



Children's Foundation
Research Institute

Preparing For and Finding Your First Faculty Position

Dennis Black, MD
J. D Buckman Professor of Pediatrics
Professor of Physiology
Vice-Chair for Research
UTHSC Department of Pediatrics
Director, Children's Foundation Research Institute



It's Never Too Early to Prepare for Your Post-Fellowship Career

- What career focus?
 - Patient care
 - Basic or clinical research
 - Teaching
- What specialized training do you need?
 - Specialized disease focus or clinical skills
 - Research training
 - Educational skills
- Trainee membership in professional organizations
 - Resources, workshops and mentoring



Planning a Career

- What professional activities do you enjoy and do well?
- Balance of career and life away from work
- Family considerations
- Geographic location
- Salary and cost of living
- Loan repayment commitments
- What are your five-year goals?
- Where do you want to be 20 years from now?



Finding a Position

- Begin looking ideally a year before completion of fellowship
- Sources
 - Posted positions
 - Word of mouth
 - Direct contact from Chair or Division Chief
 - Referral by mentor or colleague



Finding a Position

- Documents
 - CV that enumerates all of your accomplishments
 - Statement of career goals and highlight unique skills/training to achieve them
- Point of contact
 - Recruiting agency
 - Posting by Human Resources
 - Chair or Division Chief
 - E-mail followed by call



What Makes You An Attractive Candidate?

- Do you have skills and experience that make you stand out from the crowd?
- Are you a good fit for the job?
- What will you contribute to the team?
- Will you represent a good investment with a high potential to “pay off” down the road?




Factors to Consider

- Nature of the position
- Support to establish your clinical program, research and/or teaching
- Protected time
- Salary and benefits
- Your Division Chief and co-workers
- Location
- Lifestyle



Nature of the Position

- Is it really what you want to do?
- Right balance of the four missions of the academic institution: teaching, research, clinical duties and service?
- Will it help you achieve your career goals?
- Infrastructure to assist with biostatistics, informatics, genomics, grant and manuscript preparation, IRB, clinical research support, teaching, faculty development, etc.?
- Additional training opportunities?



Support to establish your clinical program, research and/or teaching

- Access to the right resources
 - Ample clinical or research space
 - Adequate office space
 - Access to critical equipment and core facilities
- Access to enough resources
 - Start-up funds
 - Summer students, graduate students
 - Research subjects
 - Research technician
- Access to appropriate mentorship and guidance
- Protected time



Details

- Space
 - Funds for renovation and furniture?
 - Layout and location appropriate?
 - Adequate vivarium services available?
 - Expect 600 to 1,000 sq ft web lab space as a start
 - Institutional research space allocation policy
- Start-up funds
 - Generally cover equipment, supplies, animals, staff, travel and computer support
 - Negotiate as lump sum or itemized by category
 - Usually spread over 2-3 years
 - Large/specialized equipment
 - Available as shared?
 - Negotiate separately. If purchased, willing to share to reduce cost?



Promotion and Tenure

- Expectations in each mission area
 - Research, teaching, clinical care and service
- Timeline
 - Early or deferred promotion/tenure available?
- Process
 - Usually first department, then college, then university approval
 - Know the requirements
- Know what tenure means at the institution



Salary

- Is it close to what you feel you are worth?
- Is it a base plus bonus system?
- If clinical, what are the RVU requirements?
- Protected research time?
- How much will you be expected to provide from grants and when?
 - What happens if expectations are not met?
 - If you exceed expectations, will some funds be returned for other uses?



Salary

- Review available data
 - AAMC salary survey for academic positions
 - State universities often publish current faculty salaries
 - Other online databases
- Account for geography
 - Use online cost-of-living calculators
 - Factor in personal needs
- Three numbers
 - “No go”
 - “Ideal”
 - “Acceptable”



Benefits



- Health Insurance
 - Types of plans
 - Coverage
- Other insurance
 - Life insurance
 - Disability
- Retirement plans
 - Specific investment vehicles
 - Employer match
 - TIAA/CREF



Benefits

- Vacation and sick leave
- Holidays
- Assistance with relocation
 - Moving allowance
 - Realtor assistance
 - Spouse or partner employment assistance
- Tuition assistance
- Child care facilities/subsidies



First Visit

- Work with organizer to gather as much information as possible
 - Meet Chair and Division Chief
 - Future colleagues and potential collaborators
 - Tour hospital, labs, vivarium, clinical research space, core facilities
 - Administrator to discuss benefits
 - Expect to present a seminar
 - Tour area with realtor or other guide (often second visit)



Negotiation

- Convey enthusiasm for the position
- Summarize areas you find acceptable
- Introduce points for negotiation
- Carefully note responses and ask for clarification if needed
- Take notes
- Restate positions and agreements
- Conclude with an indication of your level of enthusiasm



Three Possible Responses To an Offer

- Stall
 - Express enthusiasm
 - Ask for time to carefully consider, but be prepared to be turned down
 - Negotiate any important items
- Accept
 - Offer and acceptance must be in writing
 - Address start dates
 - Reject other offers and withdraw other applications
- Reject
 - Always be respectful
 - Be prepared to explain why, but keep it brief and general



Thank You and Good Luck!

Questions?