

# **Penn State Postdoctoral Society's**

## **Handbook for Postdocs**

**Penn State University  
University Park, PA 16802**



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# Penn State Postdoc Society

Dear Postdoc,

The Penn State Postdoctoral Society (PSPS) is an organization that consists of postdoctoral scholars (and fellows and research associates) working at Penn State University. PSPS has two chapters, one serving postdocs at University Park and another at Hershey Medical School. Within each of these chapters resides an executive council, which is elected by their peers at the annual general meeting.

The mission of PSPS is to enhance the postdoctoral experience at Penn State by providing resources to assist postdoctoral scholars and fellows in their professional and personal development. Our goal is to provide information and support surrounding issues such as career advancement, financial management, child and family issues, and others. Through the executive council, the PSPS is committed to representing postdoctoral causes to the university administration. In addition, we aim to facilitate social interaction between postdocs, so that as a community we can benefit from the exchange of knowledge and experience.

The University Park PSPS executive council has prepared this handbook. Its purpose is to acquaint postdoctoral scholars with the University Park Campus and its facilities, services and policies relating to postdocs. It also contains information about the surrounding State College area. The handbook is still a “work in progress” and we recognize that there may be gaps in the material. Nevertheless, we hope that you will use the resources published.

Best wishes for a rewarding Penn State experience,

## **2010-2011 PSPS Executive Council**

cover photo: The Lion Shrine at [Penn State](#) by Nathaniel C. Sheetz. 1 Feb. 2005. file: Lion Shrine PSU.jpg

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## **Introduction**

This information is intended as general information for postdoctoral scholars and fellows. It is not intended to be an official statement about or from the United States of America Federal Law/Code.

## **I. NEW POSTDOC CHECKLIST**

- 1) [If you have children, register them for childcare before you even arrive](#)
- 2) [If you're an international postdoc, visit International Scholars and Faculty Visa Services to get all your documents in order](#)
- 3) [Get your PA drivers license](#)
- 4) Attend PSPS events!

## **II. BEING A POSTDOC AT PENN STATE**

### **A. What Penn State means by “Postdoc”?**

<http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/postdocaffairs/geninfo.html>

**The Office of Vice President for Research abides by the recommendations provided by The Penn State Committee on Postdoctoral Fellows and defines a postdoctoral appointment as:**

- appointee was recently awarded a Ph.D. or equivalent doctorate (e.g., Sc.D., M.D., D.D.S., J.D.) in an appropriate field; and
- the appointment is temporary; and
- the appointee receives training under the supervision of a senior scholar or a department in a university or similar research institution (e.g., national laboratory, NIH, etc.); and
- the appointment involves substantially full-time research or scholarship; and
- the appointment is viewed as preparatory for a full-time academic and/or research career; and
- the appointee has the freedom, and is expected, to publish the results of her or his research or scholarship during the period of the appointment; and
- the initial appointment and renewals are not longer than a six-year period at Penn State, with exceptions granted to meet specific training needs of an individual and only after careful review by the college and appropriate central administrative officer

Postdoctoral education enables the recent recipient of a Ph.D. or other advanced degree an opportunity to develop further specialized research skills, learn new techniques, or enter into new fields of scholarship.

Formal programs of fellowships for specialized research training beyond the advanced degree have now become synonymous with career development in many science and engineering fields.

The "postdoc," as this training period has come to be known, is typically supported by basic and applied research funding from external grants or contracts awarded to university faculty (termed a postdoctoral scholarship) or by a fellowship award to the recipient providing him or her the opportunity to pursue advanced research with a faculty mentor (termed a postdoctoral fellowship).

Regardless of the source of funds, the postdoc should be engaged in research and scholarship under the supervision of a faculty mentor. The postdoc, much like a predoctoral student, is actively learning the complicated tasks of modern research fields. However, postdoctoral fellows are well on their way to becoming the next generation of faculty at a research university or leaders in industry and, therefore, merit full consideration for support in developing their professional careers.

## **B. The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPA)**

Penn State takes pride in offering postdoctoral training for burgeoning scientists, whether aspiring to be faculty or industry leaders. The Office of the Postdoctoral Affairs serves the University Park postdoctoral community, providing trainees with information and development opportunities to make their experiences rewarding and successful. With approximately 400 trainees on the University Park campus, the office provides services to a highly diverse postdoctoral community and works closely with the PSPS to enrich and advance their careers.

### **Contact information**

Pallavi Eswara, Staff Assistant  
315 Kern Building  
University Park, PA 16801  
Tel: (814) 865-2626  
Fax: (814) 863-1091  
Email: [pxe10@psu.edu](mailto:pxe10@psu.edu)

<http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/postdocaffairs/>

## **C. The Penn State Postdoctoral Society (PSPS)**

### **1. Mission**

The Penn State Postdoctoral Society's mission is to enhance the postdoctoral experience at Penn State by providing resources to assist postdoctoral fellows in their professional and personal development. Our aim is to provide information and support for career advancement, finances, and family issues. We are also focused on representing postdoctoral causes to the university administration. In addition, we would like to facilitate social interaction between postdocs at Penn State, towards the goal of building a community who can benefit from the exchange of knowledge and experience.

[See the PSPS Bylaws: forms.gradsch.psu.edu/postdoc/PSPSBylaws.pdf](http://forms.gradsch.psu.edu/postdoc/PSPSBylaws.pdf)

All individuals with the title of postdoctoral fellow, postdoctoral scholar, or research associate in the Pennsylvania State University payroll system or identified as such through their departments and on the University Park campus are recognized as members of the Postdoctoral Society. Those with the title of research associate must have short-term appointments as identified by the payroll system. Other individuals with similar positions to those described above who are interested may be recognized as members of the Postdoctoral Society upon request. Contact The Executive Council to request membership. <http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/postdoc/contact.cfm>

## **2. PSPS Wiki**

The PSPS maintains a wiki, PSPS Wiki, which allows users to add, remove, or otherwise edit and change most content very quickly and easily. Topics cover both the professional and personal realm. Suggestions to edit the text of this handbook can be posted on the PSPS Wiki. <http://psps.wikidot.com/>

## **3. The PSPS on Facebook**

The PSPS has a Facebook page (<http://fr-fr.facebook.com/pages/Penn-State-Postdoc-Society/97195438937>)! Many postdocs post both social and professional events.

## **D. Postdoctoral Orientation**

The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPA) organizes orientations biannually. Orientations are hosted by OPA and include representatives from the Benefits Office, Human Resources and the PSPS. International postdocs may find this orientation particularly useful to ask specific questions about postdoc life at Penn State and in the United States.

## **E. Eberly College of Science – Postdoc information guide**

The Eberly College of Science contains approximately half of the postdocs at the University Park campus. Therefore, when attempting to find scientific resources, a good place to start is the college website: <http://www.science.psu.edu/>.

A particular point of interest, regardless of the specific field, is the daily open scientific seminars that anyone can freely attend. Speakers catering to an audience from all departments are scheduled in weekly groupings. Talks are listed by week: <http://www.science.psu.edu/scisem/scisem.htm>

## **F. Human Resources**

Information related to this topic can be found online at the Office of Human Resources website: [www.ohr.psu.edu](http://www.ohr.psu.edu).

## **1. Salary/Compensation and Position Term Limits**

All newly appointed postdoctoral fellows for the year 2010-11 will receive a minimum salary of \$37,140: <http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/postdocaffairs/geninfo.html>. Postdoctoral scholars at Penn State have term limits of 6 years.

## **2. Benefits**

Postdocs are eligible to elect participation in the University's Highmark Blue

Shield PPO Blue health plan, including applicable pharmacy coverage, plus the dental and vision plans for yourself and eligible dependents. The age-graded life insurance plan is available for you only. For up to date information on insurance costs and coverage visit the Benefits Office website: <http://ohr.psu.edu/benefits/insurance>.

### **Tips and advice:**

The U.S. health insurance system is complicated and bewildering, even to people who have lived here all their lives, so it's doubly perilous to new arrivals from overseas. There are many and varied pitfalls to avoid.

The first weapon in your armory is **each provider's helpline number in your phone** (it is also on the back of your insurance card). If in doubt or if you stand to pay out more than \$50-100, CALL YOUR PROVIDER FIRST! They're very helpful and are more than happy to answer your questions.

Your second weapon is to carefully **read and understand all your insurance documents**, especially the exclusion sections (of which there are many). It's complicated, steeped in legalese and largely impenetrable, but it will help you in the long run.

You have a third weapon. **Before being involved in a costly and major procedure, get a second opinion:** it is well worth the \$15 or \$10 in co-pay.

### **Health**

- Go to healthcare providers that are in the PPO Blue network as your costs will be considerably lower.
- **Be very careful that any doctor you see in the emergency room is in the Highmark network**, as some doctors working in the emergency room are not in network, therefore you will have to pay non-network fees in addition to the emergency room co-payment.
- **Only services on Highmark's Preventative Schedule are covered, otherwise there has to be a medical necessity**, e.g. your doctor wants to run a full blood test outside of the annual checkup, even though you're perfectly healthy – **THIS WILL NOT BE COVERED BY HIGHMARK**. A blood test will only be covered if you are presenting disease or illness symptoms that would indicate a blood disorder or imbalance. This is a very common unexpected cost, so please call Highmark before agreeing to routine tests to see if they'll be covered.

### **Dental**

- Predetermination over \$200: This is exceptionally important, as if you or your dentist does not predetermine coverage or eligibility (this is a joint responsibility) you may not be covered and will be liable for the whole cost of treatment.
- Several of the 40% co-pay procedures will potentially take you over your \$1000 yearly allowance, so carry out your pre-determination with both your dentist and United Concordia so you know how much you will pay. Get this in writing for both parties.
- Put United Concordia's number in your cell phone! 1-800-423-8217. Not all dentists can be trusted, even (or especially) the large practice(s), to give you

accurate information, so get the full information from United Concordia!

### **3. Parental Accommodation Guideline**

The University has an approved a [parental accommodation guideline](#) for all postdocs, grad student teaching assistants and research assistants. The guideline suggests 6 weeks of paid leave for the primary caregiver following the birth or adoption of a child.

### **4. Retirement Investment Options**

Retirement funds and savings are not currently offered to Penn State postdocs. The PSPS would like to see this change. Until then, if you are interested in saving and investing in retirement, you can speak with a private broker, or check into the "retirement builder" program, an affiliate membership benefit to the National Postdoctoral Association.

### **5. Visas**

International postdocs offered a position at Penn State will have their visa application, usually J-1 but sometimes H-1B, made for them on their behalf by the International Scholar and Faculty Visa Services in 424 Bourke Building, University Park, PA 16802 (phone: 814-865-6246).

The information below is taken from:

[www.gradsch.psu.edu/postdocaffairs/international.html](http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/postdocaffairs/international.html)

Postdoctoral fellows from other countries who are not citizens or permanent residents of the United States must have the appropriate visa type to work. International Scholars and Faculty Visa Services (ISFVS) will work with you and your department to bring you on the visa that is deemed most appropriate for your time at Penn State. ISFVS also processes any necessary extensions or changes in your visa status. Currently Penn State will sponsor postdocs on both the J-1 and H-1 B visas.

#### **i. When you arrive at Penn State University**

Please make sure that you make your appointment to meet with your immigration consultant in ISFVS – located in room 404 of James M. Elliott Building, 120 South Burrowes Street to check in and complete an Employee Eligibility Verification Form, commonly known as the I-9 form. Please take the following documents with you:

1. Your passport;
2. Your I-94 card (depending on your visa);
3. Your visa document (DS2019 or I-797)

This check-in will take approximately 20-30 minutes. During this time, your consultant will review important information about your visa status, as well as answer any

immediate questions that you might have. The I-9 form will also be completed. It is necessary for you to give your completed I-9, and a copy of your social security card (if you have it) to your departmental contact.

If you will be receiving a paycheck through Penn State, you cannot work or be paid until you have completed the paperwork at ISFVS and have applied for a social security number.

To apply for Social Security number, you must wait until you have been in the United States for at least ten days. After the tenth day visit the Social Security Administration Office, located at 901 University Drive, Suite 2. Please take the following documents with you:

1. Your passport
2. Your I-94 card
3. Your form DS2019 or I-797 Approval Notice
4. The visa foil in your passport

If there are no problems or delays, you should receive your Social Security number and card within 4-6 weeks. Upon receipt of the card, please give a copy to your department, as well as payroll.

## **ii. Changing your address with ISFVS and USCIS**

If you move while in the United States you will need to file an address change with ISFVS, as well as the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service. (USCIS) If you are in J-1 status, all address changes require an action through the SEVIS system. Please contact your immigration consultant via e-mail with the new information. If you are in H-1B or J-1 status you will also need to notify USCIS of your address change. This can be done electronically by locating the form AR11 on the USCIS website at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) under the forms and fees section.

## **iii. Insurance**

You will find in the United States that the health care system is fairly complicated, privately insured, and can be very expensive. It is therefore, strongly recommended that all postdocs carry insurance. If you are on a J-1 visa it is a requirement that you must have health insurance, medical evacuation, and repatriation insurance.

Postdoctoral scholars holding J-1 visas and their dependents qualify for student rates on medical evacuation and repatriation insurance. To apply, take your visa and passport to the Student Insurance Office, 320 Grange Building; phone (814) 865-7467. There are several other providers of medical repatriation insurance, such as [www.betins.com](http://www.betins.com), which may offer more competitive rates depending on family size. This insurance must be renewed each year. It will be necessary to demonstrate proof of insurance when requesting extensions of your J-1 visa.

If you are appointed through Penn State, you should qualify for participation in the University medical insurance plan. In order to obtain these benefits you will need to

fill out the appropriate forms and return them to your departmental administrative assistant within thirty days of your appointment start date

**iv. International Resources**

As a University and State College community member, you will note that there are a number of resources available to you.

[Global Connections](#) at Penn State can provide you and your spouse or partner with conversation partners. The council also organizes a friendship program and a speakers program, and provides basic English classes and tax assistance. Please contact them to find out more about the tax assistance program.

New Scholar Orientation: [ISFVS](#) offers a 4-hour orientation for all new international scholars regardless of their appointment type. This orientation is offered once a semester and will be advertised on their website.

IFSVS provides information on the paperwork required when international postdoctoral fellows have to travel outside of the United States. Please contact their office for further information or forms and also inform your departmental contact whenever you travel outside of the United States.

[International Student Services](#) provides many and varied opportunities for international employees and students to travel, volunteer, and participate in University events.

The University Payroll Office has information on the types of documents required by international postdoctoral fellows for tax purposes at <http://www.controller.psu.edu/Divisions/PayrollOffice/international.html>

**As Postdoctoral appointments are temporary in nature, Penn State will not sponsor individuals in those positions for employment based on permanent residency.**

**6. HR Policy for Postdoctoral Scholars and conflict resolution:**

Official Penn State Policy governing postdoctoral appointments is HR68. Please go to the webpage for any policy information: [guru.psu.edu/policies/OHR/hr68.html](http://guru.psu.edu/policies/OHR/hr68.html). Of particular importance is the section dealing with conflict resolution. If you feel unable to resolve conflicts with your PI directly, your first option should be to talk to your personal mentor, followed by your department head and college HR manager. Should these approaches prove insufficient, it would be worth involving as a last resort the dean of the college and assistant dean of the Office for Postdoctoral Affairs.

## **G. IDPs, mentoring and reviews**

Your relationship with your PI is critical to your success as a postdoc at Penn State and the progression of your career after you leave Penn State. A large part of any successful relationship is communication, which goes both ways, so the first thing you should do when you arrive at Penn State is to develop an Individual Development Plan (IDP).

The National Postdoc Association hosts an excellent IDP on its website: [Individual Development Plan for Postdoctoral Fellows](#)

With an annual review template: [Sample Annual Review](#)

Self assessment checklist, which can help with filling out the IDP: [Competency Checklist](#)

Using this IDP, you and your PI can work together to plan out both your research at Penn State and your personal career development. Not only will this help clarify your research and personal priorities, but it will also help avoid any misunderstanding between you and your PI over what you intend to achieve during the year ahead.

Developing an IDP with your PI is one part of your relationship and is in turn part of a broader concept of mentoring. Mentoring can mean different things to different people, but in general it is the provision of advice, guidance, resources and training by the mentor (your PI) to the trainee (you). Seeking mentoring is as much a skill as any of your professional abilities, irrespective of field, and takes hard work and thought to develop. Below are some helpful links about mentoring and being mentored. In addition, don't forget that your PI does not have to be your only mentor, you can have as many mentors as you feel you need, so approach other postdocs or faculty to build your own network of mentors. Your personal and professional development will be the better for it!

### **[Some links](#)**

#### **Three-month performance review, annual review and contract renewal**

Penn State does not have an official performance review process. However, each postdoc is encouraged to meet with their PI after three months to discuss progress and expectations. The annual review should take place three-to-four months before the end of the contract, to allow for contract and visa renewal (if necessary), and can use the research priorities from that year's IDP for assessment. This would also make an excellent time to prepare the next year's IDP!

### III. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Penn State offers a wide variety of professional development resources for postdoctoral researchers. These include on-campus career and teaching centers, and regular seminars on writing, speaking, job searches, and other topics of interest to the postdoctoral community. There are also a number of online resources available both through Penn State and through other organizations; links to some of are below.

#### A. Career Services

Ultimately, postdocs will want to draw their experience at Penn State to a close, and move forward to other positions. Career Services, part of the Division of Student Affairs, provides services to Penn State students and faculty, offering workshops, seminars, interviews, and job postings.

**Location:**

101 Bank of America Career Services Center

Located across Bigler Road from the outdoor swimming pool. [[Map](#)]

**Hours:**

Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

[Drop-In](#) assistance available beginning at 8:30 a.m.

Open Tuesdays during fall/spring semesters until 7:00 p.m.

**Phone:** (814) 865-2377 **Fax:** (814) 863-0226

Their website has useful postings, like their career guide and more information about the services that they offer including: Career Counseling and Planning, Outreach Programming, Recruiting and Employer Services, and links to Resources.

[www.sa.psu.edu/career/](http://www.sa.psu.edu/career/)

#### B. PSPS Executive Council

Participating in the PSPS executive council is a great way to practice leadership skills and develop a network of peers outside your research group. If you have ideas for professional development activities, social events, want to develop crucial administration skills or even just have pet peeves that you want to tackle, then contact the PSPS executive council. Elections are held every year at the PSPS annual meeting, held between May and July.

#### C. Professional Development Brown Bag Lunch Series

The PSPS and OPA host professional development **brown bag lunches** and workshops every semester. Upcoming talks are publicized through the postdoctoral email

list. Faculty members from a variety of departments have spoken over the past year on topics including the academic recruitment process, scientific writing, interviewing skills, and developing a teaching statement.

#### **D. Teaching Skills**

**The Schreyer Institute** [www.schreyerinstitution.psu.edu](http://www.schreyerinstitution.psu.edu) is a campus organization devoted to improving teaching at PSU. They conduct periodic **seminars on teaching** [www.events.psu.edu/cgi-bin/cal/webevent.cgi?cmd=open&cal=cal381](http://www.events.psu.edu/cgi-bin/cal/webevent.cgi?cmd=open&cal=cal381), and can help with curriculum design, or in putting together a teaching portfolio for job applications.

**Tomorrow's Professor** [ctl.stanford.edu/Tomprof/index.shtml](http://ctl.stanford.edu/Tomprof/index.shtml) is an open mailing list that sends out periodic **mailings on topics in teaching and academic employment**. Topics range from ways to evaluate student learning and ways to control difficult students in the classroom, to interacting with your department chair as a faculty member.

#### **E. CVs, Resumes, and Interviews**

The **Penn State Career Center** [www.sa.psu.edu/career/students.shtml](http://www.sa.psu.edu/career/students.shtml) offers a variety of services including online career development workshops, in-person resume reviews, and mock interviews. They also maintain the **Career Library** (room 115 Career Services Center), which provides printed resources relating to the job search.

[Some links](#)

#### **F. Writing and Graphics**

While a postdoc at Penn State, it is expected that you will be making extensive contributions to scientific documentation. For those who need to familiarize themselves with standards of writing in science and engineering, Penn State engineering professor Michael Alley has created a webpage, with other contributors, providing extensive guidelines related to **writing, editing, and presenting skills for engineers and scientists**. (<http://www.writing.engr.psu.edu/>)

**Assertion-Evidence Presentation Approach for Scientists: Michael Alley**  
[http://www.writing.engr.psu.edu/teaching\\_slide\\_design.html](http://www.writing.engr.psu.edu/teaching_slide_design.html)

**Writing Assistance for Scientists: Michael Alley**  
<http://www.writing.engr.psu.edu/exercises/index.html>

[Some links](#)

## **G. External Funding: Fellowships and Grants**

The **Graduate School** offers a series of **grant-writing workshops**, some with discipline-specific advice. Contact Marissa Kutoloski ([Mdk12@psu.edu](mailto:Mdk12@psu.edu)) for further information on schedules.

**UCLA** has an **online database of postgraduate funding** opportunities. (<http://www.gdnet.ucla.edu/grpinst.htm>)

The National Postdoc Association has a very valuable fellowship and grant resource for international postdocs, who are typically excluded from a large number of U.S. postdoctoral fellowships and grants:

<http://www.nationalpostdoc.org/publications/international-postdoc-resources>

## **H. Public Speaking**

[Some links](#)

## **I. External links on National Councils and helpful computing resources**

[Some links](#)

## IV. RESEARCH ETHICS

At Penn State, the Office for Research Protections (ORP) handles issues relating to the responsible conduct of research (RCR), including guidelines, education, and administration. ([www.research.psu.edu/orp](http://www.research.psu.edu/orp)).

The Office for Research Protections partners with researchers and seven University review committees to facilitate a culture of outstanding integrity, responsibility, and trust in Penn State research. This is accomplished through a shared responsibility among the ORP and the Penn State research community to ensure that research at the University is conducted in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations and guidelines that protect human participants, animals, students, and personnel involved with research. The ORP also protects the integrity of research conducted at Penn State by offering education and training to faculty, staff, students, and the community; guiding and assisting researchers with management of real or perceived conflicts of interest; and supporting investigations and corrective actions related to non-compliance and misconduct.

### A. Responsible Conduct of Research Initiatives

The Office for Research Protections' Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) initiatives strive to foster a university culture of research integrity focused on ensuring that all researchers at Penn State share the ideal to conduct research responsibly.

#### a. Education and Training

The Office for Research Protections Education Program directs the Scholarship and Research Integrity at PSU (SARI@PSU) program, and offers educational events and workshop series (including the Scholarship and Research Ethics Brownbag series, the Survival Skills and Ethics series, the IRB101 series, and the RCR In Focus series of workshops). A schedule and more details can be found on the education program website ([www.research.psu.edu/training](http://www.research.psu.edu/training)).



Beginning September 1, 2011, the SARI@PSU program provides RCR educational opportunities to all new Penn State faculty, postdoctoral fellows, graduate students, and undergraduate researchers. ***Postdocs hired after 9/1/11 are required to take an online RCR training course during their first year of research at PSU.*** Information and access to the online training can be found at the SARI Resource Portal ([www.research.psu.edu/training/sari](http://www.research.psu.edu/training/sari)); questions may be sent to [sari@psu.edu](mailto:sari@psu.edu).

## **b. Research Misconduct**

Penn State's guidelines for the responsible conduct of research can be found in guideline RA16 (<http://guru.psu.edu/policies/rag16.html>).

Research misconduct is defined in policy RA10

(<http://guru.psu.edu/policies/ra10.html>) as:

1. fabrication, falsification, plagiarism or other practices that seriously deviate from accepted practices within the scientific community for proposing, conducting, or reporting research or other scholarly activities; or
2. callous disregard for requirements that ensure the protection of researchers, human participants, or the public; or for ensuring the welfare of laboratory animals; or
3. failure to disclose significant financial and business interest as defined by Penn State Policy RA20, Individual Conflict of Interest (<http://guru.psu.edu/policies/ra20.html>); or
4. failure to comply with other applicable legal requirements governing research or other scholarly activities.

It does not include disputes regarding routine, non-creative works of authorship, honest error, or honest differences in interpretations or judgments of data, and is not intended to resolve bona fide scientific disagreement or debate.

Penn State Policy RA10 "Handling Inquiries/Investigations Into Questions of Ethics in Research and in Other Scholarly Activities" establishes procedures for addressing allegations and handling inquiries/investigations of research misconduct (<http://guru.psu.edu/policies/ra10.html>). The ORP provides administrative support and oversight of this process. Anyone who believes that an act of research misconduct has occurred at the University is strongly encouraged to begin a discussion with the budget administrator or budget executive of the College; the Vice President for Research; or the director of ORP. Concerns about research may also be directed to the Penn State Ethics and Compliance Hotline at 1-800-560-1637.

## **B. Human Participants Research (IRB)**

The Human Research Protection Program (HRPP) ensures compliance with federal, state, and local regulations as well as institutional policies and procedures regarding the use of humans as participants in research. The HRPP manages all human participant research studies at University Park and all other campus locations (with the exception of the College of Medicine located at the Hershey Medical Center). The HRPP provides support to two Institutional Review Boards (IRB).

HRPP staff are available to provide guidance and education on research involving human participants ([www.research.psu.edu/offices/orp/hrpp](http://www.research.psu.edu/offices/orp/hrpp); (814) 865-1775; [ORProtections@psu.edu](mailto:ORProtections@psu.edu)).

### **C. Animal Research (IACUC)**

The Animal, Biosafety and Isotope Research Protection Program, in the Office for Research Protections, facilitates the activities of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee at all campus locations except the College of Medicine. ORP staff are available to provide guidance on research involving animal subjects ([www.research.psu.edu/orp/animals](http://www.research.psu.edu/orp/animals); 814-865-1775; [ORProtections@psu.edu](mailto:ORProtections@psu.edu)).

### **D. Conflict of Interest**

The Conflict of Interest (COI) program manages all significant financial or business interest disclosures for Penn State faculty, staff, and students, and provides support to both the individual and institutional conflict of interest committees. The COI program also maintains the University's individual and institutional COI Research Administration (RA) policies, guidelines, and procedures and strives to ensure compliance with all federal, state, and local COI regulations and guidelines.

Contact the COI program with any questions ([www.research.psu.edu/offices/orp/coi](http://www.research.psu.edu/offices/orp/coi); 814-865-1775; [ORProtections@psu.edu](mailto:ORProtections@psu.edu)).

### **E. Research with Hazardous Materials**

It is important that research be conducted in a manner that promotes the safety of researchers, research participants, and the environment. Researchers using bio hazardous material, radioisotopes, or other potentially hazardous materials should be sure to obtain appropriate approvals for use, adequate training, maintain necessary inspections and certifications, properly handle and dispose of hazardous materials, follow appropriate safety procedures.

Questions or concerns regarding research safety may be directed to the Office of Environmental Health and Safety ([www.ehs.psu.edu](http://www.ehs.psu.edu); (814) 865-6391). All other questions or concerns about research involving hazardous materials should be directed to ORP's Animal, Biosafety, and Isotopes Research Protection Program ([www.research.psu.edu/offices/orp/abirpp](http://www.research.psu.edu/offices/orp/abirpp); 814-865-1775; [ORProtections@psu.edu](mailto:ORProtections@psu.edu)).

## **V. OTHER PENN STATE SERVICES AND RESOURCES**

### **A. Cafeterias**

Penn State's food services website is a great place to start looking for cafeterias and other food services on campus. There are many food services dining areas throughout the campus and they are open to everyone (not just undergraduate students). <http://www.foodservices.psu.edu/default.shtml>

### **B. Childcare**

This website has many helpful links for childcare at Penn State and in the State College Community. [www.ohr.psu.edu/WorkLife/FamilyRes.cfm](http://www.ohr.psu.edu/WorkLife/FamilyRes.cfm). Childcare services are available to postdocs at several Penn State University Park locations. Links to these facilities are available through the Work/Life Office home page (<http://www.ohr.psu.edu/WorkLife/home.cfm>). The two main childcare facilities at University Park (UP) campus are the Bennett Family Center and the Child Development Lab. These facilities are highly regarded and are open to Penn State students, postdoctoral scholars, faculty and staff. Fees are determined by annual household income on a sliding fee scale. Due to its high level of care and the large number of families seeking a placement for their child, spaces are limited. When you first apply, you will likely be placed on a waiting list. It is therefore advisable that you place your name on the list as soon as possible, even before you arrive, and also investigate additional childcare options for your child.

The OHR website also provides information about the different types of childcare available in Pennsylvania and advice (including a checklist) on how to assess and determine the suitability of these facilities for your child's needs.

Another useful site that allows you to search for child care providers in the State College area is provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare: <http://www.dpw.state.pa.us/ServicesPrograms/ChildCareEarlyEd/>

### **C. Interpreting Services**

This site is useful for those with disabilities and need an interpreter or translator. [http://www.equity.psu.edu/ods/students/policies\\_interpreters.asp](http://www.equity.psu.edu/ods/students/policies_interpreters.asp)

### **D. IT Services**

Walk-in, phone, and e-mail computer consulting is provided by the Information Technology Services ([helpdesk.psu.edu](http://helpdesk.psu.edu)) in 6 Willard Building (phone: (814) 863-1035) and 204 Wagner Building (phone: (814) 863-2494). Get the most out of your Penn State

computing account: <http://its.psu.edu/computing.html>

**E. Safety Training**

Safety training is available through your department. If you are planning to work in a lab, you should attend the Environmental Health & Safety Training within 60 days from your arrival. Register online at: [www.ehs.psu.edu/training/index.cfm](http://www.ehs.psu.edu/training/index.cfm)

**F. Penn State University Libraries**

Penn State Libraries offer a variety of information services to Penn State postdocs. You can find out about all these services through their website: <http://www.libraries.psu.edu/psul.html>. You can also access e-journals via the library home page, just click the E-Journals tag in the “Start Here” window and enter the journal name.

**G. Penn State Statistical Consulting Center**

Get help and statistical advice from Penn State's Stats Consulting Lab. Postdocs are typically eligible for a single hour of consulting per semester. Other options are available at the Consulting Center – a service worth checking into:

[www.stat.psu.edu/centers/scc.html](http://www.stat.psu.edu/centers/scc.html) Occupational Medicine – Worker's Compensation

**H. Occupational medicine – Worker's compensation**

At Penn State, the Office of Human Resources (OHR) acts as a liaison between the injured employee and claim adjusters or medical providers. Timely reporting is an essential key for a successful claim. For more information check out the website at <http://www.ohr.psu.edu/WorkersComp/home.cfm>

**I. Employment Assistance Services**

To find out if employment opportunities exist for a spouse or family member, contact the Office of Human Resources: Dual Career Employment Assistance Program at <http://www.ohr.psu.edu/dual-career/>. Some employment information is also located at the PSPS website <http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/postdoc/index.cfm>

**J. Penn State Live – Official news source for Penn State**

Don't miss out on the latest news at the University. <http://live.psu.edu/>

## VI. TRANSPORT

### A. Campus shuttles

University Park has a campus bus service (served by CATA, see <http://www.catabus.com/> for detailed route and schedule information), designated by color (Red Link, White/Blue Loop, and Green Link). CATA also has bus routes throughout State College and to neighboring towns which are designated by letters (e.g., **P** to Science Park, **X – Bellefonte / Pleasant Gap**, etc ). CATA's main hub, or point of origin, is downtown State College (College Avenue & Allen Street) and all buses, at some point, also pass the campus hub (Campus: Curtin Road at Pattee Transit Center). The equipment for campus bus loops and links is identical to the bus-line equipment, so check the front display of the bus. Beware: the bus lines and loop/links schedules change for holidays and days when fewer students are on campus (e.g., summer). Most bus lines run with buses that have bike racks on the front.

Penn State Transportation Services also runs a shuttle bus service that loops one direction around campus. This shuttle goes to far flung places on this large campus, and more information on route and schedule can be found here: <http://www.transportation.psu.edu/shuttle/>. Shuttle stops are different than the CATA stops, it is free to ride, and up to the point of publication of this handbook, shuttles don't allow bikes in the passenger compartment and do not have bike racks.

### B. Bicycling

Penn State requires students, faculty and staff to register your bike with the campus police (Eisenhower Parking Deck, [www.bikeregistration.psu.edu/](http://www.bikeregistration.psu.edu/)). Rules and requirement about riding can be found here. Good bike locks are strongly encouraged, and leaving your bike over summer and other breaks is strongly discouraged due to theft and vandalism. Bikes should be secured at home as bikes are commonly stolen from balconies, yards, etc. Biking on campus should be done on the roads, as the sidewalks can be very crowded.

State College Bike Routes – there are several sealed and loose surfaced bike paths in the State College area, which make for a very pleasant way to commute to campus and explore the town: [http://www.transportation.psu.edu/bicycles/images/CATA\\_Maps.pdf](http://www.transportation.psu.edu/bicycles/images/CATA_Maps.pdf)  
Note that bike paths are not cleared of snow during winter.

There are a number of bike vendors in town: a great local bike shop for cycles of all kinds:

[www.thebicycleshopinc.com/](http://www.thebicycleshopinc.com/)  
<http://freezethaw.com/>  
[www.mtnittanywheelworks.com/](http://www.mtnittanywheelworks.com/)  
[www.rbr.info](http://www.rbr.info)

## **C. Transportation and Mobility Off-Campus**

General information relative to transportation in Pennsylvania can be found at the website of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDoT) <http://www.dmv.state.pa.us/> .

More specific information related to transportation at Penn State (on campus parking, bus passes) can be found at <http://www.transportation.psu.edu/>

### **1. Driving – Driver's Licenses – Parking**

Details about getting a drivers license can be found here: [www.dmv.state.pa.us/centers/licenseIDCenter.shtml](http://www.dmv.state.pa.us/centers/licenseIDCenter.shtml). If you don't already have a U.S state-issued driver's license, there are multiple steps to getting a license to drive in Pennsylvania, which can be time-consuming. Download the Pennsylvania Driver Manual at: [http://www.dmv.state.pa.us/driversmanual/pa\\_driversman.shtml](http://www.dmv.state.pa.us/driversmanual/pa_driversman.shtml).

Free hard copies are also available at the driving license center and this information is by far the most accurate. The closest driver's PennDoT Photo and Exam center is situated on 812 West College Avenue, Pleasant Gap, PA 16823 - Phone: (814) 359-4446 - Opened Tue-Sat 8:30 a.m.- 4:15 p.m. This is about 5 minutes drive down College Avenue past Nittany Mall. The CATA bus X stops there.

#### **a. Getting a driver's license**

Non-Pennsylvania U.S. nationals:

You can trade it for a Pennsylvania license.

French or German nationals:

You can trade it in without doing the driving or knowledge test (you still have to pass a very brief eye test). Note that your original license is sent back to the appropriate service of your country. The papers required to trade your license are: photo ID (Passport...), Social Security Number, DS-2019, letter from the International Scholar and Faculty Visa Services to justify that you are at least for one more year in the United States, check to pay the PennDoT fee, copies of two proof of residency (utility bill, rental agreement, bank statement...). However, you will have to go twice to the driving license center. First to fill a form, so that they can verify with the country where your license was issued, that your request is legitimate. Once they have received the answer from your country (~ after 1-2 weeks) you can go back to pass the eye test and get your license.

Other international postdocs.

- 1) You can drive on your home country license for one year from the date you enter the United States.

- 2) You can't get a Pennsylvania ID card or Pennsylvania driver's license if you have been in Pennsylvania for less than one year and are on a one-year contract (almost all postdocs). You may be able to get around this if you can provide proof (letter from PI) that you will be employed at Penn State for more than one year.
- 3) You need your Social Security Number. If you are ineligible (eg. spouses on J-2 visas) you need a letter from Social Security stating that. They will try and tell you that they don't provide such letters so you must insist.
- 4) If you do not have a Pennsylvania ID or driver's license, you cannot buy a car in Pennsylvania and your car insurance will be much more expensive (only Allstate offers car insurance to international drivers as far as we are aware).
- 5) Once you have been here a year, you must first apply for a learner's permit (<http://www.dmv.state.pa.us/teenDriversCenter/obtainingLearnersPermit.shtml> or call 1-800-932-4600 for details). After you get your learner's permit, you apply to do the practical test. You need to do the test in someone's car, who has a valid PA license with the correct insurance papers, and, **very importantly**, be driven by them to the test center (if you don't you can be fined for driving without a license). Sometimes, on the page where you book the times for the test there can be a very long wait (a month or more) to do the test at Pleasant Gap. It is a good idea to check often because people cancel and then you can take their spot. Another alternative is to do the test in a less popular location, such as Huntingdon, Lewistown, Altoona, or Clearfield.
- 6) You need to take with you the same documents (plus checkbook) as described in the French/ German nation section above.
- 7) It is **strongly** recommended that you take driving lessons before taking your test, as the test is very short and intense, but easy to fail. The failure rate is especially high for international postdocs. Besides, more training = safer driver and fewer accidents. There are only 2 driving instructors in State College:  
 Maefield Driver Training Inc  
 210 Norle Street, State College, PA 16801-6959 (814) 238-2210 (very good, caters to all abilities)  
 and  
 D & D Driving School  
 1001 Karen Street, Boalsburg, PA 16827-1641 (814) 466-6368 (more aimed at high school students)
- 8) They both have few open slots, so arrange appointments far ahead of when you want to take your test. Your license is only valid for as long as your DS-2019, so you will need to renew it every year.

Renewing your driver's license: you will need new (less than 30 days old) versions of **exactly** the same documents that you needed to get your license in the first place. Crazy, I know!

**Drive Safely!** <http://www.drivesafepa.org>

**b. Parking – On Campus**

The University Parking Office is located at the Eisenhower Parking Deck (Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Phone: (814) 865-1436).

If you wish to **park regularly on campus**, you must buy a parking permit, which has to be displayed on your vehicle's rear view mirror. This parking permit allows you to park on specific parking lots at specific times. You can find all the details of the program at <http://www.transportation.psu.edu/parking/facultystaff/permits.shtml> and the map displaying parking lots available to you <http://www.transportation.psu.edu/forms/Fac-StaffParkingMaps.pdf>

To **avoid a ticket (fine)**, be aware of the campus parking regulations <http://www.transportation.psu.edu/parking/regulations.shtml>. If you live far away from campus, it may worth checking the Rideshare program <http://www.transportation.psu.edu/parking/facultystaff/rideshare.shtml>

Note that public parking is available on campus for **visitors**, at parking decks for 1\$/hr: HUB Deck (off Shortlidge Road), East Deck (off Bigler Road), and Nittany Deck (beside the Nittany Lion Inn), or for very short term (30 min) at meters <http://www.transportation.psu.edu/parking/facultystaff/up.shtml>

**Are you sure you really need to park on campus?** The University Parking Office offers the “Ride for 5” program which allows you to give back your parking permit and get a bus pass valid on all CATA buses for only \$5/month. See <http://www.transportation.psu.edu/parking/facultystaff/rideforfive.shtml> for details.

**c. Parking – Downtown State College**

Some information on downtown parking is provided here: <http://www.downtownstatecollege.com/parking.html#map> , and general rules and parking possibilities are available on the borough website <http://www.statecollegepa.us/index.aspx?NID=1151>.

**D. Reaching / Leaving State College**

**1. University Park Airport**

University Park Airport (SCE) <http://www.statecollegeairport.com/> offers many

daily flights to and from Philadelphia, Washington D.C., and Detroit.

## **2. Regular bus lines**

State College has a Greyhound terminal at 152 North Atherton Street - Phone (814) 238-7971, which provides connection to the Greyhound coach network. Discounts apply if you book online and in advance online <http://www.greyhound.com>. Remember that Greyhound works on a first arrived/first served basis.

A far cheaper alternative lies with Megabus (<http://us.megabus.com/>), which connects State College to Camden, Harrisburg, New York, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh and leaves State College from the bus stop between Walmart and McDonald's on North Atherton Street. Ticket prices depend on how far in advance you book and can be as cheap as \$1 each way plus \$0.50 booking fee.

## **3. Express service in association with Penn State Transportation Service**

Every weekend when classes are in session, Penn State Transportation and Fullington Tour provide bus service to New York City, and Baltimore/ Washington DC area. See <http://www.transportation.psu.edu/psu2nyc/> for details.

## **4. Train**

State College is serviced by Amtrak via stations in Altoona, Tyrone, Lewistown, Huntingdon, and Harrisburg. From Altoona, Tyrone, Lewistown, and Huntingdon, there is the "Pennsylvanian" which connects once a day to New York • Philadelphia • Pittsburgh. From Harrisburg, in addition to the "Pennsylvanian", there is the "Keystone" which connects many times per day to Philadelphia and New York. See <http://www.amtrak.com> for details.

## **5. Taxi**

Handy Delivery (814-355-5555) <http://www.handydelivery.com/>

Nittany Express (Airport Shuttle: 814-867-4647 Taxi: 814-867-4646)  
<http://nittanyexpress.com/>

AA Taxi (814-231-8294) <http://www.statecollegetaxi.com>

## **VII. CAMPUS AND STATE COLLEGE LIVING**

### **A. Living in the State College area**

#### **Renting in State College:**

There are two main areas to live in State College: Toftrees and anywhere else. Toftrees is where a fair number of graduate students and postdocs live. The area is quiet and 5 minutes from campus. It's close enough to walk, bike, bus, or drive in. As Toftrees is rather popular, housing in this area can be more difficult to come by, but there is space. Most of the apartments are 1-2 bedrooms, and there are also townhomes. In Toftrees, there are two rental companies, "Toftrees," which owns Cooper's Pond and Turtle Creek, and Berger, which owns everything else.

Cooper's Pond has 1-3 bedroom townhomes. They can be rather pricey for a single person (even on a postdoc salary in my opinion), but it is definitely doable with a dual-income. A good thing about Cooper's Pond is that they allow both dogs and cats whereas most other places only allow cats. This seems to be a global issue in State College (yes to cats, no to dogs). They also have washer-dryer hook-up whereas most other rental places do not. Turtle Creek has 1 and 2-bedroom apartments, which is the apartment side of Cooper's Pond. You can find out more info at: <http://www.toftreesapartments.com/> The Berger (Toftrees) Apartment complex has a number of complexes, studio - 2 bedrooms: <http://www.rentberger.com/toftrees/>

As for places that aren't Toftrees, most of the other graduate students and postdocs live in Lion's Gate (or other complexes off of Waupelani Drive and Westerley Parkway). Lion's Gate is on the other side of downtown State College. <http://www.lionsgateapts.com/> For all other places, the following websites are useful:

<http://www.statecollege.com/apartments/> and <http://pennstate.craigslist.org/hhh/>

#### **Renting/buying homes & living outside of State College:**

As for finding housing outside of State College, the town of Boalsburg and Bellefonte are about 10 minutes and 30 minutes, respectively, from State College and are both very pleasant places to live with different vibes to State College and each other. Both rental costs and purchase prices are less expensive in Boalsburg and Bellefonte than in State College, a bit more so in Bellefonte.

#### **Random tidbits of information (in no particular order):**

- (1) There are a number of apartment and townhome complexes that offer exceptional prices on their websites; however, applying to live at these properties comes with catch: tenants can't make over a certain amount. There is quite a bit of subsidized housing around here (mostly for undergrads), and the max cap on income is (usually) well below what the minimum salary requirements for postdocs.
- (2) Try to avoid living downtown as this is where most of the undergrads live, and it can be quite rowdy (unless that is what you are looking for).
- (3) Most rental offices are closed on the weekends, so if you want to look for places be

sure to see if they can open for a weekend or come during the week.

**(4) Heating/cooling**

If you are looking to rent a house, be careful of the heating. Some places are oil heat, so you will have to be concerned with maintaining and filling an oil tank and market prices. Also, most (rental) places around here don't have central heating/cooling. They have baseboard heating and AC units unless you're in an apartment complex.

(5) Most rental agencies in State College require their residents to carry a minimum of \$100,000 personal liability on their insurance policies (it sounds like a lot but really isn't), and you must have renter's insurance to become a resident.

(6) As rental property in State College is at a premium, many places will only sign one-year leases. No partial (6-month, month-to-month, etc.) leases are accepted, and the fee to break your lease is usually 2 month's rent for 6-12 months left on the lease or 1 month's rent for 1-6 months left. Then of course you have to pay the monthly rent until the place is filled. Most places will help you find a replacement tenant, and since the housing demand is so high, this isn't a big issue.

## **B. Convenience Stores**

There are a large variety of convenience stores in the State College area. Addresses for some of the stores can be found at [www.statecollege.com](http://www.statecollege.com) and [www.downtownstatecollege.com](http://www.downtownstatecollege.com). Some stores downtown include:

- McLanahan's Penn State Room      414 East College Ave
- McLanahan's Downtown Market      116 South Allen Street
- Krishnan Indian Grocery      230-A West College Ave
- CVS      116 West College Ave
- CVS      138 E. Beaver Ave
- Uni-Mart      200 E. College Ave

## **C. Mail**

There are 4 U.S. Postal Service post offices within walking distance of the Penn State campus. These are:

- 54 McAllister Building, State College, PA (on campus), with the very friendly and helpful Mike the Mailman, who likes cookies.
- 237 South Fraser St., State College, PA (main office)
- 202 East Calder Way, State College, PA
- 901 University Drive, State College PA

Fed-Ex pick-up boxes are found around campus and State College (<http://fedex.com/us/>). Kinkos (Atherton @ College) is a full-service Fed-Ex agent, and the University Park Airport is the last point to ship a package for meeting those last-minute deadlines. There are also UPS stores around town, including one in the Colonnade Shopping Area on North Atherton Street.

## **D. Financial Matters**

### **1. Banks**

If you intend to open a new bank account, the two main banks in State College are Nittany Bank <http://www.nittanybank.com/> and PNC Bank <https://www.pnc.com> which have their main Offices on College Avenue (in front of Old Main). Make sure to check if they have promotional offers for new customers and Penn State Employees. For example you can link your PNC account with your Penn State ID and use the last one as a debit card <http://www.idcard.psu.edu/faculty-staff/banking.shtml>.

### **2. Penn State Federal Credit Union**

As a Penn State employee, you are also eligible to join the Penn State Federal Credit Union. A credit union is virtually the same as a bank except the credit union does not charge you to have an account in most instances. Penn State Federal Credit Union has a branch on campus, one near the Colonnade Shopping Mall (Wegman's/Target), and another in Bellefonte. You can also make withdrawals from the money machine in the local McClanahan's market and the "no-fee" ATM in Sheetz gas stations. More information about the Penn State credit union can be found here: [www.pennstatefederal.com](http://www.pennstatefederal.com)

#### **For internationals:**

When you use your debit card in another network than the one of your card, be aware that you may have to pay an extra fee. It may also be useful to get a credit card, which will help you to build a credit history. There are credit cards with no fees associated as long as you pay your bill regularly. Note that it can be exceptionally hard to obtain a credit card as you are unlikely to have a U.S. credit history (somewhat of a Catch-22). There are two ways to build up a credit history; slowly, by having a cell phone contract, paying your utility bills on time (going this way can take 6 months or more), or fast(ish), by using a pre-paid credit card.

### **3. Lion Cash+**

You can pay your every day expenses on Campus and in town with your Lion Cash+ account, which you can activate with your Penn State ID (<http://www.idcard.psu.edu/students/lioncash.shtml>). It provides also some discounts (for example at Panda Express in the HUB). See also: <http://www.idcard.psu.edu/faculty->

[staff/](#). Recharging your LionCash+ card with more funds is easy to do at the ID/LionCash+ office in the HUB.

#### **4. Discounts**

As a Penn State employee, you are eligible to discounts negotiated by the Office of Human Resources with various merchants and service providers (among mobile/restaurants/car rental). A complete list of available discounts can be found at <http://www.ohr.psu.edu/discounts> .

#### **E. Notaries Public**

There are multiple notaries of public in State College. Most of the notaries can be found at [www.statecollege.com](http://www.statecollege.com). There is one notary located downtown within walking distance to campus, which is:

West College Realty Inc.                      312 West College Ave

#### **F. Wellness Resources**

At Penn State, the Health and Wellness Resources are quite vast for incoming postdoctoral students. The services available include counseling for individuals or groups, and health services, which provide primary care to students as well as workshops in different areas. For more detailed information go to website: [www.psu.edu/health/](http://www.psu.edu/health/)

#### **1. Penn State Fitness Centers**

There are four fitness facilities located on the Penn State campus that offer weight lifting, cardiovascular training: [White Building Fitness Center](#), [IM Fitness Center](#), [Rec Hall Fitness Center](#), and [The Fitness Loft](#). Each facility has different hours and types of equipment so be sure to check out each location for specific information. [McCoy Natatorium](#) offers swimming lessons and opportunities to practice swimming. Each semester an \$81 fee will allow for an individual postdoc to workout at any of the facilities. Discounted \$218 is the annual fee. For more information contact websites listed here:

[http://www.athletics.psu.edu/psustrength/index\\_rec.asp](http://www.athletics.psu.edu/psustrength/index_rec.asp)  
<https://fitnessmembership.psu.edu/cgi-bin/fitness.exe/submit>

#### **2. Off Campus Alternatives**

If you are not interested in traditional workout classes and are more interested in team or group oriented athletic activities, there are a number of intramural sports and activity groups on campus. The recreational facility website lists most of them: <http://www.athletics.psu.edu/rec/nat/index.asp>

#### **3. Local Commercial Fitness Businesses**

There are a number of fitness alternatives in State College in addition to those offered by Penn State. Those alternatives include:

- East Coast Health & Fitness- [www.eastcoastfit.com](http://www.eastcoastfit.com) - (814) 234-9400
- Titan Fitness - [www.titanfitness.com](http://www.titanfitness.com) - (814) 235-1015 (mixed martial arts, and boxing)
- One on One, Fitness Consultants Inc. - [www.fitnessconsultantsinc.com](http://www.fitnessconsultantsinc.com) - (814) 234-1625
- Lionheart Fitness & Tanning - [www.lionheartfit.com](http://www.lionheartfit.com) - (814) 238-4617 (work-out machines, mixed-martial arts, and tanning)
- Victory Sports Performance and Fitness- [www.victorysportsperformance.com](http://www.victorysportsperformance.com) - (814) 235-7676
- The Fitness Circuit - [www.thefitnesscircuit.com](http://www.thefitnesscircuit.com) - (814) 238-4677
- Fit for Play - [www.fitforplay.net](http://www.fitforplay.net) - (814) 861-8122
- The North Club Inc - [www.thenorthclub.com](http://www.thenorthclub.com) - (814) 237-1510
- Curves of State College - [www.curvesstatecollege.com](http://www.curvesstatecollege.com) - (814) 231-4505. (fitness franchise for women, run by women)

#### **4. State College and Centre County YMCA – State College/ Bellefonte**

Particularly for the postdoc who may have a family, State College and Centre County YMCA also offers babysitting while you are working out. For more information call the contact information above or log onto this website <http://www.ymcaofcentrecounty.org/statecollege>.

State College Area Family YMCA details- [www.scaymca.org](http://www.scaymca.org) - (814) 237-7717 (reasonably priced, has a pool and a variety of classes, workout assessments, community-based with programs for both adults and kids).

The YMCA also has a means tested income based discounted membership rate (up to 80% off), call them to find out how to apply.

#### **5. What if I get sick? – Nittany Medical Center**

Serving State College residents and students is the Mount Nittany Medical Center, which is a full-service hospital and is associated with Penn State Hershey. Mount Nittany Med Center also has specialized imaging and care services. For more information contact information is located below.

Main Number: (814) 231-7000

Toll-Free: 866-757-2317

Email: [info@mountnittany.org](mailto:info@mountnittany.org)

Mailing Address: 1800 East Park Avenue (between the freeway interchange and Penn

State campus)  
State College, PA 16803

<http://www.mountnittany.org/about/contact-information/>

Be aware that, as of May 2011, going to the ER for an illness or injury that **does not** result in hospital admittance will result in a \$100 fee. Be careful about using out of hours walk in clinics at the hospital for non-emergency situations as they may use doctors that are not in the PPOBlue network, which will result in large fees not covered or only partially covered by Highmark insurance.

## VIII. LINKS

### A. Mentoring:

- Develop a mentoring plan:  
<http://www.nationalpostdoc.org/publications/mentoring-plans/mentoring-plan>
- Mentor/Trainee Responsibilities:  
<http://www.nationalpostdoc.org/component/content/article/3-rcr-toolkit/118-rcr-toolkit-mentorship>
- [Mentoring Scientists: An Ethical Dilemma](#) An article from Science Careers examining a case study on the ethics of mentoring, such as how to choose a mentor and who is the most appropriate person.
- Chapter 3 of the textbook Scientific Integrity deals with Mentoring:
- Macrina, F.L. (2005) Scientific Integrity: Text and Cases in Responsible Conduct of Research (Third Edition). American Society for Microbiology Press, Washington, D.C.
- Additional case studies on Responsible Authorship from the Online Ethics Center at the National Academies of Engineering.  
[www.onlineethics.diamax.com/CMS/research/modindex/advis.aspx#method](http://www.onlineethics.diamax.com/CMS/research/modindex/advis.aspx#method)

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### B. CVs:

#### Science Careers

[sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/](http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/) posts job listings for the sciences, as well as weekly columns on topics in career development. In their online forum, users can post questions on specific situations they are encountering in their work.

#### Tooling Up

[/sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career\\_magazine/previous\\_issues/articles/1998\\_08\\_14/tooling\\_up\\_index](http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career_magazine/previous_issues/articles/1998_08_14/tooling_up_index) is a monthly feature on topics relating to finding employment in science. Recent columns have covered resumes and CVs, elevator talks, interview tips, and an overview on how to conduct a job search. Although the main focus is on industry jobs, most topics will also be relevant to those seeking academic employment.

#### Mastering Your PhD

[sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career\\_development/previous\\_issues/articles/2006\\_11\\_10/mastering\\_your\\_ph\\_d\\_series\\_index/](http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career_development/previous_issues/articles/2006_11_10/mastering_your_ph_d_series_index/) is a web-based series (and a print book) on finding employment after getting your PhD. Those who are questioning whether an academic appointment is right for them may find this particularly useful.

Whether or not you're in the biological sciences, the **NIH Virtual Career Center** [www.training.nih.gov/careers/careercenter/jsearch.html](http://www.training.nih.gov/careers/careercenter/jsearch.html) has a good section on the **job search process**, including CV templates, interviewing and negotiation tips.

**Rice University** holds an **annual negotiating workshop** for women applying for faculty positions in science [www.advance.rice.edu/negotiatingtheidealfacultyposition/](http://www.advance.rice.edu/negotiatingtheidealfacultyposition/). The workshop sponsors pay travel and accommodations for applicants selected to attend.

**Peter Fiske** is a research scientist at Lawrence Livermore National Lab, who has written an excellent book **Put Your Science to Work**. The book is a great job search and general career planning resource, but will be especially helpful to those considering non-traditional career paths.

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## C. Writing and graphics:

**George Whitesides**, a chemistry professor at Harvard, published a **paper in Advanced Materials** that describes how to write a good scientific paper, or lay out a research program, starting from an outline (Advanced Materials **2004**, 16(15), 1375-1377).

**Edward Tufte** is a professor at Princeton who has published several classic books on how to organize information in graphs, including **The Visual Display of Quantitative Information** and **Envisioning Information**. These are available through the PSU library. These are not quick 'how-to' guides for your next PowerPoint graph, but focus on graphics in which large, complicated data sets are presented creatively and effectively.

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## D. Public speaking:

**Toastmasters** is an international organization that helps participants develop speaking and leadership skills in a supportive and professional environment (<http://www.toastmasters.org/MainMenuCategories/WhatIsToastmasters.aspx>). Members typically meet once a week for about an hour; each participant takes an active role in the meeting, acting as chair, giving a speech, giving feedback, etc. There are several clubs locally, so you can call to get details from the one nearest you (<http://reports.toastmasters.org/findaclub/searchresults.cfm?ZipCodeProximity=16802&myRadius=10&imageField.x=31&imageField.y=7>).

**Jean-Luc Doumont** has a Ph.D. in physics from Stanford and now runs a company called Principiae (<http://www.principiae.be/>) to help people give better scientific presentations. His website has a number of resources, and he has also recently published a great book on presenting data, called **Trees, Maps, and Theorems** (<http://www.principiae.be/TM&Th/X0000.php>).

**Max Atkinson** is a former Oxford Research Fellow. His book entitled **Lend Me Your Ears** gives an excellent, example-based, discussion of the differences between good writing and good speaking. He also gives practical advice on how to prepare talks quickly, and how to interact with an audience. His book is a good choice both for novices and for those looking to take their speaking from competent to outstanding.

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## **E. National Councils:**

### **Chronicle of Higher Education**

Weekly news and job-information source for college and university faculty members, administrators, and students. <http://chronicle.com/section/Home/5>

### **National Research Council**

The National Research Council (NRC) <http://sites.nationalacademies.org/NRC/> functions under the auspices of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), the National Academy of Engineering (NAE), and the Institute of Medicine (IOM) The mission of the NRC is to improve government decision making and public policy, increase public education and understanding, and promote the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge in matters involving science, engineering, technology, and health. The institution takes this charge seriously and works to inform policies and actions that have the power to improve the lives of people in the U.S. and around the world. The NRC is committed to providing elected leaders, policy makers, and the public with expert advice based on sound scientific evidence.

### **National Council for the Social Studies**

The National Council for the Social Studies <http://www.socialstudies.org/> has grown to be the largest association in the country devoted solely to social studies education. NCSS engages and supports educators in strengthening and advocating social studies. With members in all the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and 69 foreign countries, NCSS serves as an umbrella organization for elementary, secondary, and college teachers of history, geography, economics, political science, sociology, psychology, anthropology, and law-related education.

## Community of Science

COS [www.cos.com/](http://www.cos.com/) is the leading global resource for hard-to-find information critical to scientific research and other projects across all disciplines. They aggregate funding opportunities, identify collaborators, and promote your research through a COS profile.

## Science careers

From the journal Science [sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/](http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/), this website has all kinds of information and postings about job hunting, grant writing, and job postings.

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## F. Helpful Computing Resources

**RefWorks** - <http://www.refworks.com/> This is an online research management writing and collaboration tool that allows researchers to gather, manage, store and share information, as well as generate citations and bibliographies.

**Zotero** - [www.zotero.org](http://www.zotero.org) is a free, easy-to-use Firefox extension to help you collect, manage, and cite your research sources. It lives right where you do your work—in the web browser itself. It's like RefWorks, but is free, and is not as powerful. Nonetheless, this is useful for organizing research, references, and even stores and indexes your PDFs and notes. Instead of bookmarking websites, you can take a snapshot of them and store them in Zotero. The help on the web is extensive, and this freeware has a great following.

**Clonezilla** - <http://clonezilla.org/> An open source (FREE) software package that allows for a bare-metal cloning of your harddrive. Clonezill will clone GNU/Linux, MS windows and Intel-based Mac OS, no matter it's 32-bit (x86) or 64-bit (x86-64) OS.

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