



College of Engineering

**Policy on
Research Space Allocation**

December 2015

1. INTRODUCTION

In compliance with the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) Handbook of Operating Procedures (Section 2.42), this document is developed for the purpose of guiding the allocation of research space within the College of Engineering at UTSA. Defined in this document is a set of general expectations for efficient use of research space within the College and is meant to serve as a framework for the Faculty and the Department Chair to use research space optimally through shared responsibility and faculty governance.

2. DEFINITION

Research space is defined as laboratory space dedicated to the conduct of university research. This space is an important University asset for the support of faculty to conduct their research and that the faculty's performance is being evaluated to fulfill the University mission as defined by the Board of Regents. All research lab space is university asset and allocated by the College. Each Department Chair, with oversight of appropriate faculty committee, is to ensure efficient use of research space assigned to department faculty and to justify for allocation of new space.

3. LABORATORY GOVERNANCE

- A. All users of the assigned laboratory, including the faculty and students, will comply with any and all rules and regulations pertaining to occupational health and safety, as required by the Office of Environmental Health, Safety, and Risk Management. Any non-compliance of the occupational health and safety policies must be immediately addressed by the faculty and students so as to promote a safe and health work environment.
- B. With faculty retirement or resignation, the research space assigned to that position will initially revert to the College for reallocation consideration. Similarly, research space will be reverted to the College for reallocation if it is deemed poorly utilized and justified (i.e. non-optimal use of space such as for storing, having non-usable/non-working equipment, and/or lack of student activity) and/or if occupational health or safety issues are not resolved within the allotted time. Upon advice from the CFAC or its equivalent, the Dean can either assign the space back to the Department or assign the space to investigators in other Departments. The procedure is described below.
 - a. Together with the appropriate Departmental Space Committee or its equivalent, the Department Chair will analyze and provide justification for reassignment of space to the faculty by March 1 for review and comments. The report, along with comments (if any) from faculty whose current research space is recommended to be reassigned, will then be forwarded to the CFAC or its equivalent for an independent review. The CFAC will forward its final report and advise the Dean by May 1.

- b. In consultation with the Dean, the Department Chair will notify faculty of research space reassignment by June 1 of each year, and petitions from the faculty with plans to retain poorly utilized and maintained research space need to be submitted to the Department Chair and the Dean by August 1. The CFAC or its equivalent will review submitted petitions and will advise the Dean on the request. Reassignments of research space will be effective September 1.

4. RESEARCH SPACE OF CURRENT FACULTY

- A. To ensure that the research space in the College of Engineering is optimally utilized to support current faculty research and is contributing to the University mission, the space assigned to each faculty will be reviewed by its appropriate Departmental Space Committee or its equivalent every three years. Metrics for space evaluation should include:
 - i. Average amount of active research expenditures/year over the past five year period.
 - ii. Average amount of research space (including student space) assigned to the faculty over the past five year period.
 - iii. Average number of graduate and/or undergraduate students mentored on research thesis/dissertation by the faculty per year over the past five year period.
 - iv. Average number of post-doctoral researchers and/or research-track faculty mentored by and financially supported by the tenured/tenure-track faculty per year over the past five year period.
 - v. Average number of peer-reviewed journal publications and peer-reviewed conference proceedings publications per year over the past five year period.
 - vi. Average number of students, mentored on research thesis/dissertation, who have graduated per year over the past five year period.
 - vii. New grants or contracts received during the past academic year
- B. Threshold for each of these metrics will be determined by the Department Chair, in consultation with the faculty, with revisions for these thresholds performed every three years.
- C. Together with the appropriate Departmental Space Committee or its equivalent, the Department Chair will analyze and provide justification to the Dean by March 1 for all space assigned to the faculty each year. This justification can include the physical (including safety) need of housing large and/or specialized equipment.
- D. At the discretion of the Department Chair, funded projects may have priority over unfunded projects. Faculty should provide justification as to the need of research space for unfunded projects, including the potential for research funding.
- E. Sharing of research space among compatible faculty and students should be rewarded with higher priority of department support.

- F. Research space that also serves for organized laboratory courses at undergraduate or graduate levels should be considered reduced research space, appropriate to its usage, and with higher priority of department support.
- G. Research space that hosts College, University, or multi-institutional user facilities should be considered shared/collaborative research space, appropriate to its usage, in Department justifications.
- H. Space assigned to research assistants, post-doctoral researchers, or research-track faculty under the supervision of the tenured/tenure-track faculty (in the laboratory or outside the laboratory) will be counted towards the total research space.

5. ALLOCATION OF RESEARCH SPACE TO NEW INCOMING FACULTY

- A. To ensure that adequate research space is provided to all incoming tenured/tenure-track faculty in the College of Engineering and to allow new faculty to contribute to the University mission, the hiring department, Department Chair, and its appropriate Space Committee is responsible for identifying space within the Department to accommodate the new faculty. The space for the new faculty can be either existing department space as a result of faculty leaving the University (retirement or resignation) or space that is removed from existing department faculty as a result of poor utilization and/or justification. Alternatively, space for the new faculty can be created through sharing with existing faculty within the department. All space assigned to each incoming faculty will be reviewed by Department Chair and its appropriate Departmental Space Committee or its equivalent at the end of his/her third year. Space allocation metrics for incoming faculty should include:
 - i. Amount of active research funding/year over the past five year period for appointments at the Associate Professor level and above.
 - ii. Amount of research space (including student space) needed.
 - iii. Number of potential graduate and/or undergraduate students assigned to the faculty.
 - iv. Minimum amount of space needed to house large pieces of equipment.
- B. Threshold for each of these metrics will be determined by the Department Chair, in consultation with the faculty, with revisions for these thresholds performed every three years.
- C. Together with the appropriate Departmental Space Committee or its equivalent, the Department Chair will analyze and provide justification to the Dean for all space assigned to new faculty by March 1 of the faculty's third year.

6. PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING NEW RESEARCH SPACE

- A. All petitions by faculty will need to be submitted to the Department Chair and reviewed by its appropriate Departmental Space Committee or its equivalent. The

Department Chair, together with the appropriate Departmental Space Committee or its equivalent will analyze the justification(s) for new research space and make determinations if additional space is available within the Department to accommodate the faculty request. Metrics for evaluating this request should include:

- i. Average amount of active research expenditure/year over the past five year period.
 - ii. Average amount of research space (including student space) assigned to the faculty over the past five year period.
 - iii. Average number of graduate and/or undergraduate students mentored on research thesis/dissertation by the faculty per year over the past five year period.
 - iv. Average number of post-doctoral researchers and/or research-track faculty mentored by and financially supported by the tenured/tenure-track faculty per year over the past five year period.
 - v. Average number of peer-reviewed journal publications and peer-reviewed conference proceedings publications per year over the past five year period.
 - vi. Average number of students, mentored on research thesis/dissertation, who have graduated per year over the past five year period.
 - vii. Minimum amount of space needed to house large pieces of equipment.
 - viii. The amount of new space needed and justification for the additional research space beyond what the faculty currently has.
- B. Threshold for each of these metrics will be determined by the Department Chair, in consultation with the faculty, with revisions for these thresholds performed every three years.
- C. Together with the appropriate Departmental Space Committee or its equivalent, the Department Chair will analyze the petition and justification(s) from the faculty making the request for space within the Department. Once the petition is deemed justified, every effort should be made by the Department Chair and its appropriate Departmental Space Committee to accommodate the request within the department. The new space can be assigned to the faculty by reassigning existing department space as a result of faculty leaving the University (retirement or resignation) or space that is taken away from existing department faculty as a result of poor utilization and/or justification. Alternatively, new space for the faculty can be created through sharing of existing faculty within the department.
- D. The Department Chair will consult with the Dean for request of research space outside the Department. The Department Chair will provide the Dean with the analysis for the departmental research space showing optimum use of the space and the need for additional space outside the Department. The CFAC or its equivalent will evaluate the space analysis within the requesting department, identify new space outside the department if necessary, and will advise the Dean on the request.