

Visiting Scholar Policy and Appointment Process

Introduction

It is recognized that individuals from other institutions (e.g., universities, colleges, government agencies, foundations or industry) may seek to visit the University of Pennsylvania to learn and exchange ideas and expertise. These visits are regarded as an important component of the research and training mission of the School of Medicine. The title of Visiting Scholar is intended for individuals who currently hold a position elsewhere and are coming to the School of Medicine for a defined period of not less than 2 weeks and not more than one year. This policy is not applicable to individuals who hold either faculty positions or are students enrolled in a degree-granting program at another institution as these categories fall under the guidance of the existing University of Pennsylvania Visiting Faculty (http://www.upenn.edu/assoc-provost/handbook/ii_b_3.html) or Visiting Student policies (http://www.med.upenn.edu/bgs/current_students_visiting_policies.shtml).

The department will serve as the responsible entity for hosting the Visiting Scholar, and will ensure adherence to all relevant university and school policies and procedures: included in this is completion of the Patent Policy Participation Agreement form. Appointment as a Visiting Scholar is not an employment contract. Accordingly, the appointment may be terminated at any point for unsatisfactory activity, conduct, or for other reasons.

Definition

To be eligible for appointment as a “Visiting Scholar,” an individual must meet the following criteria:

- hold a position at his/her home institution to which they could return at the end of the Visiting Scholar appointment at Penn
- hold a terminal degree in his/her area of expertise, usually a Ph.D., D.Phil., or M.D. (or equivalent)
- Is expected to visit and shall be appointed, for a defined period of not less than 2 weeks but not more than one year
- Must not be eligible for appointment as a postdoctoral fellow or researcher
- Must not be either faculty or a student in training at the home institution

Process

A faculty member requesting appointment of a Visiting Scholar to his or her laboratory must provide a letter of appointment (template attached) to the department chair and business administrator with documentation supporting the criteria listed above.

Acceptable documentation must include, at a minimum:

- a brief statement that defines the purpose, location, and duration of the request
- proof of a terminal degree

- a letter from the home institution that verifies the employment status in good standing, the employment duration, and the promise of position retention upon return to the home institution.
- proof of financial support (in US dollar equivalents), either from the host entity and/or from the home institution (may be a combination of both)

Length of Appointment

The appointment of a Visiting Scholar will be for a maximum of one year. Oversight of Visiting Scholar appointments is the responsibility of the appointing Department Chair.

Health Insurance Coverage

Visiting Scholars must either provide evidence of health insurance or participate in a health insurance plan offered by the University. Premiums for the coverage will be the responsibility of the Visiting Scholar or the hiring department. It is recommended that Visiting Scholars from outside of the United States utilize the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program. Program regulations require that “J-1 Exchange Visitors and their dependents are required to have health insurance at all times.”