2019-2020 One Time Voluntary Separation Incentive Program Criteria and Guidelines

Introduction:
The purpose of the Voluntary Separation Incentive Program (VSIP) is to implement one-time separation incentive to eligible UW-Platteville employees, as authorized by the Chancellor, in order to achieve specific institutional objectives. These objectives include:

A. Reducing salary, wage, and benefit costs in anticipation of imminent funding and enrollment challenges while recognizing the invaluable contributions of its employees,
B. Prioritizing the allocation and appointment of positions to ensure the fulfillment of the University's mission into the future,
C. To the extent possible, and in the context of the long-term fulfillment of the University's mission, minimize the scope and/or number of involuntary terminations due to budget or program constraints.

While all employees who meet the eligibility requirements may apply, not every individual application may be approved. The Chancellor retains sole discretion over the eligibility and approval of any given VSIP offering and/or application. Nothing in this program shall be construed as creating an employee right or entitlement of any kind. Participation in the program by any eligible employee is strictly voluntary on the part of the employee. No employee may be pressured by any other UW-Platteville or UW System employee to participate in the program.

Eligibility Criteria:
Employees meeting the following criteria are eligible to participate in the VSIP:

1. Currently employed as a faculty member, academic staff member or university staff member at UW-Platteville; AND
2. Are at least fifty-five (55) years of age as of December 1, 2019, vested with the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS), and are eligible to receive an annuity under WRS;
3. Have a UW-Platteville start date on or before January 1, 2015; and
4. Schedule the date and officially retire from UW-Platteville no later than June 30, 2020 (exceptions may be granted by the Chancellor for good cause upon recommendation by the Provost and applicable college dean or department supervisor of the individual); and
5. Will not seek reemployment at UW-Platteville for a period of at least two (2) years from the date of retirement.

The following individuals are not eligible for participation even if they meet the criteria listed above (1-5):

1. Employees who have given written notice of their intent to retire or resign prior to September 1, 2019; and/or
2. Student employees and rehired annuitants
Application Procedure and Review:

All potentially eligible employees will be invited to apply for consideration in the VSIP. Eligible employees will be advised of their eligibility and will be provided with an application to participate the week of December 16, 2019.

Eligible employees must submit completed applications for consideration in the VSIP no later than March 1, 2020.

Division leaders and Deans of Colleges shall evaluate the applications received in relation to the objectives of the VSIP listed above and make recommendations to the Chancellor for final approval.

The Chancellor will determine the final application approvals by March 16, 2020.

Approved applicants will be provided a separation agreement for their review. Approved applicants will have a minimum of forty-five (45) days, from the date the separation agreement is made available to the approved applicant, to review and consider the contents within the separation agreement. During this time, approved applicants are encouraged to seek advice from their financial and/or tax counselors and to contact Human Resources and/or ETF with their questions about VSIP or retirement under WRS.

There is no expectation that all VSIP applications will be approved.

Incentives:

Approved applicants will receive a one-time incentive payment equal to thirty-three percent (33%) of the individual’s base salary.

- For faculty and instructional academic staff, the straight base pay amount used in the incentive payment calculation will be the employee’s nine-month salary for the 2019-2020 academic year.
- For annual employees, the straight base salary used in the incentive payment calculation will be the employee’s twelve-month salary as of October 31, 2019.
- For all eligible applicants, excluding faculty members, the straight base salary amount used in the incentive payment calculation will be adjusted to reflect the FTE percentage appointment the employee had in the same period used to determine the base salary amount.
- For employees who are non-exempt pursuant to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the base salary to be used in the incentive payment calculation will be determined as follows:
  - The sum of the employee's hourly rate multiplied by forty (40) hours, multiplied by fifty-two (52) weeks, multiplied by their FTE percentage.
- No employee’s base salary determination will include any overtime, overloads, “winterim” payments, additional summer payments, nor any other payments above the employee’s straight base salary.
- If, at the time of the implementation of VSIP, an employee is currently serving in an interim capacity, has been in that interim capacity for a minimum of twelve (12) months prior to the implementation of the VSIP, and otherwise meets all of the applicable eligibility criteria, the
employee’s base interim salary shall be used in the incentive payment calculation. In cases wherein, the employee has served in an interim capacity for less than twelve (12) months prior to the implementation date of the VSIP, the employee’s straight base pay from the period immediately prior to the interim appointment shall be used in the incentive payment calculation.

Enhanced Incentive for Tenured Faculty:
In recognition of the valuable rights bestowed with tenure, the time and commitment invested in achieving tenure, and recognizing that the VSIP requires a faculty member with tenure to surrender these rights, UW-Platteville will offer an enhanced incentive to any tenured faculty who is eligible, applies and is approved under the VSIP. Those tenured faculty who apply and are approved pursuant to the VSIP will be paid an additional one-time, lump sum incentive of ten thousand dollars ($10,000).

Tax and Financial Consequences of Participation in the VSIP:
In all cases, each individual participating employee is responsible for consulting with their personal tax advisor and/or financial advisor as to the potential tax and financial consequences of the employee’s participation in the VSIP. No employee of UW-Platteville is authorized by the University of Wisconsin System to provide tax and/or financial advice to employees. Information sessions and materials are for general information only and should not replace the advice of a competent financial and/or tax advisor.

Conditions:
Not every individual application is guaranteed to be approved. The Chancellor has sole discretion over the determination of eligibility and approval of any individual application to the VSIP in order to achieve specific institutional objectives. Nothing in this program shall be construed to create a right or entitlement to any employee.

Approved participants in the VSIP shall be restricted from being rehired by UW-Platteville for two years from the date of separation, unless authorized by the Chancellor because of exigent circumstances, although all accepted applicants by adhere to the WRS valid termination requirements under Wisconsin Administrative Code §ETF10.08 and break-in-service regulations pursuant to Wisconsin Statute §40.26(5).

Each approved applicant’s date of separation will be determined by the Chancellor upon recommendation from the Provost, Deans and Division leaders in consideration of the needs of the University. Separations must occur no later than June 30, 2020 unless an exigent need is determined by the Provost, Deans and division leaders as approved by the Chancellor.

The Assistant Chancellor for Diversity and Inclusion, or their designees, shall review the final VSIP plan and the proposed approved applicant group to ensure that the plan does not adversely impact underrepresented groups that are in the employment of UW-Platteville and will provide a recommendation for approval, modification or rejection to the Chancellor prior to the final approval of applicants. The Chancellor retains sole discretion in approving or denying applicants.
In consideration for participation in the VSIP and the payment of incentives described herein, accepted applicants must voluntarily accept and sign a separation agreement that contains a release of all continuing employment rights and any and all claims against UW-Platteville, UW System, and/or the Board of Regents, including but limited to any claim against their officers, employees, agents, attorneys, insurers, and/or their assignees.

The Implementation Criteria and Guidelines have been discussed with shared governance.

Dennis J. Shields, Chancellor
Date

Paige Smith, Vice Chancellor
Date

12/10/19

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