DEANS, DIRECTORS, DEPARTMENT CHAIRS, and ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS

Re: Postdoctoral Scholar Health Benefits Program Effective January 1, 2012

I am pleased to announce a new campus policy for postdoctoral scholars.

Currently, UCLA policy mandates that postdoctoral scholars who are paid wages through the payroll system (title code 3252) receive employer-paid healthcare benefits for themselves and their family members. For the approximately 20% of postdoctoral scholars who are supported by fellowships (title code 3253) or are “paid directs” (title code 3254), the employer is not required to pay for family member coverage, although most do.

The new policy will provide the same level of coverage to all postdoctoral scholars at UCLA. Effective January 1, 2012, postdoctoral scholars who choose to enroll in the HMO or PPO medical, dental, and vision plans will have their insurance premiums covered in full by the sponsoring department, excluding the postdoctoral scholars’ required monthly premium contributions. Coverage will include the postdoctoral scholar and any eligible family members.

Click here for the full text of the policy.

Many grants, such as NRSAs, already provide resources for these health benefits costs. We recommend that departments/programs identify funds for any costs not covered by the source of compensation. Options may include other funds available to the Principal Investigator (PI) or various types of departmental funds. All units are encouraged to develop a pool of funds that would be available across the department, division, or school to cover any costs that cannot be covered by funds available to individual PIs.

Information about the new policy will be included in upcoming information sessions and the Postdoctoral Scholar Benefits Plan (PSBP) Open Enrollment workshops. For more information, click here. Please distribute this message to faculty and staff in your unit. A separate message will be sent to postdoctoral scholars about this health benefits change in time for Open Enrollment.

Sincerely,

Robin L. Garrell
Vice Provost, Graduate Education
Dean, Graduate Division
On January 1, 2005, the University of California Office of the President (UCOP) implemented a system-wide benefits program for all postdoctoral scholars appointed within the UC System, the **UC Postdoctoral Scholar Benefits Plan (PSBP)**.

The PSBP is a comprehensive program that offers medical, dental, vision, life and AD&D insurance, short-term disability insurance, and voluntary long-term disability insurance. The PSBP is comprised of the following plans, some of which offer a choice between an HMO or PPO options:

- Medical: Health Net HMO or PPO
- Dental: Health Net DHMO or Principal PPO
- Health Net Vision PPO
- Life Insurance, AD&D and Short-Term Disability Insurance
- Voluntary Long-Term Disability Insurance

**Mandatory Sponsor and Postdoctoral Scholar Contributions:** Postdoctoral Scholars in all title codes (3252, 3253, 3254) must receive health care benefits while employed at UCLA. Coverage must include the postdoctoral scholar and any eligible family members. Effective January 1, 2012, postdoctoral scholars who choose to enroll in the HMO or PPO medical, dental, and vision plans will have their insurance premiums covered in full by the sponsoring department except for the costs of the postdoctoral scholars’ required monthly premium contributions.

**Payment of Additional Premium:** Postdoctoral Scholars in all title codes are responsible for paying the additional cost of the Long-Term Disability premium should they choose to enroll in this option as per the UC-UAW postdoctoral scholar union contract. The contribution amount will be detailed on the annual benefits rates sheet.

**Mandatory Benefits:** Postdoctoral scholars who choose to opt out of the UC PSBP will still be provided with the Life Insurance & AD&D, short-term disability and workers’ compensation components of the plan. The premiums for these mandatory benefits will be charged automatically to the sponsoring department.
Exceptions: In some exceptional cases, postdoctoral scholars who are not employees, namely “fellows” and “paid-directs,” may be asked to pay some portion of the premiums. One instance will be when a postdoctoral scholar Fellow (3253) or Postdoctoral Scholar Paid-Direct (3254) has a funding source that designates or allows health benefits to be charged to her/his research or institutional allowance. In these cases, the sponsoring department’s share of the HMO or PPO costs may be covered by these sources. However, if the funding source is insufficient to cover the sponsoring department’s share, then the sponsoring department will be responsible for covering the remaining cost.

Eligibility: The eligibility requirements for the UC PSBP begin with an appointment in one of the three Postdoctoral Scholar title codes (3252, 3253, and 3254).

- **Initial Eligibility** requires an appointment at 100% time for at least three months or 50%-99% time for at least 12 months.

- **To retain eligibility**, a Postdoctoral Scholar--Employee (3252) is required to maintain an average regular paid time of at least 17.5 hours per week (43.75%).
  *Note: the paid percent time can differ from the appointment percent time. The Average Paid Time should be monitored on the IHRS screen in EDB.*

- **To retain eligibility**, Postdoctoral Scholars-Fellow (3253) or Paid Direct (3254) are required to maintain an appointment at a minimum of 43.75% time.

Eligibility for family members: Family member eligibility requirements are the same as the family member eligibility requirements for the UC Faculty/Staff plans. A Factsheet which details eligible family members is located on pages 4 and 5 here: [http://atyourservice.ucop.edu/forms_pubs/checklists_factsheets/grp_ins_emp.pdf](http://atyourservice.ucop.edu/forms_pubs/checklists_factsheets/grp_ins_emp.pdf).