

## **NIMBioS Postdocs - Comments for New Postdocs from Lou Gross**

1. My main role is to make sure you succeed, where success metrics depend upon your career goals.
2. I travel a lot, feel free to come by for a quick chat or grab me at lunch – for longer chats send me an email to set up a time. Be proactive - don't be bashful about grabbing me even if I look busy. I won't always be able to answer your questions but I'll try to find someone who can.
3. One of my main functions is to help you network - here at UT, with NIMBioS visitors, and nationally. The more I know about what your goals are, the better I can help you on this.
4. Your mentors here are not directing your research - this is your project and success rests with you. Everyone here wants to help, but they should not be doing more than providing advice and guidance - the decisions are yours.
5. I strongly suggest that you make out a time-line for your activities here, including when you intend to submit papers, what meetings you want to attend, what applications you wish to pursue and when. Go over these with your mentors.
6. Don't be bashful about asking the other postdocs here for advice - similarly for the staff.
7. Marissa Baskette has a great compilation of resources for academic careers and getting grants at <http://www.des.ucdavis.edu/faculty/baskett/links.html>  
There's also much info on postdocs at <http://www.nationalpostdoc.org>  
and NAS has a report on postdoc experience:  
"Enhancing the Postdoctoral Experience for Scientists and Engineers: A Guide for Postdoctoral Scholars, Advisers, Institutions, Funding Organizations, and Disciplinary Societies," 2000.
8. When visitors are here, use it as an opportunity to network and don't be bashful about saying what you are working on, or grabbing people during their breaks to talk with them.
9. Find a side project (or several) while you are here. Don't be constrained by what you put in your proposal.
10. Postdocs as a group can invite a set of Distinguished visitors each year. Talk with your colleagues about this.
11. Feel free to join in with labs of your mentors (or other faculty).

12. If you want to get mentoring experience with undergrads or grad students, start with the REU/REV program and the labs of your mentors.

13. Work hard but try to spend time here on something other than research - lot's of opportunities to broaden your experience - concerts, plays, readings, dances, etc.

14. If you see a planned activity you want to participate in, generally this is approved if you apply, except that Working Groups are fixed. If you see a planned Working Group you want to participate in, then you should ask the organizers if it is OK to be included. If you apply to participate in something though, we expect you to fully participate.

15. We will review your mentor choice after 3 months to make sure all is going well. Be sure to talk with me if you have any concerns about your interaction with mentors.

16. There are loads of seminars and colloquia on campus in addition to the ones at NIMBioS - you can get on the mailing list for any dept by calling the office and asking to be placed on the list.

17. UT runs lots of workshops on grant writing here at NIMBioS space - just let Chris or I know if you want to attend some of these. UT also has lots of other training courses open to you at no charge. We can do sessions here at NIMBioS on talking to the press, how to write a job application, how to interview, etc. in addition to providing feedback on dry-run talks.

### **Administrative stuff:**

1. This is a 2-year position, don't plan on being here longer unless you get funding separate from NIMBioS.
2. Treat the staff with respect and don't expect them to instantly respond to your needs - they all have lots to do. Send messages to [help@nimbios.org](mailto:help@nimbios.org) rather than calling Michael or the other IT staff directly.
3. You have \$2,000 per year for travel, but you should not constrain yourself based solely on this. If there are meetings/workshops/etc. that you think would benefit you to attend, ask for more \$.
4. Similarly, if there is some item you need (software, training, etc.) that would benefit your research, ask.
5. Before you travel, fill out a travel authorization form.
6. If you'd like a collaborator to visit, ask them to apply for short-term visit funding (unless they have their own) and specify that they are coming here to work with you. No guarantees, but this has priority to be approved.

7. Teaching - if you think this will benefit your career path, then be sure to ask. We can set this up, but there are constraints.
8. Follow the UT Acceptable Use policy for downloads - no illegal movies, songs, etc.
9. We have a spousal/partner accommodation policy - ask me if you have questions about this.
10. UT has an annual review policy - sometime next semester we will have a formal review. Do not expect a raise though. UT controls this and I have little say.

**Additional Comments for Faculty:**

1. Make it very clear to postdocs and in the application process exactly what their responsibilities will be, and how much time they can devote to prior projects vs. the project which is funding them.
2. Be clear about exactly what costs you will cover – travel to what meetings, H1B or other visa charges.
3. Be clear what your expectations are with regard to time commitments in the lab and what people are able to spend time on for other activities, including seminar participation, teaching, etc.
4. Be clear about your annual leave policy. Though you can't require them to take leave, you can encourage it.
5. In doing your budgets, be sure to include time/funds for postdocs to expand their interests/background, including ethics, grant writing, public policy, communication, etc.