



October 4, 2024

Dear Eligible Faculty Member:

The University of North Carolina Phased Retirement Program (the "Program") requires certain notices to faculty. Our records suggest that you are now eligible to participate in the Program or were potentially eligible on or before August 1, 2024.

This letter provides a summary of key details of the North Carolina Phased Retirement Program. On the Provost's website, the following information is available for your review: the Program Summary, the UNC Policy 300.7.2, a sample UNC Phased Retirement Program Application and Reemployment Agreement, and a General Release form. Additionally, a listing (both departmental and institutional in scope) of individuals, by faculty position, who appear eligible or ineligible for the Program is available. This information is located at [https://www.ncat.edu/provost/faculty-resources/phased-retirement-letter-october-2021\\_revised.pdf](https://www.ncat.edu/provost/faculty-resources/phased-retirement-letter-october-2021_revised.pdf). Please read all of these materials carefully, as they outline your rights and responsibilities under the Program.

### **Eligibility**

Only full-time tenured faculty who meet certain age and service requirements ("Eligible Faculty Members") may participate in the Program. Moreover, tenured faculty occupying full-time administrative or staff positions are not eligible to participate in the Program until they vacate such positions. Thus, only individuals under faculty appointment involving teaching, research and service are eligible to participate in the Program.

In general, Eligible Faculty Members are full-time tenured faculty who:

- have at least five years of full-time service at the constituent institution of the University of North Carolina at which they are currently employed;
- are age 62 or older for members of the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System ("TSERS") or 59½ or older for participants in the University of North Carolina Optional Retirement Program (the "ORP"); and
- are eligible to receive retirement benefits through either TSERS or the ORP, as applicable.

## **Limitations**

Subject to certain enrollment caps and annual application time "windows", you may apply to participate in the Program, the service for which would commence with the start of the next academic year that follows the date of your application, if approved. You do not, however, have an absolute right to participate in the Program. Rather, N.C. A&T State University may limit participation in the Program in response to a bona fide finding that financial exigencies prohibit enrollment in the Program or that further enrollment will substantially weaken academic quality or disrupt program sequence. N.C. A&T State University may also set caps to limit the number of Eligible Faculty Members who may participate in the Program.

You should also know that all applications are subject to final approval by N.C. A&T State University's Chief Academic Officer following evaluation of the conditions referenced above and the development of a mutual "work plan" with an Eligible Faculty Member. That work plan and other terms, if accepted, must then be set forth in a UNC Phased Retirement Program Application and Reemployment Agreement and Release, to be executed by an Eligible Faculty Member prior to participation.

## **Process**

Should you decide to participate in the program, you would give up tenure and terminate your current full-time position. In return, N.C. A&T State University would contract with you for half-time (or equivalent) service for a period of two years.

You will negotiate individually with your department chair to determine your specific teaching and other duties and the time frame for fulfilling them. For example, you may be contracted to teach a full schedule for either fall or spring semester each year or teach a half schedule for both semesters. Halftime responsibilities and duties may vary among departments, but all enrollments in the Program commence with the start of the next academic year and do not include summer school duties.

## **Compensation**

If approved, you would be compensated at a salary equal to fifty percent (50%) of the full-time salary you received immediately prior to phased retirement (e.g., based on your last nine or twelve month contractual term of full-time employment, as applicable). Your salary would be paid over a twelve month period irrespective of the pattern of duties/service under your agreed to work plan. Subject to any limitations imposed under the State Retirement System, you would also be eligible for salary increments and merit pay in subsequent years of Program participation based on annual evaluations.

If you choose to enroll in the Program and are approved, you may also participate in all employee benefit programs for which you are eligible. These programs include NC Flex pre-tax benefits, 403(b) and 457(b) Voluntary Supplemental Retirement Plans, Worker's Compensation and Liability Insurance.

In addition, Eligible Faculty Members who enroll in the Program may elect to begin receiving benefits they have accrued under either TSERS or the ORP, as applicable, but they are not required to do so. However, so long as a participating Faculty Member does not receive a monthly retirement benefit, he or she will not receive the University-paid state health plan benefits.

**Compensation** (*cont'd*)

Note: If a faculty member does not elect to receive a monthly retirement benefit from TSERS or ORP, upon entering phased retirement, he/she may continue participation in the State Health Plan as a permanent halftime employee on a fully contributory basis. In that case, the faculty member would not be eligible to receive the University contribution.

**Meeting and Other Conditions**

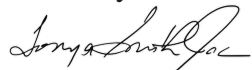
You are not required to apply for or participate in the Program. However, if interested in potentially pursuing this retirement transition option, you are encouraged to attend a scheduled Zoom meeting on **Tuesday, October 15, 2024 at 3:00 p.m.** At this meeting, designated officers will be available to provide information to eligible faculty members and to answer any questions you might have about the Program. These officers will also be available as a resource at any time. You may access this meeting at <https://ncat.zoom.us/j/93205366709?pwd=Q6WVCnLIVKbDyRIVgVF0I9gwHPabgJ.1>.

If you then decide to participate in the Program, you will be asked to sign an Agreement and a Release as a condition of your entering the Program. These materials must be completed and turned in by you at least six months but not more than 11 months before the commencement of the first semester of your requested participation in the Program, to begin at the start of the next academic year. You are encouraged to consult with your attorney and financial advisors before making such a decision. A decision to enter the Program is irreversible once made. However, the period of phased retirement may be later terminated at any time if you and N.C. A&T State University mutually agree in writing.

Upon entering the Program, if approved, you would continue to be submitted to annual and/or other performance reviews. In addition, Participating Faculty Members will remain subject to The Code and Policies of the University of North Carolina and N.C. A&T State University.

We know that decisions regarding retirement are both emotional and difficult. The Program is intended to make the process easier and to facilitate difficult decisions by allowing individuals to continue to participate in academic life and the mentoring of students while preparing for the future. We hope you will agree that the Program is a beneficial one.

Sincerely,



Tonya Smith-Jackson, PhD  
Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

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