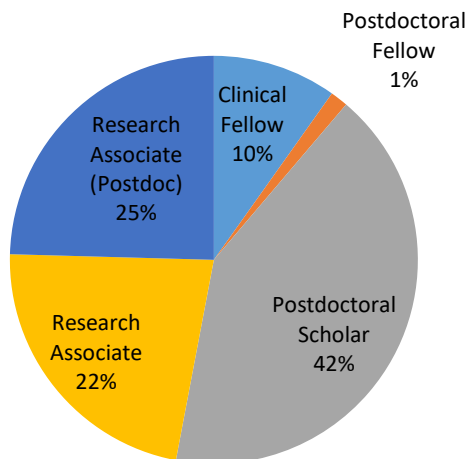


# The Postdoctoral Community at Oregon State University

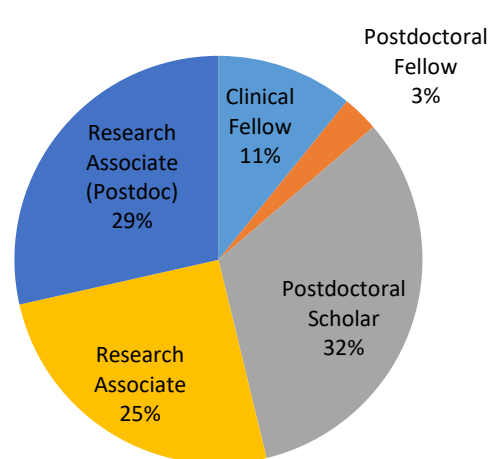
January, 2017

This report provides a snapshot of the postdoctoral community at OSU as of January 2017. There are five 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 common 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 distribution of postdocs among the different appointment categories at OSU for 2016 and 2017.

**Distribution among appointment categories  
January 2016**



**Distribution among appointment categories  
January 2017**

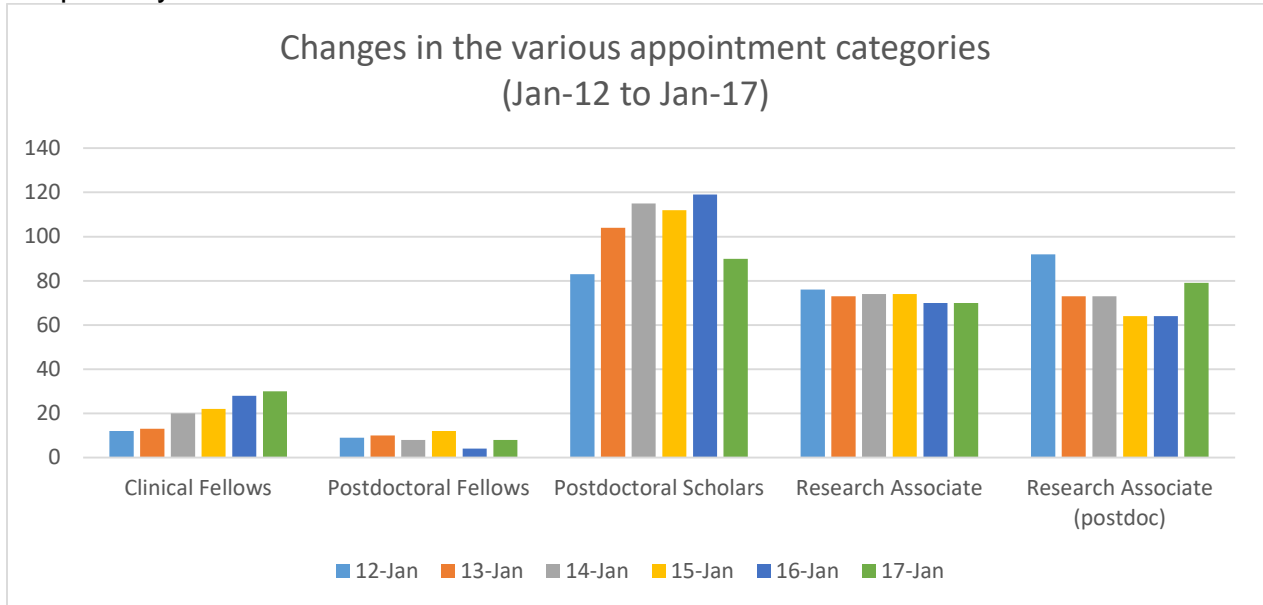


**Figure 1. Distribution of postdocs across appointment categories at OSU in January 2016 and 2017.**

### Size of the population and change since last year.

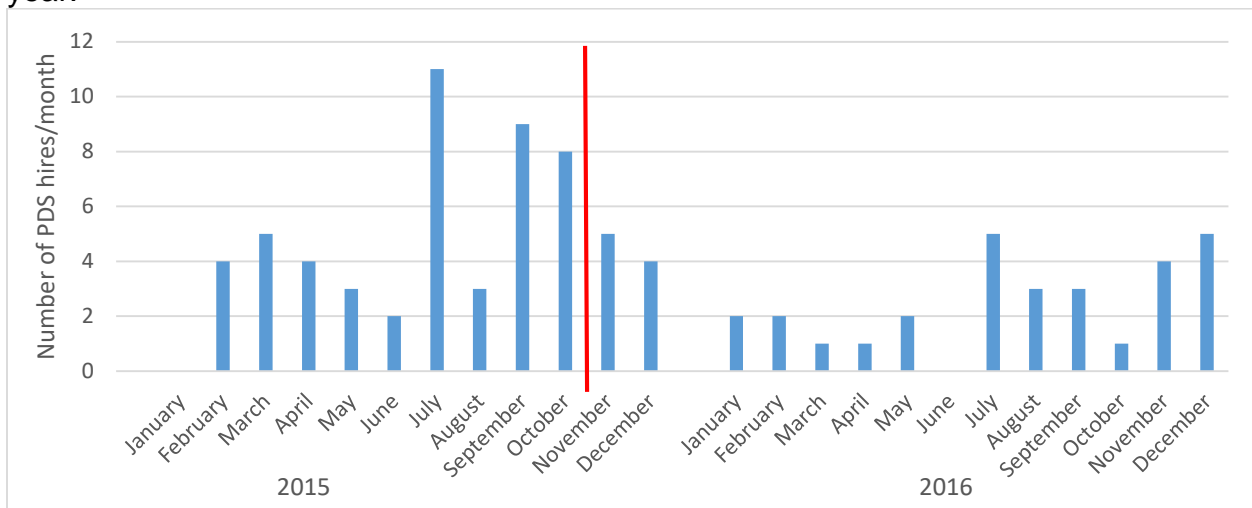
Since January, 2016 the overall community of postdocs and research associates has decreased slightly (by about 3 percent) (Table 2). However, within this relatively stable overall population there are some more significant changes among specific appointment types, see Figure 1. Most notably, the number of Postdoctoral Scholars decreased by 24%, likely as a result of the on-going phase-out of this category that was implemented in October 2015.

Clinical Fellows increased by 7%, and the number of Fellows increased by 100%, however this category consists of a relatively small number (up from 4 to currently 8). This year, the significant decrease in the number of Postdoctoral Scholars was accompanied by a similar increase in the number of Research Associate (postdocs) of over 23%. Figure 2 illustrates the trend among the various appointment categories over the past 6 years.



**Figure 2. Variation among appointment categories over the past 6 years.**

For the Postdoc Scholar category an official phase-out was announced on October 13, 2015. While existing appointments are being honored such that Postdoc Scholars budgeted in pending and awarded grants are continuing through the end of the grant period, it is expected that we will see a continued decline in the numbers in the coming year.



**Figure 3. Monthly Postdoc Scholar appointments in 2015 and 2016 (the phase-out took effect Oct 13<sup>th</sup>, 2015).**

Since the phase-out notice was published, we have seen a relatively substantial decline in the number of Postdoc Scholars appointed each month, see Figure 3. We will continue to monitor these numbers to evaluate the impact on the overall numbers of postdocs at OSU.

Distribution of postdocs across departments and research units

Postdocs and Research Associates are distributed among many departments and centers at OSU, see Figure 4 and Table 3.

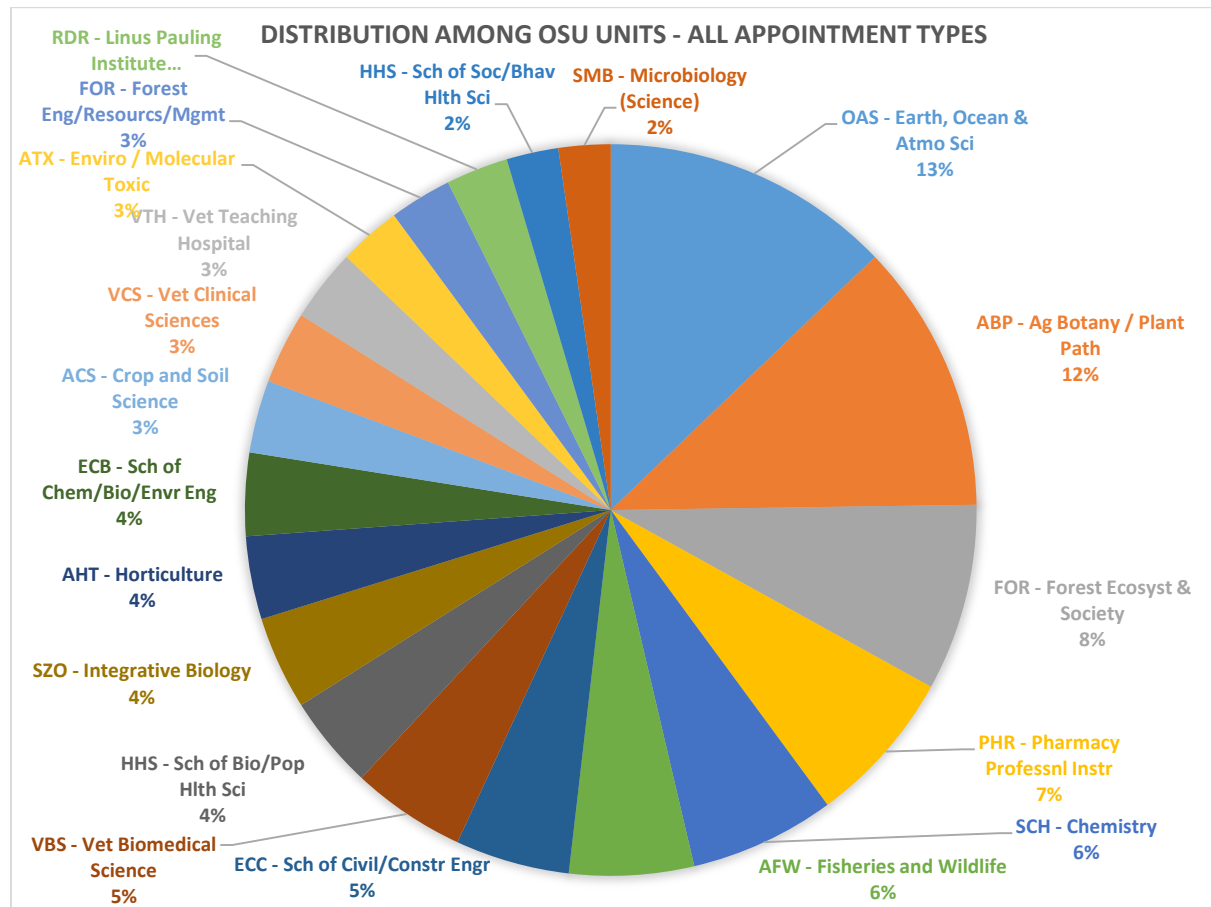


Figure 4. Distribution of postdocs and research associates among OSU departments (n > 5).

As of January 2017, the College of Earth, Ocean & Atmospheric Science and Botany and Plant Pathology Department have the largest number of appointments across the categories and host a quarter of all postdocs at OSU. There are also relatively large numbers (>10) in Forest Ecosystems & Society; Pharmacy; Chemistry; Fisheries and Wildlife; Civil and Construction Engineering, and Veterinary Biomedical Sciences.

However, for the Postdoctoral Scholar category, Botany & Plant Pathology has the largest number with 11; Chemistry and the School of Civil & Construction Engineering each have 9; while Integrative Biology is hosting 7, and Pharmacy has 5 this year, see

Figure 5 (only units with 3 or more Postdoc Scholars are included). It is worth noting that these are the units that are being affected the most by the on-going phase-out, e.g. Chemistry went from 16 in 2016 to 9 this year. While a consistent increase in this category was noted in 2014 and 2015 in schools across the College of Engineering, the decline observed last year (28 to 22) continued this year, with a drop from 22 to 15 in the past year. This means that the Postdoc Scholar population in the engineering schools has been almost halved in 2 years. A similar trend as seen for the Department of Chemistry.

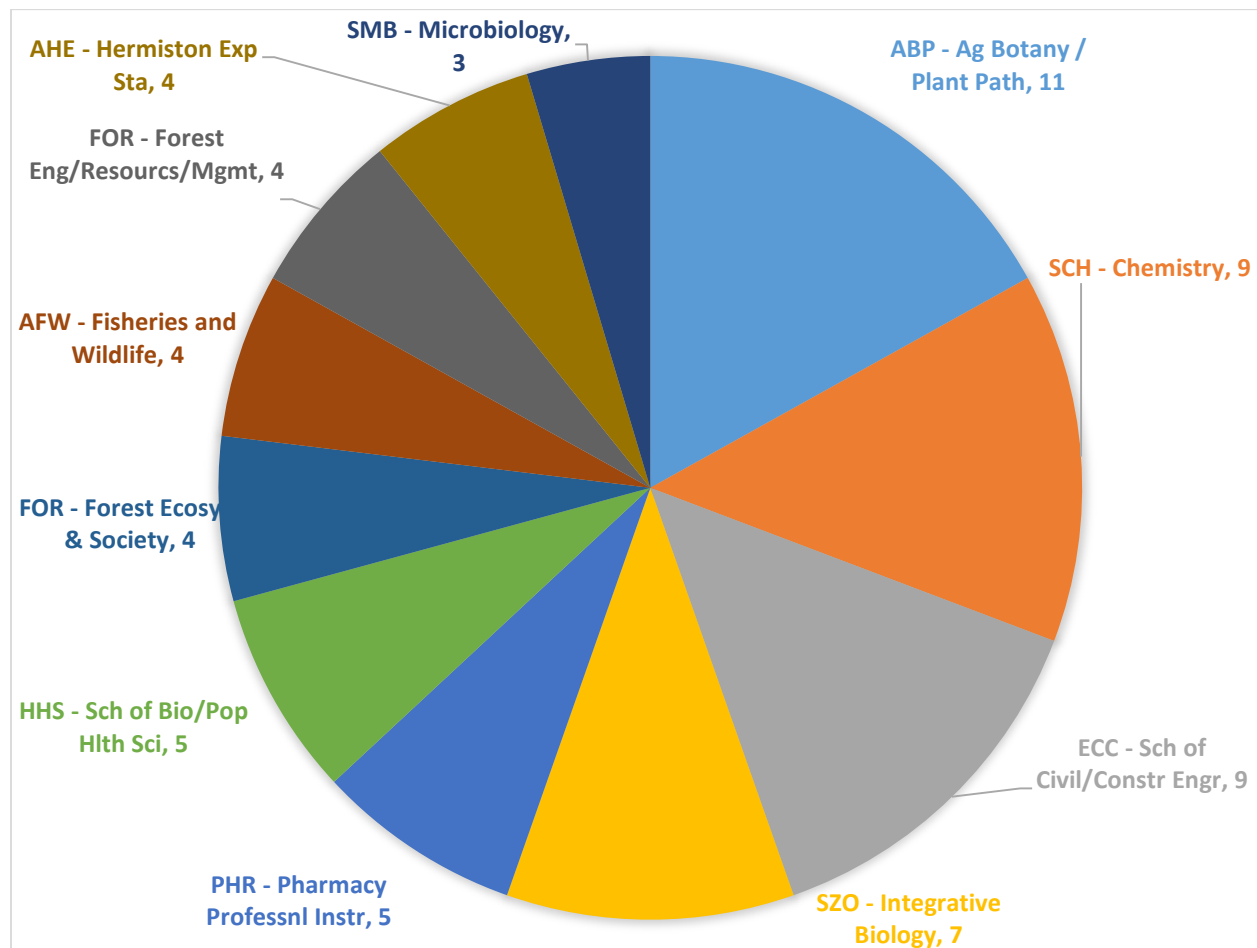


Figure 5. Distribution of Postdoc Scholars among OSU departments (n > 3).

### **Gender, Race and Ethnicity**

Averaged over the entire community of postdocs and research associates, men outnumber women (53.1% to 46.9%). This is fairly similar to the gender distribution in the OSU undergraduate population. However, the gender distribution varies greatly among the appointment types (Figure 6 and Table 4). 60% of the Clinical Fellows and over 62% of Postdoctoral Fellows are female, whereas males outnumber females 62% to 38% among Postdoctoral Scholars.

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

Information about race is available for 64% of the overall postdoctoral community and the summary information is provided in Table 5. The Research Associate (postdoc) and Research Associate categories have vastly higher response rates of 93% and 86%, respectively, see Figure 7a.

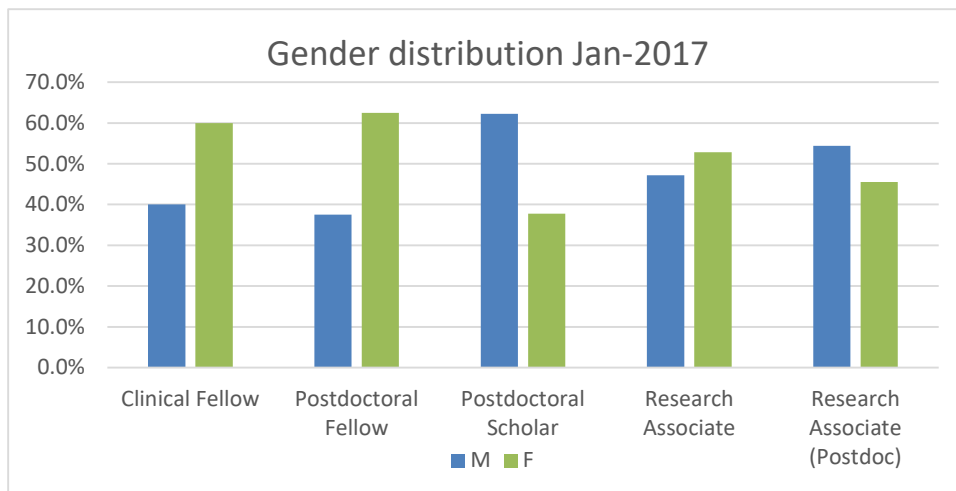


Figure 6. Gender distribution among different appointment types.

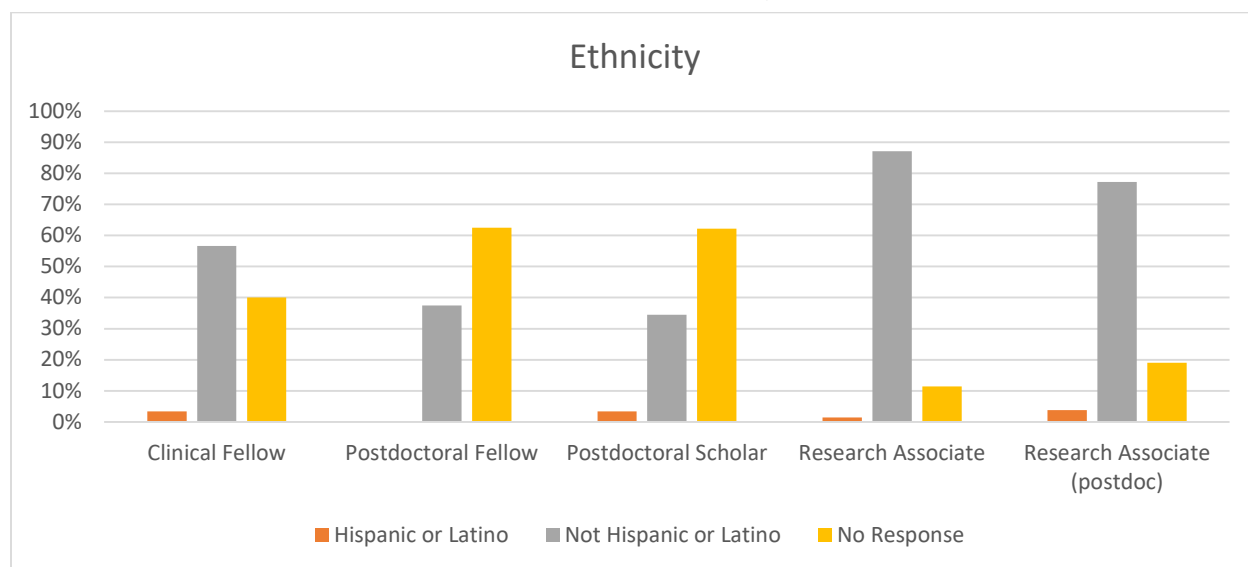


Figure 7a. Reported information about ethnicity, January 2017

Slightly less than half of the general postdoc population reports their race as white/non-Hispanic. There is some variation among the different categories resulting in percentages between 25%-73% (including the Fellows). The second largest group totaling 16% overall self-report as Asian. Not much more than 1% total of the entire (reported) postdoc/research associate population is African American or Native American, with no representation among Postdoc Fellows, Postdoc Scholars, and Clinical Fellows.

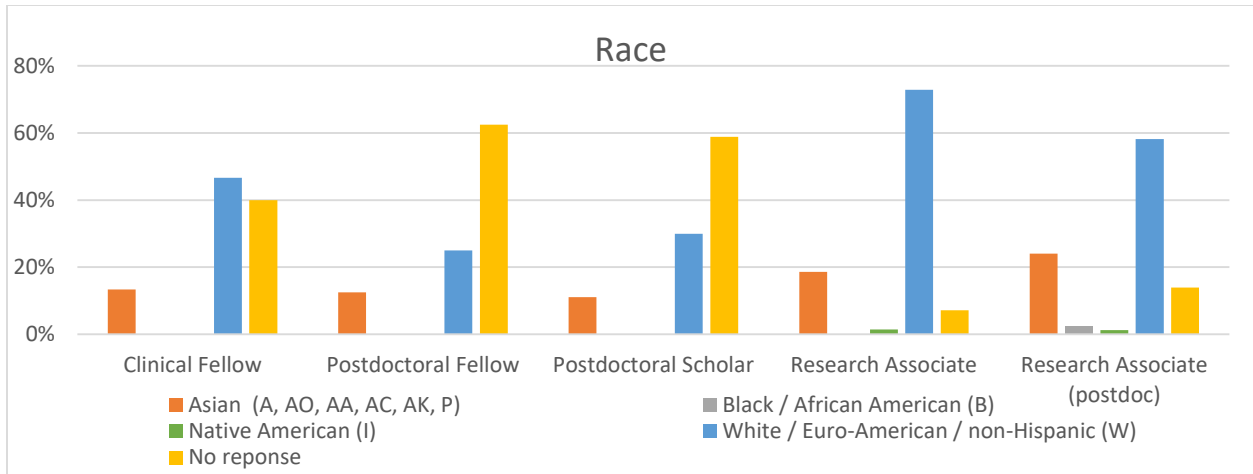


Figure 7b. Reported information about race, January 2017

Similarly, 61% of the overall group reported ethnicity (Table 6), and of those, approximately 2% self-identify as Hispanic or Latino/Latina overall, which is 1% lower than in 2016. For both race and ethnicity, it is interesting to note that self-reporting is much higher (89% and 81%, respectively) among Research Associates and Research Associate (postdocs), who generally have a longer tenure at OSU, see Figure 7b.

### Rates of compensation

The average compensation rate for Postdoctoral Scholars has increased steadily since 2012, and since 2015 has been above the level of both Research Associates and Research Associate (postdocs). This is most likely a consequence of the mandated minimum stipend which was introduced in

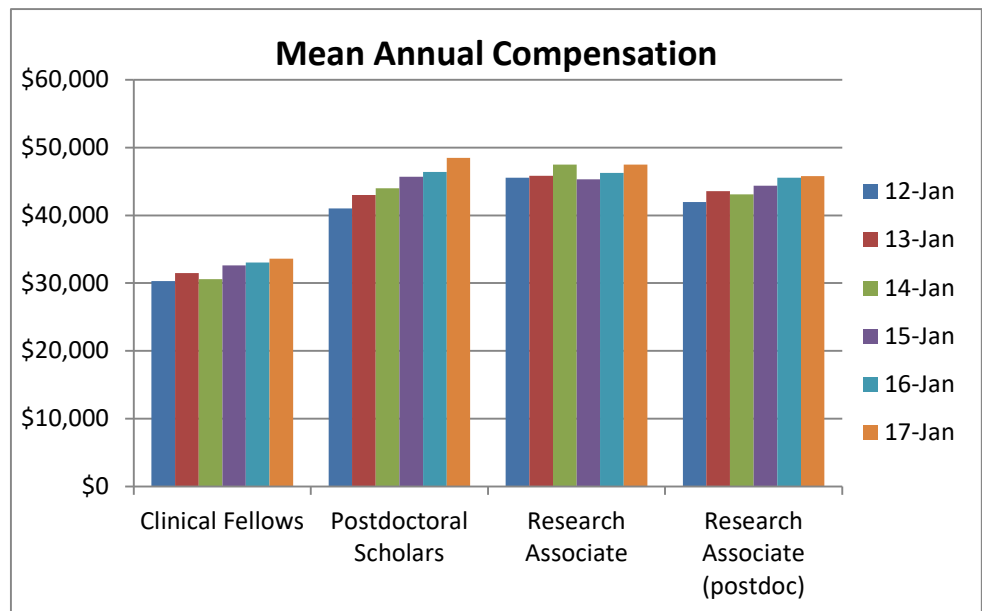
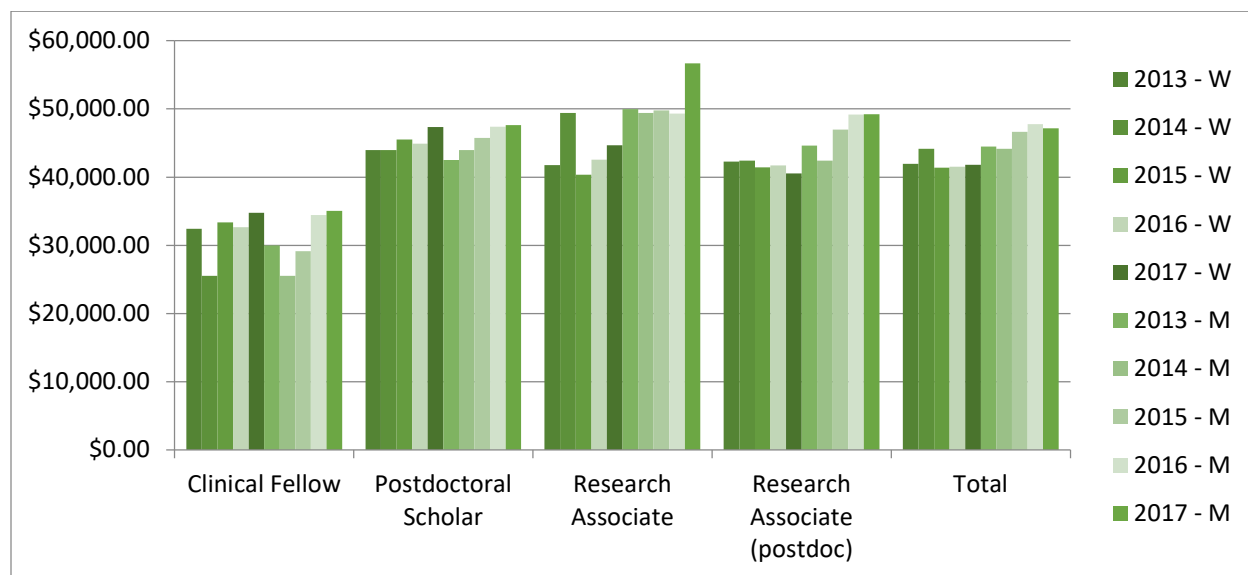


Figure 8. Mean annual compensation, January 2012-2017

January 2014 for OSU Postdoctoral Scholars, and it is worth noting that the *mean* compensation for Postdoc Scholars was well above the stipend level recommend by the National Institutes of Health until the stipend levels were increased in response to FLSA-mandated increases, announced in late 2016. This resulted in a significant bump in the NIH NRSA stipend levels for 2017, see Table 8. The full-time annual compensation rate as of January 2017 was again significantly lower for Clinical Fellows

than for the other types of appointments; average compensations for Postdoctoral Scholars are the highest for the second year in a row, followed by Research Associates, and Research Associate (postdocs) (Figure 8). Figure 8 demonstrates that there has been a fairly consistent increase in compensation from 2012 to 2016 for all categories. Postdoctoral Fellows are not included in this analysis because they are externally funded.

Figure 9 shows the changes in compensation from 2013 to 2017 among men and women; most of the categories have seen a similar increase for men and women. Figure 9 and Table 7 also show that among Clinical Fellows, women now again earn less than men (by 1%), after a brief year in 2015 where they were earning significantly more than men (by 15%). However, across all categories, women continue to be compensated at lower levels (by 11% on average). The under-compensation is most significant for Research Associate (postdocs) and Research Associates in 2017, where the salary differential is skewed in favor of men (by 18% and 21%, respectively). Among Postdoctoral Scholars, the rigorous policy around minimum stipends is expected to contribute favorably to equality in compensation, as reflected in only a 1% difference in compensation across gender (slightly in favor of men).



**Figure 9. Mean annual compensation among women and men, January 2013-January 2017 (women are represented by the leftmost bars, men on the right, for each category)**

Oregon State University established the Postdoctoral Scholar position in 2009, but it was not until January 2014 that expectations for minimum levels of compensation were firmly established. These minimum levels are tied to the Kirschstein-National Research Service Awards set by the National Institutes of Health. For 2017 the minimum Kirschstein-NRSA stipend levels reflect expected changes in compensation resulting from the proposed changes to the FLSA (Fair Labor Standards Act) rules for overtime pay announced in late 2016. Thus, for an entry-level postdoc the stipend level for a first-year postdoc for 2017 is \$47,484, and the levels increase with years of service (Table 8). Because these FLSA-mandated stipend increases were only just implemented in

January 2017, it is expected that it will take some time before OSU Postdoc Scholars are brought up to this level across all units. As seen in Table 9, every Postdoc Scholar at OSU was compensated at or above the NIH NRSA entry level that was in place for 2016 (\$43,692), which is a significant improvement over past years (Table 9). Similarly, Table 7 shows that the average compensation for Postdoc Scholars is already above (for men) or very close (for women) to the new 2017 levels, and it is likely that improvement will be made through the coming 12 months. Table 7 also shows that the announced changes to the FLSA rules for overtime pay may have prompted salary increases among the other OSU postdocs categories as well, as the average level of compensation (at least for men) is at \$47,156, while the average for women lack behind at \$41,831.

For more information about the status of the FLSA changes, please see <http://hr.oregonstate.edu/policies-procedures/administrators/classification-compensation/final-rule-update-fair-labor>. The changes were supposed to take effect Dec 1, 2016, but a federal court issued an injunction against the changes on November 23<sup>rd</sup>, and the rules will therefore not go into effect until the injunction is lifted or the case is decided in favor of the proposed rule changes.



## 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 Fellow:** 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 Scholar:** Trainees who are typically funded by grants to OSU faculty and paid a monthly stipend. 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. 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. **(This appointment category is currently being phased-out - as of Oct 13<sup>th</sup>, 2015.)**

**Research Associate:** 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 (postdoc):** 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.

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

	Number			% change (16-17)
	15-Jan	16-Jan	17-Jan	
<b>Clinical Fellows</b>	22	28	30	7.1
<b>Postdoctoral Fellows</b>	12	4	8	100.0
<b>Postdoctoral Scholars</b>	112	119	90	-24.4
<b>Research Associate (postdoc)</b>	64	64	79	23.4
<b>Research Associate</b>	74	70	70	0
<b>Total</b>	284	285	277	-2.8

**Table 3.** Distribution of postdocs and research associates among departments

2017	Clinical Fellow	Postdoctoral Fellow	Postdoctoral Scholar	Research Associate	Research Associate (Postdoc)	Department Total
OAS - Earth, Ocean & Atmo Sci	0	3	1	8	16	28
ABP - Ag Botany / Plant Path	0	0	11	7	8	26
FOR - Forest Ecosyst & Society	0	0	4	6	8	18
PHR - Pharmacy Professnl Instr	7	0	5	2	1	15
SCH - Chemistry	0	0	9	2	3	14
AFW - Fisheries and Wildlife	0	0	4	3	5	12
ECC - Sch of Civil/Constr Engr	0	0	9	2	0	11
VBS - Vet Biomedical Science	4	0	2	2	3	11
SZO - Integrative Biology	0	1	7	1	0	9
HHS - Sch of Bio/Pop Hlth Sci	0	0	5	2	2	9
ECB - Sch of Chem/Bio/Envr Eng	0	1	2	4	1	8
AHT - Horticulture	0	0	0	4	4	8
ACS - Crop and Soil Science	0	0	2	3	2	7
VCS - Vet Clinical Sciences	7	0	0	0	0	7
VTH - Vet Teaching Hospital	7	0	0	0	0	7
FOR - Forest Eng/Resources/Mgmt	0	0	4	0	2	6
ATX - Enviro / Molecular Toxic	0	0	1	2	3	6
RDR - Linus Pauling Institute	0	0	1	5	0	6
SMB - Microbiology (Science)	0	0	3	1	1	5
HHS - Sch of Soc/Bhav Hlth Sci	0	0	1	1	3	5
AHE - Hermiston Exp Sta	0	0	4	0	0	4
ESE - Sch Elect Engr/Comp Sci	0	0	2	1	1	4
AMB - Microbiology (Ag)	0	0	0	4	0	4
ASF - COMES - Newport Exp Sta	0	0	0	0	4	4
MSA - Counseling Center	4	0	0	0	0	4
EMM - Sch of Mech/Ind/Mfg Engr	0	0	2	0	1	3
AAR - Applied Economics	0	0	1	2	0	3
RNR - INR-Or Biodvrsty InfoCtr	0	0	1	2	0	3
RDR - Environ Health Sci Ctr	0	3	0	0	0	3
SBB - Biochem / Biophysics	0	0	0	1	2	3
AMM - Marine Mammal Inst	0	0	2	0	0	2
RMS - Hatfield Marine Sci Ctr	0	0	2	0	0	2
SPH - Physics	0	0	2	0	0	2
AMC - Mid-Columbia Exp Sta	0	0	1	0	1	2
KED - College of Education	0	0	1	1	0	2
ABE - Biol & Ecol Engineering	0	0	0	0	2	2
HHS - EXT Fam/CommHlth	0	0	0	0	2	2
RDR - CIMRS (Inst/Marine Res)	0	0	0	2	0	2
RNR - Institute Natrl Res Dir	0	0	0	2	0	2
ACB - Columbia Basin Exp Sta	0	0	1	0	0	1
AFS - Food Science and Techno	0	0	0	0	1	1
ANW - North Willamette Exp Sta	0	0	0	0	1	1
FOR - Wood Science / Engr	0	0	0	0	1	1
HHS - Public Hlth/HumanSci Adm	0	0	0	0	1	1
YIA - Intercolleg Athletics	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	30	8	90	70	79	277

**Table 4.** Gender distribution among appointment types.

<b>2017</b>	M	%	F	%
Clinical Fellow	12	40.0%	18	60.0%
Postdoctoral Fellow	3	37.5%	5	62.5%
Postdoctoral Scholar	56	62.2%	34	37.8%
Research Associate	33	47.1%	37	52.9%
Research Associate (Postdoc)	43	54.4%	36	45.6%
Total for all Postdoc Appts	147	53.1%	130	46.9%

**Table 5.** Reported information about race.

<b>2017</b>		<b>Race</b>				
	<b>Total</b>	<b>Asian (A, AO, AA, AC, AK, P)</b>	<b>Black / African American (B)</b>	<b>Native American (I)</b>	<b>White / Euro- American / non- Hispanic (W)</b>	<b>No Response</b>
<b>Clinical Fellow</b>	30	13%	0%	0%	47%	40%
<b>Postdoctoral Fellow</b>	8	13%	0%	0%	25%	63%
<b>Postdoctoral Scholar</b>	90	11%	0%	0%	30%	59%
<b>Research Associate</b>	70	19%	0%	1%	73%	7%
<b>Research Associate (postdoc)</b>	79	24%	3%	1%	58%	14%
<b>Total</b>	277	16%	0.51%	0.54%	47%	36%

**Table 6.** Reported information about ethnicity.

2017	Ethnicity			
	Total	Hispanic or Latino	Not Hispanic or Latino	No Response
Clinical Fellow	30	3%	57%	40%
Postdoctoral Fellow	8	0%	38%	63%
Postdoctoral Scholar	90	3%	34%	62%
Research Associate	70	1%	87%	11%
Research Associate (postdoc)	79	4%	77%	19%
<b>Total</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>39%</b>

**Table 7.** Mean annual compensation in 2017 by gender

	2017 - M	2017 - W	difference W to M
Clinical Fellow	\$35,064	\$34,776	-1%
Postdoctoral Scholar	\$47,618	\$47,337	-1%
Research Associate	\$56,704	\$44,681	-21%
Research Associate (postdoc)	\$49,238	\$40,532	-18%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$47,156</b>	<b>\$41,831</b>	<b>-11%</b>

\* Postdoc fellows not included as they are externally funded.

**Table 8.** Stipends established for 2017 by the National Institutes of Health for postdoc-level Kirschstein-National Research Service awards

Years of Experience	Stipend for FY 2016	Monthly Stipend
0	\$47,484	\$3,957
1	\$47,844	\$3,987
2	\$48,216	\$4,018
3	\$50,316	\$4,193
4	\$52,140	\$4,345
5	\$54,228	\$4,519
6	\$56,400	\$4,700
7 or More	\$58,560	\$4,880

See more at: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-17-003.html>

**Table 9.** Mean Postdoctoral Scholar stipends for 2017 by department/unit for departments/units who have at least 3 Postdoctoral Scholars

ABP - Ag Botany / Plant Path	\$44,569.85	11
PHR - Pharmacy Professnl Instr	\$44,973.60	5
SZO - Integrative Biology	\$45,552.00	7
SCH - Chemistry	\$45,734.67	9
HHS - Sch of Bio/Pop Hlth Sci	\$45,873.60	5
AHE - Hermiston Exp Sta	\$46,460.00	4
SMB - Microbiology (Science)	\$47,052.00	3
ECC - Sch of Civil/Constr Engr	\$47,766.67	9
FOR - Forest Ecosyst & Society	\$49,038.00	4
AFW - Fisheries and Wildlife	\$51,453.00	4
FOR - Forest Eng/Resources/Mgmt	\$52,122.00	4