

Basis for Policy

A number of factors – particularly rapid expansion of the University of Utah Health Sciences Campus (UUHSC) research enterprise - has led to the need for modification of the Research Space Allocation Guidelines; a merit- and need-based system for assignment of research space. This policy exists to ensure that the procedure for assignment of research space is transparent and that all research space assignment decisions are subject to the same evaluation criteria and standards. This policy applies to all research space on the UUHS campus and is based primarily upon research expenditures, as they are more stable than grant/contract award data.

Typically, the Senior Vice President for Health Sciences collaborates with Deans, Directors, and Chairs to ensure that the assignment of research space related to recruitment and retention aligns with the policy herein. However, because space is not a permanent entitlement to a Department, Institute, Center or individual faculty, it should be noted that research space belongs to UUHSC and is, therefore ultimately assigned by the Senior Vice President for Health Sciences.

This policy is subject to the needs and strategic direction of the institution and will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it aligns to leadership priorities. Department Chairs will be notified of any subsequent revisions.

Principles

1. This policy applies to any faculty who is assigned research space. Newly recruited early-stage faculty are exempted from this policy for the first 3-years after the start of their employment.
2. The expectation is that dedicated research space vacated by a physical move or major institutionally funded renovation is allocated back to the Senior Vice President for Health Sciences. Likewise, it is expected that research space vacated due to a reduction in program size, reduction in workforce, program elimination, or reduction in grant-funded research is also allocated back to the Senior Vice President for Health Sciences. All new construction is under the control of the Senior Vice President for Health Sciences.
3. Changes in research space assignment will be made in partnership with the relevant unit director/department chair.
4. It is expected that all research space assignments comply with existing donor agreements.
5. The expectation is that faculty will retain only one *private* office space, including those who have additional administrative and clinical duties. Exceptions must be approved by the Senior Vice President for Health Sciences.
6. Although space metrics are defined for wet lab and dry lab research, the two types of research are not generally in competition with each other for the same space. Space that is appropriate for wet-lab research should be used for wet-lab research.
7. No commitment of UUHSC research space may be made in grant applications, contracts, or during faculty searches without a review of the commitment by the Associate Dean for Research and Infrastructure.

Definition of Research Funding

1. The research funding metric is calculated based on expenditures (directs +indirects) as a rolling three-year average.
2. Research expenditure dollars (i.e., directs + indirects) are credited to the Principal Investigator (PI) only. In the case of large Program Project Grants, expenditure dollars may be credited based on Account Executive.
3. Career development awards (i.e., K awards) are included.
4. Individual investigator, externally funded foundation gifts are designated as research grant awards
5. Training grant expenditures (e.g., T grants) are not counted towards research space allocation metrics, but may warrant assignment of administrative space specific to the needs defined by the training grant.
6. Expenditures from “start-up” funds are not counted as research funding.
7. Ad hoc funding, such as from a department chair, is not considered research funding.
8. Site-PI of industry-sponsored clinical trial funding is excluded.
9. All of an investigator’s research expenditures are proportionally credited to their space if they have space in multiple buildings.

Space Allocation Metrics

Research expenditures per square foot of assigned space is the metric used to evaluate research space assignments. Research expenditure data are provided annually by the Office of Budget & Institutional Analysis (OBIA). Net Assigned Square Feet (NASF) are provided annually by the Office of Space Planning & Management. It is the responsibility of the Department to ensure accurate space assignments are reported to the Office of Space Planning & Management, on an annual basis at a minimum.

Research expenditures/square feet will be calculated at least annually based on the most recently completed fiscal year and with a rolling three-year average. This metric will be used to inform department chairs of their space utilization and to identify areas where greater density could be achieved in order to accommodate new recruits, researchers about to be displaced by building construction, or expanding programs with appropriate funding. The three-year rolling average is important to mitigate such cases where there is a lapse in research funding, or may account for a large one-year supplement.

Net Assignable Square Footage includes:

- All office and lab space in all buildings assigned *exclusively* to the investigator by name will be included. These spaces include common equipment rooms, tissue culture and animal facility procedure rooms exclusively for their use (not animal housing rooms) as well as office space (e.g., private office, conference room, shared office space, cubicles, storage space and “bull pens”) for any associated mentored faculty, graduate students, post-docs or administrative personnel (where available). Shared space will be pro-rated by investigator.

- All office space in all buildings assigned to the investigator or as part of the investigator's research team will be included. These spaces include all workplaces (e.g., private office, conference room, shared office space, cubicles, storage space and "bull pens") for any associated mentored faculty, graduate students, post-docs, research associate or administrative personnel (where available). Shared space may be pro-rated by investigator.
- Research space will be assigned to a new faculty member for an initial period of three (3) years. Faculty members are expected to be actively submitting grant applications during this period of time. New faculty that do not possess external funding will receive research space equivalent to one R01 equivalent (i.e., ~\$250,000 per year in direct costs) specified below, unless additional space is negotiated in the appointment letter and approved by the SVPHS Research Unit. Research space assigned to an individual faculty member should not exceed 2,500 square feet, inclusive of dedicated lab space, faculty and research staff office space, shared equipment and storage rooms, and tissue culture rooms.
- Faculty beyond their initial startup period without research expenditures should not be individually assigned laboratory space, although they may be assigned shared lab space, and an office nearby for collaboration, for activities such as the mentorship of a graduate student or other collaborative research activities as confirmed in writing by the department chair or a funded principal investigator.
- For faculty with space in multiple buildings, research space metrics will be calculated based on the aggregate of the assigned space.

1. Wet Lab Space Benchmark:

The wet lab benchmark is \$300 (directs+indirects)/ft², the benchmark approximately translates to 1,000 ft² per R01 equivalent inclusive of individually assigned "wet-lab" laboratory space, faculty and research staff private and shared office space, shared equipment and storage rooms, and tissue culture rooms. (Estimated breakdown includes 600 ft² of wet-lab space, 300 ft² of support space, 100 ft² of office space.)

2. Dry Lab Space Benchmark:

The initial benchmark for dry-lab research space is \$600/ft², inclusive of faculty and staff private office space, dedicated cubicle space, and dedicated conference areas. (Estimated breakdown includes 100 ft² of private faculty office space, 100 ft² of shared office space, 300 ft² of cubicle space). The \$600/ft² metric will be evaluated over the next three years, because the implications of covid for long-term space needs will need to be factored into the overall assessment.

Importantly, wet and dry lab space is not interchangeable. The more specialized the costly requirements of wet lab research require that space that can be used for wet lab research (including associated offices etc.) should be used for that purpose.

Exceptions to benchmarks may be requested on the basis that investigator activities have a high research impact, are academically significant, or allow for ongoing instruction for a meaningful number of students. Exceptions must be approved by the Senior Vice President for Health Sciences.

Requests for New Space

It is recognized that high-level recruitments (e.g., department chairs and center directors) will require direct negotiation for space between the Dean and the Associate Vice President (AVP) for Research for Health Sciences with advice from the Associate Dean for Research and Infrastructure (ADRI). This only applies to research-intensive recruits. In his/her advisory role to the AVP, the ADRI is to be a facilitator in the identification of research space to support new recruits or programmatic growth. If the identified space needs to be emptied or modified, a two (2) month minimum may be required from the time the SVPHS Research Unit has been provided notice that a newly recruited faculty has signed their contract to finalize and open a space for that new faculty, which may require relocation or reduction in space of existing faculty.

For routine space requests, a Space Request Form should be submitted. Once submitted, the form will be reviewed and the ADRI will take into account the overall dollar density for the requesting department. In cases where the department is not meeting dollar density guidelines, increased densification of space may be suggested. In cases where dollar density guidelines are being met, options for additional assignment of space will be reviewed.

1. Requests for additional research space should contain the following information:
 - A. Purpose of space:
 - New faculty
 - New instruments
 - New Cores
 - Expand research space of existing faculty due to increased funding
 - Thematic allocation of space for a group of investigators
 - Other (e.g. additional office space for research staff, laboratory prep areas, etc.)
 - B. A description of the type and size of space needed.
 - C. Documentation of why the current unit space allocation and usage is insufficient for the research need. Depending on purpose, documentation should include, but is not limited to:
 - A brief justification of need
 - Current standard performance ratio for the unit based on the defined metrics. Anticipated increase in performance ratio if request for space is due to increased funding of existing faculty or hiring of new faculty with funding
 - Grant award notice for new instruments, expanded funding of existing faculty, hiring faculty with funding
 - For a new faculty hire: if no existing space is available within a unit for a new faculty hire, then the unit director should submit the space request prior to obtaining recruitment approval
 - For new institutional cores: approval of the Institutional Core by the AVP for Research is required
2. Requests for additional research space must originate from the unit director and be forwarded to the Senior Vice President for Health Sciences Research Unit with supporting documentation from the College Dean. The exception to this will be Institutional Cores, in which case the Core Director should submit the request.
3. Priorities for new space will be based on several factors including, but not limited to:

- Existing commitments by the Senior Vice President for Health Sciences to College Deans
- Availability of space to accommodate requests
- Funding to justify new space
- Research priorities as laid out in the Strategic Plan
- Appropriate justification

Any requests for space related to the use of animals must be made by contacting the Office of Comparative Medicine. The SVPHS Research Unit does not assign vivarium space.

References:

<https://www.uthsc.edu/research/about/reports-and-publications/documents/space-plan-2016.pdf>

http://www.uky.edu/ie/sites/www.uky.edu.ie/files/uploads/EAB_RM_Optimizing-Research-Space-Allocation-at-Academic-Medical-Centers.pdf

<https://research.medicine.umich.edu/office-research/administration/policies-regulatory/requesting-medical-schoolncrc-research-space>