Phased Retirement FAQs for Faculty

1. **What is the Bentley phased retirement program?**

   In 2004 Bentley adopted a phased retirement plan for faculty aged 60 and older who have at least ten years of full-time, tenure-track or tenured service. The policy’s flexibility allows retiring faculty members, in conjunction with department chairs and the academic administration, to craft a phased retirement plan that is beneficial to all parties.

   The program provides three options: a one-year, two-year, or three-year phased plan.

   - **One Year:** The faculty member engages in activity equivalent to teaching one course per semester, in one or more of the three Faculty Manual categories (teaching, scholarship, service); examples include mentoring, serving on a committee, assessing a program, conducting research, organizing a workshop, teaching a course, etc. The faculty member is paid full-time, and retains his/her tenure during the one-year phased retirement period. At the conclusion of the one-year phased retirement period, the faculty member relinquishes his/her tenure with Bentley University.

   - **Two years:** The faculty member works half-time, and is paid full-time, for two years. For example, the standard teaching load for a tenured faculty member is six courses per year. A faculty member would be expected to teach three courses per year in each of the two years of the phased retirement program. During the two-year phased retirement period, the faculty member retains his/her tenure during the two-year period. At the conclusion of the two-year phased retirement period, the faculty member relinquishes his/her tenure with Bentley University.

   - **Three years:** The faculty member works one-third time, and is paid two-thirds time, for three years; or, two-thirds time for full pay for three years. For example, the standard teaching load for a tenured faculty member is six courses per year. A faculty member opting to work one-third time for two-thirds pay would be expected to teach two courses in each of the three years of the phased retirement program. A faculty member opting to work two-thirds time for full pay would be expected to teach four courses in each of the three years of the phased retirement program. During the three-year phased retirement period, the faculty member retains his/her tenure during the three-year period. At the conclusion of the three-year phased retirement period, the faculty member relinquishes his/her tenure with Bentley University.
Please see the Phased Retirement Policy in the Faculty Handbook for additional details about the program.

2. **What is the relationship between a sabbatical and a phased retirement?**

The phasing process must begin at least six years after the last full-year sabbatical or three years after the last one-semester sabbatical.

Those otherwise eligible for a phased retirement who have taken a sabbatical may be subject to a waiting period. Generally, the phasing process may begin six years after the last full-year sabbatical, or three years after the last one-semester sabbatical.

However, faculty with 20 or more years of full-time tenured or tenure-track service are eligible four years after their last full-year sabbatical and two years after their last one-semester sabbatical. As a result, long-serving faculty who are considering a sabbatical to pursue projects important to them and to Bentley are not discouraged from doing so because of the potential impact on their ability to take advantage of the phased retirement option.

3. **Who should I talk to about planning a phased retirement?**

There are many retirement resources at Bentley. You can discuss retirement with your department chair, your respective academic dean and/or the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, and with your Human Resources Business Partner. To develop a specific phased retirement plan and to negotiate the specific terms of the phased retirement agreement (contract) consistent with the phased retirement policy, you should contact your respective academic dean or the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Following this meeting, Bentley’s General Counsel will draft a phased retirement agreement for your review.

You may also want to speak with the chair of your department (regarding your own situation and for succession planning).

4. **How early should I notify my respective dean’s office about my plans for retirement?**

You should begin the process of discussing your ideas as soon as you feel ready to have some early discussions about your retirement plans. However, your signed phased retirement agreement must be submitted to your respective dean not later than February 1 if you wish to begin your phased retirement by September 1 of the same year.

5. **Do I need to notify the chair of my department at the same time I notify the dean’s office?**

While you may choose to meet with the chair of your department for personal or succession planning purposes, you are not obligated to speak with the chair or anyone
else until you have signed your phased retirement agreement and submitted it to your respective dean.

6. **Do I sign the phased retirement agreement with Bentley once I choose a phased retirement option?**

Yes. After you and your respective dean have agreed on a plan and a retirement date, you will sign a formal phased retirement agreement prepared by Bentley’s General Counsel. As with any legal document, you should feel free to have your personal attorney review the phased retirement agreement before signing it.

7. **What is the impact of phased retirement on my benefits, faculty privileges, and perquisites?**

Faculty members who have signed a phased retirement agreement maintain all benefits of their status as a full-time faculty member during their phase-out period. Faculty members holding tenure retain their tenure status until the end of the phased retirement period.

8. **Can I return to Bentley to teach after I retire?**

At the discretion of the dean and based upon the needs of the department, some faculty members return to teach on a part-time basis after they retire. However, Bentley cannot guarantee that a retired faculty member will have the ability to teach on a part-time basis after the phased retirement period has come to a conclusion.

Faculty members who return to teach on a part-time basis may use their pre-retirement title while teaching. For example, if a faculty member held the title of full professor at the time of retirement, that faculty member may use the title of full professor while teaching on an adjunct basis for Bentley. Faculty members who teach after retirement receive a per course stipend that is 33% above the standard stipend paid to Bentley adjunct faculty members.

9. **What medical benefits and other benefits/privileges do I retain after I retire?**

To find out about medical benefits, including dental care, please see the Bentley Human Resources retirement website [www.bentley.edu/offices/human-resources/retirement](http://www.bentley.edu/offices/human-resources/retirement). As noted on this website, continuation of your healthcare benefits will depend on the date you began your employment with Bentley.

In addition to any applicable health benefits, retired faculty members maintain the following privileges:

- **Faculty Status Privileges** – the option to apply for standard summer research grants for the first three summers after retirement; the use of shared office space, as available, on campus; and the retention of one’s faculty title if and when teaching as a part-time faculty member after retirement.
**Access to Facilities** – use of the Bentley library (and access to the library’s data bases while working in the library), the Dana Center, the Faculty/Staff Dining Room, and the Faculty Lounge

**Technology Privileges** – retention of your Bentley computer in use at the conclusion of the phased retirement period (with Help Desk maintenance only if it involves official Bentley business).

**Event Participation** – free tickets to the Bowles Performing Arts Series, an invitation to the annual December holiday celebration, and the option to participate in the faculty ceremonial procession at baccalaureate and commencement.

**Other** – continued participation in the MetPay auto and homeowners discount insurance program if already enrolled, the ability to meet on campus with a Fidelity or TIAA/CREF retirement counselor, and retention of a faculty parking sticker.

10. **Do some faculty members have priority over others for the timing of their phased retirement?**

Prioritization occurs only when more faculty members apply for a phased retirement agreement than their department can reasonably accommodate in a given year. In such cases, priority will be given based on the following criteria:
- length of service, including both tenure track and tenured service; and
- length of time since the faculty member’s most recent sabbatical.

11. **How do I learn more about Bentley’s phased retirement program?**

Explore the Bentley Faculty Resources page [https://www.bentley.edu/offices/human-resources/faculty-resources] on the HR website, where you will find financial planning resources, lifestyle and psycho-social information, a Bentley retirement checklist, and a pdf link to this handbook. Also, your respective dean and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs are available to talk with you confidentially.