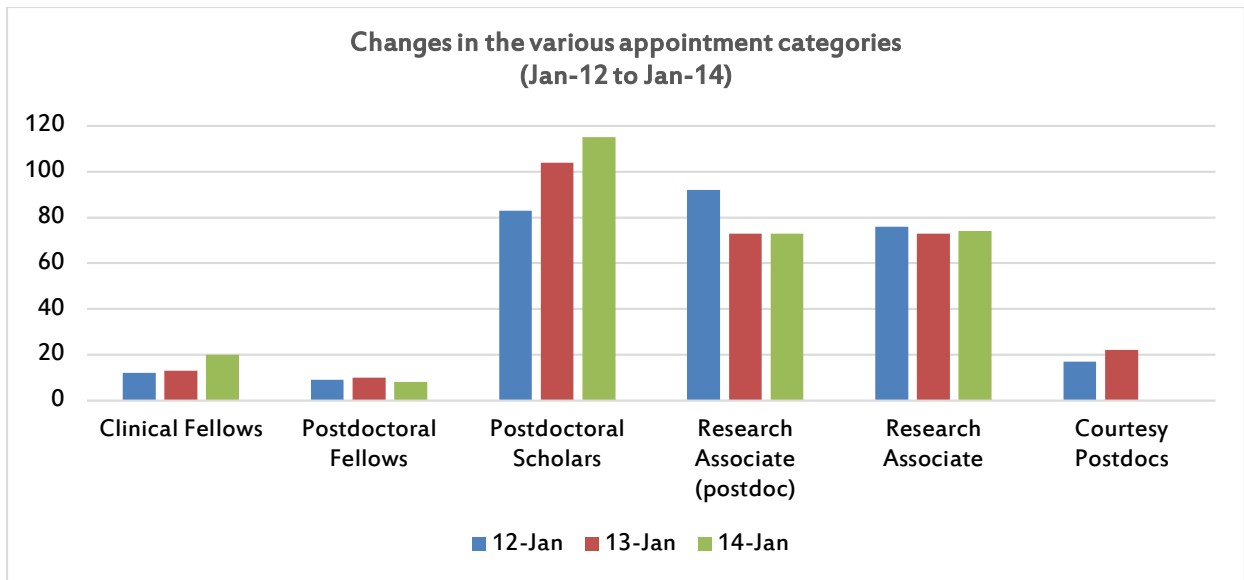


Figure 2

Postdocs and Research Associates are distributed among many departments at OSU, see Figure 3 and Table 3. As of January 2014, the College of Earth, Ocean & Atmospheric Science has the largest number of appointments across the categories, and there are also relatively large numbers in Botany and Plant Pathology; Forest Ecosystem & Society; Chemistry; Zoology, and the Linus Pauling Institute.

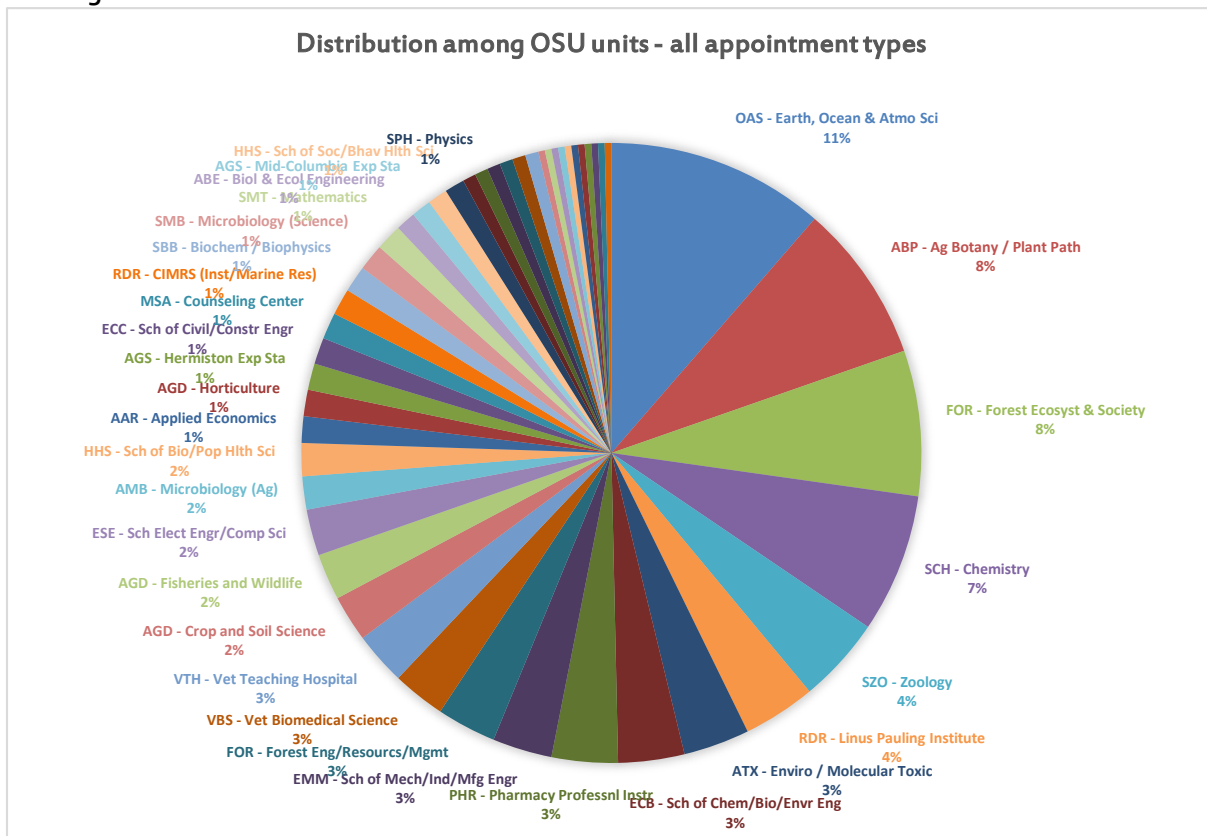


Figure 3

However, for the relatively new Postdoctoral Scholar category, Chemistry has the largest number with 14, Forest Ecosystem & Society and Zoology have 7 each, while Botany and Plant Pathology; Environmental & Molecular Toxicology; the School of Chemical, Biological and Environmental Engineering; School of Mechanical, Industrial & Manufacturing Engineering and the School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Sciences have 6 each, see Figure 4. Worth noting is that only 4 of CEOAS's appointments are in the Postdoctoral Scholars category.

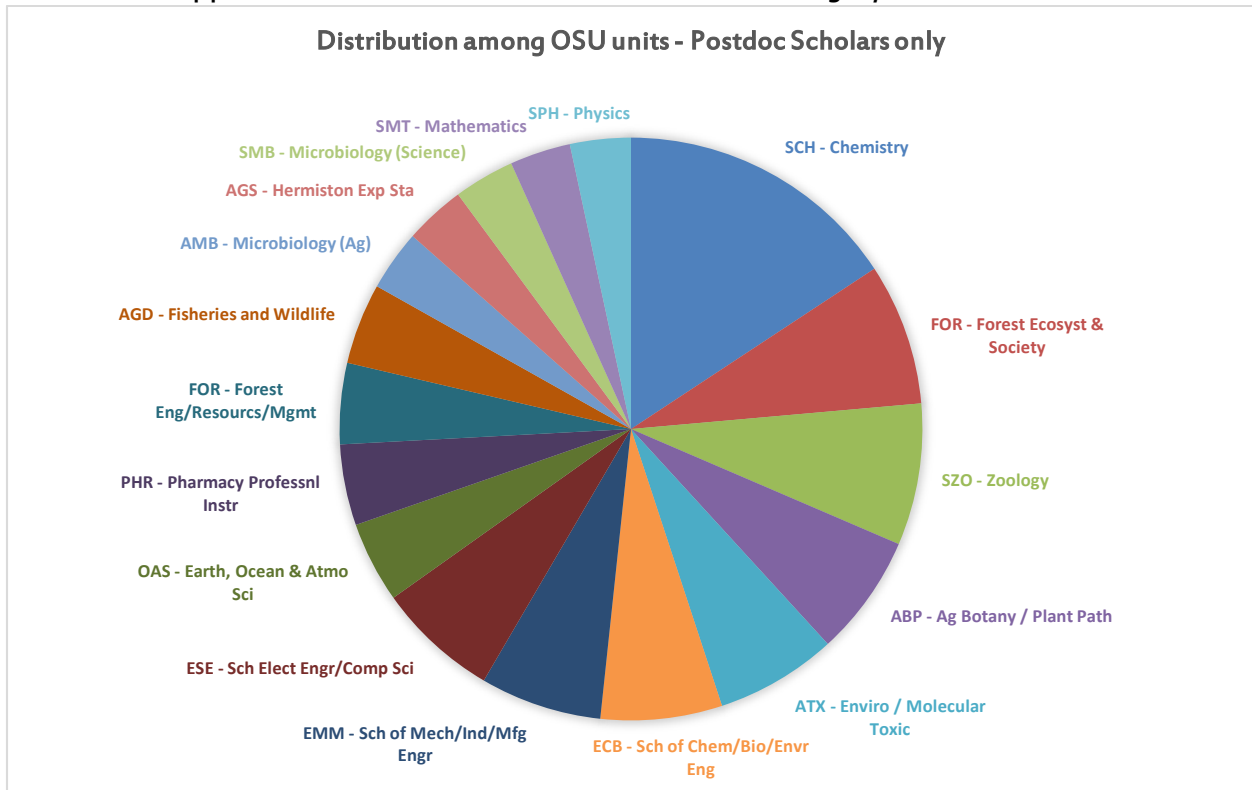


Figure 4

Gender, Race and Ethnicity

Averaged over the entire current community of postdocs and research associates, men slightly outnumber women (55.5% to 44.5%). This is roughly similar to the gender distribution in the undergraduate population. However, the gender distributions vary greatly among the appointment types (Figure 5 and Table 4). Close to 2/3 of the Clinical Fellows and Postdoctoral Fellows are female, whereas males outnumber females by nearly the same

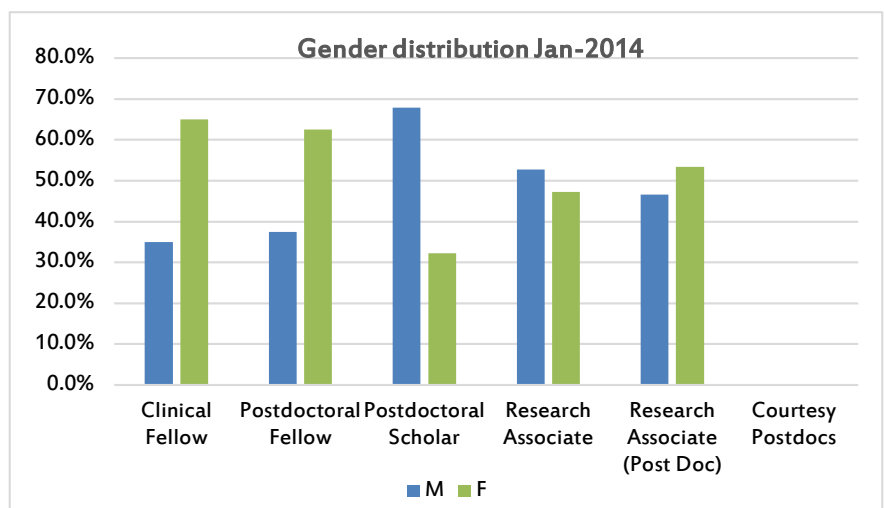


Figure 5

proportion among Postdoctoral Scholars. There is a more balanced gender distribution among Research Associate (postdocs) and Research Associates.

Racial information is available for slightly more than half of the postdoctoral community. Given the fairly small size of the populations of each subgroup in the first place, and the fact that there is likely to be “bias” among those who choose not to report this information, great caution should be exercised in interpreting the summary information provided here (Table 5). Values listed are percentage of those reported.

Given these caveats, more than 2/3 of the people in each of the appointment categories are white/non-Hispanic, totaling 73% overall. Asians are the second largest group totaling 24%, and have an especially significant presence among the postdoctoral scholars, where they account for nearly 38% of the (reported) population. Less than 1.5% of the entire postdoc/research associate population is African American or Native American, with no representation among Clinical Fellows, Postdoc Fellows, and Research Associates.

About 2/3 of the overall group reported ethnicity (Table 6), and of those, approximately 5% self-identify as Hispanic or Latino/Latina. This group has no representation among Postdoc Fellows and Research Associates. For both race and ethnicity it is interesting to note that self-reporting is substantially higher among Research Associates, who generally have a longer tenure at OSU.

Rates of compensation

The full-time annual compensation rate as of January 2014 was significantly lower for Clinical Fellows than for the other types of appointments; average compensations for Postdoctoral Scholars were greater, higher still for Research Associate (postdocs), and highest for Research Associates (Figure 6). The differences in compensation are likely explained by differences in the total time served in the

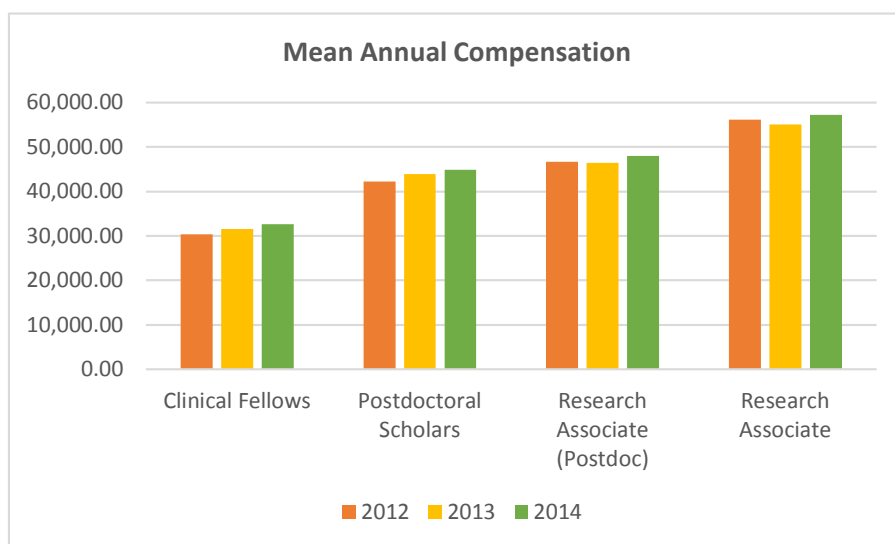


Figure 6

appointment and the relative permanency of the appointment. Figure 6 demonstrates that there has been an increase in compensation from 2012 to 2014 for all categories. Postdoctoral Fellows are not included in this analysis because they are externally funded. We observe a slightly more consistent increase in stipends among Postdoc Scholars, as opposed to the two Research Associate categories, likely because these latter appointment types are not subject to minimum stipend requirements such as the Postdoc Scholar category is.

Figure 7 shows the changes in compensation from 2012 to 2014 among men and women, and most of the categories have seen a similar increase for men and women. Figure 7 and Table 7 also show that among Clinical Fellows, women earn 6.5% more than men; Female Postdoctoral Scholars also earn slightly more, although the difference is too small to be considered significant (0.6%). The situation is reversed for Research Associate (postdocs) and Research Associates, where the salary differential is skewed in favor of men (by 2% and 11%, respectively), see Table 7.

When Oregon State University established the Postdoctoral Scholar position in 2009, expectations for minimum levels of compensation were established. These minimum levels are tied to the Kirschstein-National Research Service Awards set by the National Institutes of Health. For 2014 the minimum Kirschstein-NRSA stipend for an entry-level postdoc was \$42,000, and the levels increase with years of service (Table 8). At least 40 postdoctoral scholars at OSU are currently paid less than the entry-level minimum set by NIH. Seven units are currently paying average stipends below the required minimum (Table 9).

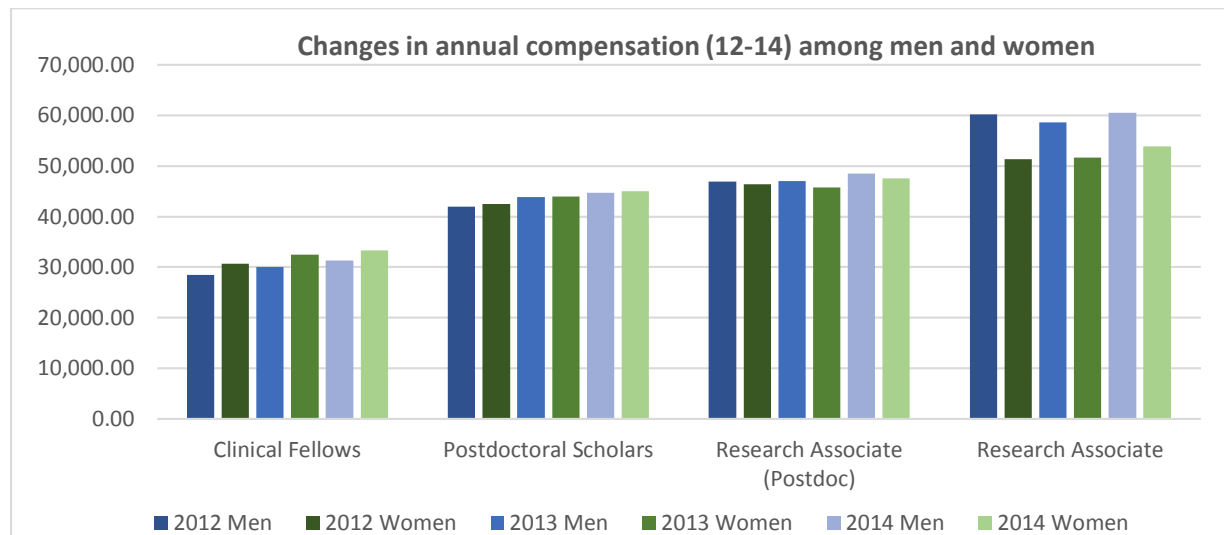


Figure 7

DATA TABLES

Table 1. Brief Descriptions of Appointment types. All are “non-professorial” appointments requiring a PhD or similar advanced degree

Clinical Fellow: Typically funded by an agency or clinic. Short-term appointments (typically two to three years maximum) for advanced clinical training in counseling, pharmacy, veterinary medicine, etc. Most Clinical Fellows have earned their terminal professional degree within less than five years, but any restrictions limiting these appointments to recent graduates are set by the funding organization, not OSU. Health insurance required and provided by OSU, but paid by the Fellow or funding agency; family insurance available, but must be paid by fellow. No retirement benefits.

Postdoctoral Fellows: Funded independently, typically by a federal agency. Short-term research appointments (typically two to three years maximum) under supervision of an OSU faculty member. Most Postdoc Fellows have earned PhDs within less than five years, but any restrictions limiting these appointments to recent graduates are set by the funding agency, not OSU. Health insurance required and provided by OSU, but paid by the Fellow or funding agency; family insurance available, but must be paid by fellow. No retirement benefits.

Postdoctoral Scholars: Trainees who are typically funded by grants to OSU faculty and paid a monthly stipend (not a salary) through OSU Payroll. OSU policy stipulates that these are short-term research/trainee appointments limited to a maximum of three years and individuals must have earned a PhD within less than five years from the initial appointment date. The position combines professional development and research training. Health insurance similar to insurance provided to graduate students paid from the grant that pays the stipend. No retirement benefits.

Research Associates: Fixed-term employees who are typically funded by grants to OSU faculty to support research and paid a monthly salary with benefits the same as all other non-classified employees at OSU. No expectations for professional development. No time limits on years since PhD or years in the position.

Research Associate (postdocs): Exactly the same as the Research Associate position from the University’s perspective, although some colleges have internal policies and expectations for term limits and a recently-earned PhD.

Courtesy Postdoctoral Scientists: No longer exists.

Table 2. The postdoc and research associate populations at OSU and change since last year

	Number		% Change
	13-Jan	14-Jan	
Clinical Fellows	13	20	54%
Postdoctoral Fellows	10	8	-20%
Postdoctoral Scholars	104	115	11%
Research Associate (postdoc)	73	73	0%
Research Associate	73	74	1%
Courtesy Postdocs	22	0	-100%
Total	295	290	-2%

Table 3. Distribution of postdocs and research associates among departments

	Clinical Fellow	Postdoctoral Fellow	Postdoctoral Scholar	Research Associate	Research Associate (postdoc)	Dept Total
OAS - Earth, Ocean & Atmo Sci	0	2	4	11	16	33
ABP - Ag Botany / Plant Path	0	2	6	9	7	24
FOR - Forest Ecosyst & Society	0	0	7	5	10	22
SCH - Chemistry	0	0	14	2	5	21
SZO - Zoology	0	0	7	3	3	13
RDR - Linus Pauling Institute	0	1	2	6	2	11
ATX - Enviro / Molecular Toxic	0	0	6	3	1	10
ECB - Sch of Chem/Bio/Envr Eng	0	0	6	3	1	10
PHR - Pharmacy Professnl Instr	4	0	4	1	1	10
EMM - Sch of Mech/Ind/Mfg Engr	0	0	6	3	0	9
FOR - Forest Eng/Resources/Mgmt	0	0	4	3	2	9
VBS - Vet Biomedical Science	2	0	4	0	2	8
VTH - Vet Teaching Hospital	8	0	0	0	0	8
ESE - Sch Elect Engr/Comp Sci	0	0	6	1	0	7
AGD - Fisheries and Wildlife	0	0	4	2	1	7
AGD - Crop and Soil Science	0	0	2	3	2	7
AMB - Microbiology (Ag)	0	1	3	1	0	5
HHS - Sch of Bio/Pop Hlth Sci	0	0	2	1	2	5
AGS - Hermiston Exp Sta	0	0	3	0	1	4
SMB - Microbiology (Science)	0	0	3	0	1	4
SMT - Mathematics	0	0	3	0	1	4
AAR - Applied Economics	0	0	2	2	0	4
ECC - Sch of Civil/Constr Engr	0	0	2	1	1	4
SBB - Biochem / Biophysics	0	0	2	1	1	4
AGD - Horticulture	0	0	1	1	2	4
MSA - Counseling Center	4	0	0	0	0	4
RDR - CIMRS (Inst/Marine Res)	0	0	0	3	1	4
SPH - Physics	0	0	3	0	0	3
ABE - Biol & Ecol Engineering	0	0	1	1	1	3
AGS - Mid-Columbia Exp Sta	0	0	1	0	2	3
HHS - Sch of Soc/Bhav Hlth Sci	0	0	1	1	1	3
AGS - Columbia Basin Exp Sta	0	0	1	1	0	2
AWR - Oregon Wine Res Institut	0	0	1	1	0	2
AGS - COMES - Newport Exp Sta	0	0	0	0	2	2
RDR - Environ Health Sci Ctr	0	2	0	0	0	2
RNR - INR-Or Biodvrsty InfoCtr	0	0	0	1	1	2
VCS - Vet Clinical Sciences	2	0	0	0	0	2
AGS - EOARC - Union Exp Sta	0	0	1	0	0	1
AIP - Integrtd Plant Prot (Ag)	0	0	1	0	0	1
ASC - Animal & Rnglnd Sciences	0	0	1	0	0	1
FOR - Wood Science / Engr	0	0	1	0	0	1
AGD - Food Science and Techno	0	0	0	0	1	1
AST - Statistics (Ag)	0	0	0	1	0	1
HHS - EXT Fam/CommHlth OnCmps	0	0	0	0	1	1
KED - College of Education	0	0	0	1	0	1
LCB - Acad Prog / Student Aff	0	0	0	1	0	1
RMS - Hatfield Marine Sci Ctr	0	0	0	0	1	1
RNR - Institute Natrl Res Dir	0	0	0	1	0	1
Total	20	8	115	74	73	290

Table 4. Gender distribution among appointment types.

	M	%	F	%
Clinical Fellow	7	35.0%	13	65.0%
Postdoctoral Fellow	3	37.5%	5	62.5%
Postdoctoral Scholar	78	67.8%	37	32.2%
Research Associate	39	52.7%	35	47.3%
Research Associate (Post Doc)	34	46.6%	39	53.4%
Courtesy Postdocs				
Total	161	55.5%	129	44.5%

Table 5. Information about race (note that this information was only available for slightly over half of the overall group, so these calculations should be interpreted cautiously). Values for each group are percentages of those reported.

	Percentage of total reported				No Response	Total Reported
	Asian	Black / African American	Native American	White / Euro - American / non - Hispanic		
Clinical Fellow	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	70.0%	30.0%
Postdoctoral Fellow	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Postdoctoral Scholar	37.3%	2.0%	2.0%	58.8%	55.7%	44.3%
Research Associate	19.6%	0.0%	0.0%	80.4%	24.3%	75.7%
Research Associate (Post Doc)	20.0%	2.9%	2.9%	74.3%	52.1%	47.9%
Percentage of total	24.3%	1.3%	1.3%	73.0%	47.6%	52.4%

Table 6. Information about ethnicity (note that this information was only available for slightly more than 2/3 of the overall group, so these calculations should also be interpreted cautiously).

	Percentage of total reported			Total Reported
	Hispanic or Latino	Not Hispanic or Latino	No Response	
Clinical Fellow	28.6%	71.4%	65.0%	35.0%
Postdoctoral Fellow	0.0%	100.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Postdoctoral Scholar	4.4%	95.6%	40.9%	59.1%
Research Associate	0.0%	100.0%	13.5%	86.5%
Research Associate (Post Doc)	9.1%	90.9%	24.7%	75.3%
Sum	5.1%	94.9%	31.7%	68.3%

Table 7. Mean annual compensation in 2014 by gender

	Men	Women	% difference
Clinical Fellows	31,265.14	33,299.08	-6.5%
Postdoctoral Scholars	44,709.82	44,973.14	-0.6%
Research Associate (Postdoc)	48,468.00	47,520.59	2.0%
Research Associate	60,554.00	53,838.46	11.1%

* Postdoc fellows not included as they are externally funded.

Table 8. Stipends established for 2014 by the National Institutes of Health for postdoc-level Kirschstein-National Research Service awards

Years of Experience	Stipend for FY 2014	Monthly Stipend
0	\$42,000	\$3,500
1	\$43,680	\$3,640
2	\$45,432	\$3,786
3	\$47,244	\$3,937
4	\$49,128	\$4,094
5	\$51,096	\$4,258
6	\$53,148	\$4,429
7 or More	\$55,272	\$4,606

See more at: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-14-046.html#sthash.d4oMca8Z.dpuf>

Table 9. Mean Postdoctoral Scholar stipends by department/unit for departments/units who have at least three Postdoctoral Scholars

	Average Salary	Number of Postdoctoral Scholars
VBS - Vet Biomedical Science	38,004.00	4
SCH - Chemistry	39,945.00	16
SPH - Physics	40,071.00	4
SZO - Integrative Biology	40,657.71	7
PHR - Pharmacy Professnl Instr	40,802.40	5
HHS - Sch of Bio/Pop Hlth Sci	41,300.00	3
RDR - Linus Pauling Institute	41,772.00	3
ATX - Enviro / Molecular Toxic	42,600.00	5
ABP - Ag Botany / Plant Path	42,949.71	7
AHE - Hermiston Exp Sta	43,317.00	4
AMB - Microbiology (Ag)	44,368.00	3
ECB - Sch of Chem/Bio/Envr Eng	44,882.40	5
SMT - Mathematics	47,000.00	3
FOR - Forest Ecosyst & Society	47,360.57	7
OAS - Earth, Ocean & Atmo Sci	48,000.00	3
SMB - Microbiology (Science)	49,290.00	4
ESE - Sch Elect Engr/Comp Sci	50,146.29	7
AFW - Fisheries and Wildlife	50,916.00	4
FOR - Forest Eng/Resources/Mgmt	51,549.00	4
EMM - Sch of Mech/Ind/Mfg Engr	54,252.00	4