

Institutional Handbook of Operating Procedures

Policy 02.07.03

Section: General Administration	Responsible Vice President: Executive Vice President, Provost and Dean of Medicine
Subject: Space Management	Responsible Entity: Academic Enterprise

I. Title

Academic Enterprise Research Space Management

II. Policy

The success of the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) research mission requires optimizing institutional assets and space. To maximize existing resources, research space management must consider the broad variety of research, equipment, and funding needed to produce results. UTMB research is primarily sponsor-based, and research missions must adapt with changes in sponsorship. As Principal Investigators (PI) acquire new extramural funding, their research footprint may require expansion to ensure success. Adversely, as sponsorship diminishes, research space allocations should be reevaluated and/or reassigned. It is the goal of the UTMB Academic Enterprise to balance research space allocations with ever-changing research needs by promoting transparency and fairness to enhance the success of our research community.

The following guidelines have been established to help Leaders make decisions regarding the allocation of research related space at UTMB.

III. Guiding Principles

- All research space within the Academic Enterprise belongs to the institution and is allocated based on programmatic needs and priorities as determined by the Provost.
- Priorities for space assignment should include, but not be limited to, sponsorship, faculty recruitment, programmatic synergy, access to shared equipment, and alignment with the research strategic plan.
- Extramural funding will be the main criterion for determining the efficiency of research space utilization.
- Space assignments are not permanent and will be subject to formal review every six years via the academic department review process conducted by the Office of Faculty Affairs and Professional Development (OFAPD).
- Underutilized research space (as defined by the productivity metrics) and any research space that is vacant for more than one year should be reassigned to the Provost's Space Pool.
- The Provost's Space Pool should always maintain a minimum target of 5,000 square feet of Laboratory space to be available for recruitment, expansion of research programs, and swing space in event of emergency.
- A center may have laboratory space for its members, but this space is subject to accounting within each PI's home department.
- Data and metrics help inform space allocation decisions but are not a substitute for thoughtful decision-making.

IV. Calculation of Research Space Productivity (“Expenditures per Square Foot”):

Extramural sponsorship for investigator-driven research will be the main criterion in determining the productivity of research space. This includes recognition of collaborative sponsorships, sub-grants, private projects, and pending awards.

Research space productivity will be calculated by dividing total extramural award expenditures (both direct and indirect) incurred over the past 12 months by the square footage of Laboratory space assigned to each faculty member.

For reporting, calculation of the numerator will not include endowments (Funds 450 & 455), LERR or PUF funding (Funds 881 & 878), MSRDP (Funds 220 - 227), or institutional discretionary funding (Funds 230 & 235). The denominator will include all spaces with Archibus category codes “250” and “255” as reported within the annual space survey.

The data will be aggregated at the department level for review by the provost and made available to department chairs (and center/institute directors) to help inform decisions regarding space allocation within their assigned areas.

UTMB maintains a goal of having an annual direct and indirect research expenditure total equal to the current national mean of public schools as reported by the American Association of Medical College’s Group on Business Affairs. In 2022, this utilization benchmark was **\$352** per square foot. Moving forward, the most recently published AAMC national public school mean will be recognized when benchmarking UTMB research space productivity.

In cases where multiple investigators on a single award occupy separate Laboratory spaces and the expenditures associated with each investigator’s portion of the project are not easily discernable, each investigator will declare a percentage of the award’s expenditures for use in calculating the productivity of their Lab space.

Space assigned to newly recruited faculty during their guaranteed period will not be considered in the departmental analysis of research space productivity.

Space assigned to emeritus faculty is at the discretion of the department chair and subject to review when determining department space productivity.

To best capture a department’s space utilization, a Three-year Expenditure Total will be used to determine trends and indication of future funding prospects.

V. Additional Considerations

While the numerical representation of research space productivity described above is a useful metric, additional factors will be reviewed when considering changes to research space allocation. Factors may include:

- The number of people working in the space
- Special use considerations; including prior renovations
- Pending grant applications resources needed to fulfill requirements
- Prior commitments related to the space
- Moving and renovation related costs associated with reallocation

- Recruitment and program expansion
- Programmatic synergy
- Proximity of shared resources
- Differential space requirements for different types of research (basic science, clinical, computational, etc.)

VI. Operating Procedures

A. DEPARTMENTAL SPACE REVIEW

Research space utilization for all faculty should be reviewed annually by departmental chairs and/or their designees. Availability of each research space should be designated using one of the following descriptors:

1. Productively utilized and unavailable.
2. Potentially available but underutilized and currently occupied.
3. Potentially available, but not currently vacant or in need of repair
4. Potentially available and unoccupied but holding for recruitment
5. Available and unoccupied

B. PROGRAM GROWTH/FACULTY RECRUITMENT

If a faculty member acquires new extramural funding, warranting an increased amount of research space, the request should first be share with their department chair. who should attempt to accommodate the needed space within their given space portfolio. Likewise, whenever possible, research space for newly recruited faculty members should be identified within the parent department's current research footprint.

If the department needing additional research space has maximized utilization of their research footprint, a formal request should be submitted to the Chief Research Officer (CRO) for consideration. If the CRO agrees that additional research space is warranted, options for space expansion will be presented to the requesting department for consideration. This plan will include a timeline and resources needed to accommodate the reallocation of the space. Once approved by the requesting department, the plan will be submitted to the provost for review.

If the approved plan cannot provide the new-found space needs by allocating space from the Provost's Space Pool, the plan should then be submitted to the chair requesting the additional space as well as the chair within whose area the space is currently accounted.

Should the chairpersons involved in the proposed plan not be able to reach a mutually agreeable solution to the reassignment of space, a committee empaneled by the CRO will have the authority to render a binding decision.

C. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

A 60-day period will be allowed for vacating space from date of communication from the Provost Office.

When possible, each full-time equivalent is recommended approximately 125 sf of laboratory space.

The responsibility of lab clean-out and EHS inspection will be the responsibility of the relinquishing department upon departure of faculty or reassignment of space.

Any costs associated with lab movement, clean-out, or vacancies initiated by the Provost's Office will be exempt from budgetary implications via an AE Rolling Budget Adjustment request.

Future tiering of space quality is recommended for the entire UTMB campus to determine if sponsorship benchmarks should correspond to the quality of space. Expectation for higher quality research space would include higher funding requirements, while older and less desirable research spaces will be allowed a lower productivity benchmark or targeted for decommissioning.

D. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Provost

Promotes stewardship and sustainability of the UTMB research mission. Ensures research space supports the strategic research missions of UTMB and has ultimate authority on research space allocations assigned to departments, centers, and schools.

Chief Research Officer

Provides leadership and vision in shaping UTMB's strategic research priorities. Establishes expectations for research success and recommendations for improvement as needed. Responsibilities include vetting all space related requests prior to submission to the provost for consideration.

Deans / Department Chair / Center Directors

Allocate research space to faculty based on their area space use policy with the goal of maximizing research space efficiency.

CRO Executive Advisory Group

Review all incoming requests pertaining to wet and dry laboratory research space assignment with the goal of maximizing synergies, scientific discovery, and resource allocation.

VII. Definitions

Laboratory - space equipped for experimental or dry research with category codes 250 (Non-class Lab) or 255 (Non-class Lab Service) as defined by the National Center for Education Statistics

Three Year Expenditure Total - includes expenditures from previous three 12-month periods and projected expenditures for the coming 36-months

Provost's Space Pool - research space that is not assigned to a department

Leaders – Deans, department chairs, and center/institute directors

VIII. Related UTMB Policies and Procedures

[IHOP – 02.07.02 - Space Management Policy](#)

IX. Additional References

[Appendix A](#)

X. Dates Approved or Amended

<i>Originated:</i> 09/30/2020	
<i>Reviewed with Changes</i>	<i>Reviewed without Changes</i>
01/08/2024	

XI. Contact Information

Academic Enterprise
(409) 772-6615

APPENDIX ABuildings Included in Provost Space Pool

002	KEILLER BUILDING
007	CLINICAL SCIENCES BLDG
017	RESEARCH BUILDING 17
019	MARY MOODY NORTHEN PAVILION
021	RESEARCH BUILDING 21
041	<i>GALVESTON NATIONAL LABORATORY</i>
054	BASIC SCIENCE BUILDING
057	SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROF & NURSING
059	T.G. BLOCKER MED RES BLDG

Buildings to Have Wet Lab Research Phased Out Over Time

		Short Term 0-5 Years	Long Term 5-15 Years
008	J.S. ANNEX FR. OLD CHILDRENS	✓	
	J.S. ANNEX FR. JOHN SEALY	✓	
009	HOSPITAL		
011	JOHN W MCCULLOUGH BLDG	✓	
073	NMR DOCKSIDE BUILDING	✓	
121	REBECCA SEALY	✓	
006	RESEARCH BUILDING 6**		✓
087	PRIMARY CARE PAVILION	✓	

**Suitable for dry lab research ONLY