**Pathways Postdoctoral Fellowship Program**

**Description:** Clemson University’s Pathway Program is a joint initiative of the Offices of the Provost, the Chief Diversity Officer, and NSF Tigers ADVANCE. The overarching goal of this program is to enable departments to mentor historically underrepresented scholars to be competitive for faculty positions in the department while not constraining scholars only to the host department. Mentoring takes place through a 2-year research Provost’s Pathway Fellowship funded by the Provost’s office. Provost’s Pathway Fellows will have limited teaching responsibilities (if any) and be team mentored through their transition into a tenure-track position at Clemson or elsewhere. This document outlines the current application and selection process for this program.

**Pathway Fellow Recruitment:**

1. Departments or other units identify Pathway Fellowship candidates and nominate them for consideration by the program. This process can be initiated by individual faculty. Departments are particularly encouraged to participate in the Pathfinders Program (see below) as a method for identifying candidate fellows. Nomination for Pathway Fellowship should be submitted to the provost’s office at (APFA@clemson.edu). Four items are required:
   a. The candidate’s CV.
   b. A two-page research proposal written by the candidate.
   c. A statement of support from three faculty members in the target department (at least 2 from home department, and if department is supportive 1 may come from a different department) who agree to mentor the candidate and to participate fully in the Pathways program. The statement should describe how the mentors will support the candidate in establishing an independent research agenda and career. It is suggested that the mentors each primarily focus on different areas (for example: one for research, one for teaching, and one for professional development). Additionally, the location of research/scholarship space and office should be described (where possible: within one of the mentor’s existing spaces).
   d. A memo from the department chair and dean supporting the mentorship application and commitment to the required department and college support (see below).
2. The Provost’s Office reviews applications on a rolling basis and forwards approved applications back to the department.

3. It is strongly suggested that the candidate (upon approval by the Provost’s office) be invited to campus for a one-day interview to meet the faculty or at minimum interview with the prospective mentors via videoconference (Zoom, WebEx, Skype, etc.). The department must use its normal procedures for evaluating and hiring a targeted special faculty hire (recall that the Faculty Manual defines postdocs as special faculty).

4. If the Fellow receives approval from the interviewing faculty, the mentors and candidate postdoc work with the TPR committee to submit a signed letter of support that includes a one-page outline of clear goals that need to be accomplished for the fellow to be competitive for a tenure-track position. This document is reviewed and approved by the Department Chair and Dean.

5. After approval by the Department Chair and Dean (step 4), the fellow is hired as a postdoctoral fellow (special faculty rank) using standard targeted hiring procedures.

6. Funding covering materials and supplies as well as moving expenses is at the discretion of the College and/or Department and is their responsibility. Location and space for research shall be in an existing location, preferably within the space of one of the mentors.

7. Provost’s Pathway Fellows go through a one-day faculty orientation and are warmly invited to utilize appropriate Grad360 and faculty professional development programs, opportunities, and activities. The faculty mentors go through a half-day training (please contact APFA@clemson.edu for the most relevant options as this is a quickly developing series of resources).

**Pathway Fellow Transition to Tenure-Track Faculty:**

1. Fellows design a research plan and all typical application materials submitted to T/TT faculty positions (cover letter, teaching, research/scholarship, and inclusive excellence statements, and other materials as relevant to their discipline) in accordance with the approved expectations for new T/TT faculty hires in the field.

2. Fellows input goals and accomplishments into FAS which are reviewed and approved by the mentors and department chair. The department chair ensures goals are consistent with those outlined by the TPR committee and provides ongoing feedback to the mentors and the fellow regarding the fellow’s progress.

3. Twelve months into the program, the Fellow starts preparing a faculty application package. Department chair or faculty mentors provide feedback on the package as needed.

4. No later than fifteen months into the program, the Fellow applies for and interviews for a T/TT position in the target department. The department follows their standard procedures for the recruitment of an open competitive search hire. The department’s decision should be made at least six months before the end of the fellowship appointment.
**Link to Pathfinder Program:** Departments interested in recruiting Pathway fellows are strongly encouraged to engage with the Pathfinder program led by Drs. Curtis White and Delphine Dean. The Pathfinder program brings graduate students to campus for a mentoring, networking, and training meeting. Mentors will have the opportunity to meet with graduate students while they are on campus with the goal of matching mentors with fellows. Faculty members can also recommend graduate students at other institutions who they believe would benefit from this program. For more information, see the Pathfinder Program website.

**Pathways Mentor Responsibilities:**
- Mentors commit to work with Pathways Fellows as outlined in the original agreement.
- All mentors agree to participate in a mentoring training session sponsored by Tigers ADVANCE. *(please contact APFA@clemson.edu for timely updates)*

**Department and College Responsibilities:**
- Prior to hiring the fellow, departments affirm that the fellow’s research area is an appropriate fit for a tenure track position in the department.
- Unless there are exceptional circumstances, departments should expect that fellows meeting the goals outlined by the TPR committee will be competitive for a tenure track position at the end of the fellowship term.
- Departments use a position entered into the annual College Hiring Plan to make the hire. If no position is available when the Postdoc Fellow starts, the College must add this FTE and hiring position details into the next year’s hiring plan.
- Departments commit to a minimum of $5,000 in startup support and $2,000 in travel funding during the post-doctoral period.
- Departments provide standard, competitive tenure track start up packages to all fellows if they are the successful candidate in the Assistant Professor search.