

**PHASED RETIREMENT and RETIREMENT FAQs  
FOR DEANS AND CHAIRS  
November 2022**

*The following FAQs may be helpful to Chairs and Deans whose faculty are interested in retirement or phased retirement.*

**1. Who is eligible for *phased retirement*?**

Tenured faculty members and senior lecturers are eligible for phased retirement after 7 years of service at Santa Clara University and after reaching the age of 55. Phased retirement can extend up to five years.

**2. Who is eligible for *retirement*?**

Tenured faculty members or faculty members with renewable or continuing appointments are eligible to retire after 10 years of service at Santa Clara University and after reaching the age of 55.

**3. I know there is no mandatory retirement age. Am I allowed to raise the issue of retirement plans (or plans for phased retirement) with faculty in my department?**

Avoid specifically asking faculty members when they plan to retire or when they plan to start phased retirement, because questions could be perceived as age discrimination or as a form of pressure or coercion.

However, it is appropriate for a chair to engage all departmental faculty in individual discussions on an annual basis about any potential transitions (sabbaticals, leaves, phased retirement, etc.) within a set period of time such as 3 or 4 years. A typical conversation might begin by letting the faculty member know of his or her value to the department and by emphasizing that you are having conversations with all faculty for planning purposes. If the faculty member brings up the possibility of phased retirement or full retirement, a substantive discussion can occur.

**4. What if I think a faculty member should consider retirement, but when I initiated a discussion about future transitions, he or she indicated no plans to consider phased retirement or retirement soon?**

While it is reasonable to initiate discussion about future plans for departmental planning purposes, if a faculty member states that he or she will be available for the stated period of time, there is no reason to raise the issue again before a substantial period of time has passed (at least one year).

**5. If a faculty member approaches me directly to discuss retirement, is there anything I should *not* discuss?**

- *Finances:* Avoid giving financial advice or personal opinions about what is best for the faculty member to do. Encourage the faculty member to speak with a financial consultant about personal financial issues.
- *Age:* Do not make any references to a faculty member's age, even if the comment is intended to be sympathetic, humorous, or helpful. Even non-derogatory comments about age can be considered evidence of discrimination when they occur within a discussion about retirement.

**6. May I share a faculty member's plan with other members of my department?**

*Confidentiality is recommended until final decisions have been made.* A faculty member may wish to consider options for some time before making a decision about the timing of retirement or phased retirement. Be sensitive to the faculty member's process of decision-making, avoiding any pressure to hasten a decision. To ensure confidentiality, do not share the faculty member's plans with colleagues until final decisions have been made and agreements have been signed.

**7. Can faculty on phased retirement cluster their courses?**

Faculty on phased retirement can cluster their course assignment into less than three quarters as described in the University's flexible course scheduling policy.

**8. Should I ask a faculty member on phased retirement to serve on committees?**

Faculty members on phased retirement have agreed to a reduction, but not elimination, of University responsibilities, including service responsibilities, for a period of up to five years. Faculty members on phased retirement may serve on department, school, and University committees, although their reduction in responsibilities should be taken into consideration in committee assignments. Faculty on phased retirement are eligible for election to Rank and Tenure committees. However, according to the Faculty Senate Bylaws (Faculty Handbook, Appendix A, Section V.D.1) the names of faculty on phased retirement will not be listed on ballots unless they expressly contact the president-elect to request that their names be included.

**9. Can a faculty member continue to hold an endowed professorship or endowed chair during phased retirement?**

Endowed professorships are intended for faculty who are fully engaged in the life of the University. Faculty members do not hold endowed chairs or endowed professorships during phased retirement.

**10. Can a faculty member on phased retirement take a medical leave?**

Yes. Faculty on phased retirement have access to all benefits, including medical leaves. Faculty should notify their dean and Human Resources (Indu Ahluwalia, Senior Benefits Specialist, [iahluwalia@scu.edu](mailto:iahluwalia@scu.edu), or Abby Molina, Employee Relations and Leave Specialist, [amolina@scu.edu](mailto:amolina@scu.edu), about leave requests.

**11. How can I help a colleague who has asked “What can I do with my books and papers?”**

Faculty from all academic disciplines are invited to donate their books and papers to the University’s Archives and Special Collections:

<https://www.scu.edu/media/offices/provost/faculty-affairs/compensation-support/retirement/donating-faculty-papers.pdf>

**12. Do faculty keep their offices while on phased retirement?**

Faculty maintain office space during phased retirement. Faculty members on phased retirement may be asked to share office space.

**13. Do the chair and dean need to sign the Phased Retirement Agreement?**

The Phased Retirement Agreement is an agreement between the Provost and the faculty member, and is signed only by the Provost and faculty member. Deans and chairs are consulted as needed as the agreement is drafted. Deans and chairs receive a copy of the signed Phased Retirement Agreement.

**14. Several of my colleagues are interested in retirement or phased retirement, but also want to maintain ties with the University. What options are available to them for continuing their relationships with the University?**

A wide range of options for ongoing engagement in the life of the University are available, depending on the faculty member’s interests and University needs. A retired faculty member may be hired on an adjunct appointment if there is departmental need. Many retired faculty participate in the SCU Osher Lifelong Learning Institute as instructors or as students: <https://www.scu.edu/osher/>. Santa Clara University has a Retired Faculty Group which holds periodic gatherings (contact the Faculty Development Program for more information on the Retired Faculty Association). Alumni Resources provides information on volunteer opportunities for retirees: <https://www.scu.edu/alumni/career/retiring/>.

**15. How can I help a colleague who wants to know more about retirement or phased retirement?**

Kitty Murphy, Associate Provost for Faculty Personnel and Policy or Laurene Skinner, Director of Faculty Personnel can provide information and guidance. Please direct colleagues to the following websites, as well:

- *FAQs on phased retirement for faculty:*  
<https://www.scu.edu/media/offices/provost/faculty-affairs/compensation-support/retirement/phased-retirement-faqs-faculty.pdf>
- *SCU policies and procedures related to retirement & phased retirement:*  
<https://www.scu.edu/provost/faculty-affairs/compensation-support/retirement/eligibility/>
- *Human Resources Retirement Information:*  
<https://www.scu.edu/hr/maintain-benefits-info/retirement/>
- *Volunteer opportunities for retired faculty and alumni:*  
<https://www.scu.edu/alumni/career/retiring/>