Michigan State University  
Space Assignment Policy

Specifically Addressing Office and Research Space

Revised: June 26, 2007

I. Preamble: Policy Statement on the Assignment of Space

All Michigan State University buildings, space, and land, regardless of fund source or location, belong to the University as a whole and are subject to assignment and reassignment by the Provost to meet the overall needs and best interest of the institution. Long-range planning for optimum use of these valuable University assets is a continuing process.

The assignment and use of space must change with University priorities. This may include space currently and traditionally held by academic units. Policies and procedures that guide space assignment and reassignment are the responsibility of the Executive Committee on Buildings, Facilities, and Space (ECBFS). Unless otherwise specified by the Provost or the Vice President for Finance and Operations, space assigned to a College/MAU, whether in a single building or multiple facilities, may be reassigned or reallocated within and among internal units of the College/MAU by the College/MAU to meet its goals and purposes. Any assignment of space between or among Colleges/MAUs is subject to prior approval by the Office of Planning and Budgets/Facilities Planning and Space Management, and may necessitate action by the ECBFS.

II. Introduction

Among the many resources needed to accomplish the mission of a university, facility resources, particularly the allocation of space, are critical. Similar to other essential components such as personnel, financial support, and equipment, it is recognized that space is finite and that the creation of new space is a slow and expensive process that is not always possible. Therefore decisions regarding space need to be made within the context of utilizing existing resources in the most effective manner possible. As a result, the assignment and reallocation of space needs to be accomplished thoughtfully and in accordance with policies and criteria that meet the needs of the units’ current and future mission and programs. The decision making process needs to take into account the special needs and unique differences among academic units and colleges. With this understanding, the following policy has been developed for space utilization at Michigan State University.

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1 This is an excerpt from the Facilities Planning and Space Management Policy and Procedures document.
The following is intended to be consistent with and follow from other all-campus policies regarding the assignment of space. Furthermore, these policies and the following assignment criteria are intended to:

1. Acknowledge that space is a limited resource that should be considered an integral component in program planning-similar to resource issues of budget, personnel, and equipment.

2. Recognize the special space and facility support needs of each academic unit and college.

3. Promote stewardship and accountability for space assigned to the relevant academic units and colleges.

4. Promote a process that:
   - Is open and consistently implemented across all colleges.
   - Provides for the efficient distribution of space within and across colleges and a process for resolving conflicting interests both expeditiously and fairly.
   - Produces recommendations based on an objective assessment of need, accepted measures of productivity, and the priorities of the unit, college, and university.

5. Promote long-range strategic space planning that cuts across unit and college boundaries with reviews to occur at 3 year intervals. It is expected that space allocations within academic units are evaluated on an annual basis as part of regular review procedures. As one potential outcome of the review, changes in space assignments should be forwarded to FPSM for updating the university space inventory database.

6. Provide for space allocation committees that recognize the updated role of cross-collegiate deliberations in implementing policies and space allocation criteria noted below. A set of space allocation committees may be appointed both within and among the colleges. Within-college committees may include representatives from each of the units in a college, and be appointed by the dean. Cross-college committee(s) may be established to recommend space allocation across a group of facilities that are shared by multiple colleges. For example, the Health Colleges Space Committee oversees space assignments in Fee Hall, Life Sciences, Clinical Center “B” Building, and the Veterinary Medicine Complex. Other cross-college committees may be established to oversee other groups of facilities. Cross-college committees should have a representative from each college that shares space in the designated group of facilities, to be appointed by the relevant deans. The across-college

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2 The all-campus policies can be found in FPSM – University Policies and Procedures Resource Guide, April 29, 1997 also located on the Web at Http://www.msu.edu/dig/oph/sm.
committee(s) should include a representative from the Vice President for Research, and a representative from the Provost's Office: Facilities Planning and Space Management. Representatives should understand and be capable of representing the particular and specific unit and college space needs, and be able to develop and assess unit-specific productivity criteria.

7. In addition to the standing committees noted above, ad hoc committees also may be established in cases that require special attention to focused space issues.

8. The Office of the Registrar retains responsibility for the assignment of all instructional space, although some space assignment may be delegated to academic units.

III. Policies

1. The University operates in a dynamic environment. To be successful, it must be able to use its resources flexibly to not only create change, but also adapt to it. It is recognized that space, particularly research and studio space, cannot be assigned permanently, or for an indefinite period of time to any one individual, program, unit, or college. Space may require reallocation based on need, productivity, or when the priorities of the unit, college, and/or university change. The Provost retains the authority to assign space for new University initiatives which may be thematic and cross-unit, consistent with University priorities. At the same time, it is recognized that the physical movement of facilities can be costly, time consuming, and disruptive. University policies should require sufficient due diligence to ensure that reassignments are undertaken only when fully justified.

2. The relevant dean, unless otherwise specified by the Provost, has the authority to assign and to reassign space that is currently occupied and assigned to the college among its internal units to meet the programmatic plans of the college.

3. For units and programs that are jointly administered, space may be reassigned across major administrative units with the unanimous agreement of the relevant deans or the deans’ designees. In these matters, the lead college has the responsibility to facilitate the resolution of space issues relative to the unit.

4. Program and personnel planning must make explicit the implications for space assignment. Program creation, growth, or contraction, must include a component that identifies a space plan. Similarly, all personnel hiring and contract and grant decisions require a space plan approved in advance of the offer with arrangements for space to be available when the offer, contract, or
grant is implemented. Primary responsibility for these provisions rests with the lead dean(s) associated with the project, and with the department chairs of the associated units.

5. The college or major administrative unit designee for space will review all assigned space assigned for research and creative endeavors, inclusive of jointly-administered space, at least every 3 years. A consistent process across units for reassessing need and renewing the assignment will be put in place based on the criteria that follow in this document. It is expected that unit administrators conduct regular annual reviews of space allocation within their respective administrative units, and make appropriate alterations in allocation of space consistent with this policy. Changes in space assignments should be forwarded to FPSM for updating the university space database.

6. Requests for space need to consider the financial resources and the trajectory of growth that each faculty member’s program brings to the unit/university. At a minimum, each college will establish a set of criteria for research and studio space assignment that includes some combination of indicators listed in Section IVB (Research and Related Support Space). In addition, each college may develop a more complex hierarchy of allocation priorities, based on the mission, goals, activities, and needs of the college and its units.

7. Inasmuch as contracts and grants are awarded for a defined period of time, the assignment of space to support an award is also to be time-limited in accordance with the provisions of the contract or grant. Generally speaking, consideration for continuing space assignment is contingent on the renewal of an award. During the request for renewal, the space assignment should also be reassessed.

8. Due diligence should be exercised to avoid space reallocation during temporary interruptions in funding. An interruption of one year or less may be tolerable, provided that the faculty have developed and implemented a sound plan for the continuation of funding within the coming year.

9. Utilization of space, particularly but not limited to the amount of space and type, will be a consideration at the time of the annual faculty performance review. Space, as a resource, should be allocated in proportion to the productivity of each faculty member and within the contextual needs of each discipline/set of responsibilities. Adjustments in the space assigned may be made based on this review.

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3 It is recognized that in selected instances, the space plan may not be fully developed prior to the required submittal date for a contract or grant. However, a plan must be in place that provides the space that may be needed if the contract or grant is awarded prior to acceptance of the award by the University Trustees.
10. Wherever possible, the colleges and units should promote the clustering and sharing of research space among groups of faculty working in related areas, and/or requiring access to similar types of specialized equipment.

11. When space becomes vacant, regardless of the reason, and unless otherwise specified by the Provost, the space vacancy will be communicated to the appropriate space allocation committee, as provided for by existing University policy.

12. The cross-college space allocation committee(s), in consultation with the Provost’s Office, have the responsibility for examining space needs across colleges and assessing the assignment of space based on the need to support college and university priorities. The space allocation committee(s) may act on behalf of the colleges. Further, they have the authority to assign and reassign space within facilities occupied by the colleges. When the space allocation committee cannot resolve matters, the issue(s) may be referred to the relevant dean(s) for review and response. In the event that the space committee and the dean(s) cannot reach a resolution, the matter will be referred to the ECBFS. The ECBFS will be the final arbiter in such disputes.

IV. Space Assignment Guidelines and Criteria

A. Office Space

All faculty, academic and non-academic staff, and graduate assistants should be assigned suitable office space to carry out their responsibilities. Suitability may be defined in a variety of ways. For example, suitable space may be located in or adjacent to a laboratory; in or adjacent to a clinic or other clinical facility; in or adjacent to a studio or other space designated for creative endeavors; on or off campus; or otherwise situated at the discretion of the dean or dean’s designee. At the discretion of the dean, this could include shared office space. Based on past practice and because they do not have full-time duties, all graduate assistants will share office space.

1. Office space, both private and shared, will be assigned taking into account the following criteria:

   - Level of responsibilities.
   - Type of Appointment.
   - Level of productivity.
   - Proximity to other assigned space (i.e. laboratory, studio or clinical space).
   - Proximity to other faculty with similar academic interests or a demonstrated interest and commitment to collaborative scholarship.

2. Recognizing the limited amount of space, faculty should not be assigned more than one office. In instances where faculty are jointly appointed
and provide services in more than one department or unit, the faculty member, in conjunction with the various units and colleges, is expected to be assigned a primary office. Departments or units that are not providing the primary office may provide suitable workspace for the faculty member. This would typically consist of an office or workspace to be shared with part time, emeriti, or other similarly situated faculty.

3. Emeriti, adjunct, and visiting faculty may, depending on their contribution to the unit, college, or university, be assigned to office space as determined by the appropriate University administrator or designee. In most instances, again recognizing the limitation of space and within the context of the above criteria, productive emeriti faculty would be required to share office space with other similarly situated faculty.

B. Research and Related Support Space

Faculty, with a research agenda, creative project or program approved by the relevant dean(s), should be assigned suitable space to carry out their responsibilities. If space has been provided to a research or project team, the principle investigator will be primarily responsible for ensuring that the space is utilized in accordance with the assignment approval. Shared support space such as cold rooms, dark rooms, tissue culture, autoclaves, etc. are shared among a number of researchers and should be assigned and administered at the unit or college level. At the discretion of the college, laboratory research space also could be shared space. Furthermore, the location, type, and amount of research space will be made at the discretion of the unit and the college in accordance with their needs and priorities. It is also acknowledged that this space is finite and assignment decisions will need to be made on the basis of unit, college, and university priorities with the potential outcome of some space needs not being met. Although, any faculty member subjected to research or creative activity productivity review in their performance evaluations can assume access to space and infrastructure, the space assignment might not include an independent laboratory. All space assignments can and may be adjusted on the basis of productivity and competing priorities of the involved unit, the college, and or the university.

1. A plan for research space for new faculty (including wet, dry, and specialty laboratories), or space for creative endeavors must be approved in advance of any offer and available when the faculty member is hired. It is understood that new faculty, especially junior faculty, are selected based on their potential for productivity in the future, as well as their accomplishments to date. At a minimum, a new faculty member must have developed a research agenda or program that conforms to the strategic plan of the relevant unit(s), as determined by their dean(s). Additionally, the new faculty member should display evidence of, or have strong potential for, some combination of the following:
 Publication or acceptance for publication of refereed journal research articles in the current and immediately preceding years.
 Active and ongoing submission of extramural grant, contract or other proposals to support their research or creative endeavors.
 Ability to support funded graduate research assistants.
 Involvement with collaborators in research team efforts both on campus and externally.
 Evidence of or potential for achieving a national reputation in a chosen field.
 High priority outreach and extension activities, in accord with unit strategy.

2. Space assignments for new faculty should take into account the following factors:

 Projected duration of projects.
 Proximity to appropriate support space (i.e., animal management, biochemical hazard control, radiation exposure safety, large equipment and material storage, etc.).
 Proximity to other assigned space (i.e., laboratory, studio or clinical space).
 Proximity to other faculty with similar academic interests with a demonstrated interest or commitment to collaborative scholarship.

3. Review of research space (including wet, dry, and specialty laboratories or studios) for currently appointed faculty will be part of the annual performance appraisal process. The review of space will include:

 The amount and condition of current space assigned, including square footage, laboratory configuration and safety issues.
 The number of personnel utilizing the space, including faculty, technicians, graduate students, post doctoral fellows, etc.
 Whether space is shared with other faculty and the estimated amount of time the space is used by each faculty member.
 Record of productivity as outlined in number four below.

4. Space may be continued for currently appointed faculty taking into account a combination of the following:

 A research agendum or program that conforms to the strategic plans of the unit, college and university, as determined by the relevant dean(s), in conjunction with the departments.
 Recognition of active research as evidenced by the following types of indicators over a three year rolling average (this is an illustrative, not a definitive, listing):
- Publication or the acceptance for publication in high-quality, refereed journals of research articles in the current three year period.
- Significant performance, exhibits or other forms of referred review in the creative arts.
- Success at obtaining extramural funding to support the faculty member’s research or creative endeavors.
- Active links with commercial or private industry through fiscal and technical support.
- Ability to support funded graduate research assistants.
- Involvement with collaborators in research efforts both on and off campus.
- Evidence of a national reputation in his/her chosen field(s).
- Strategically-oriented outreach and/or extension activity, including that aimed at economic development and the creation of new jobs for the region.

- The projected duration of currently funded projects.
- The identification of planned project renewal, new, or expanded projects.
- Anticipated changes in the personnel levels required to accomplish the research program.
- Interest in reconfiguration or an alternative space assignment that may facilitate a new project by relocating all or a portion of the assigned space to a different location, to better support new or ongoing collaborative research.
- Proximity to appropriate support space (i.e. animal management, biochemical hazard control, radiation exposure safety, large equipment and material storage, etc.).
- Proximity to other assigned space (i.e. laboratory, studio or clinical space).
- Proximity to other faculty with similar academic interests given a demonstrated interest and commitment to collaborative scholarship.

5. The amount of space previously assigned may be modified based upon a combination of the factors outlined in Number 3. above.

6. The university has a responsibility to provide appropriate support to all three parts of a faculty member’s role: teaching, research, and outreach. In many cases, that includes access to research space, but it does not guarantee exclusive access to a given space.