




STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Division/Department: Divisions of Academic Affairs and Research	SOP/IOP No.: AA-2025-01
Effective Date: 11/24/2025	Revision(s): na
Subject: Research Space Allocation	
Authority: FAMU Regulation 1.021	
Applicability	This Procedure applies to University designated research space.
Signature of Approving Authority	
Related References	

I. Procedural Statement and Purpose

- A. The purpose of this Procedure is to establish a coordinated process and designated committee structure to allocate research lab space. This Procedure hereby authorizes the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (Provost) and the Vice President (VP) for Research to establish the Research Space Allocation Committee (RSAC or Committee) to oversee all University research space. The Procedure grants the RSAC authority to assess research space productivity annually, allocate University research space for new faculty or research projects, and reallocate research space due to low productivity or changing University priorities.
- B. Achieving R1 Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education status relies heavily on adequate space for conducting research activities, such as in laboratories, studios, workshops, or offices. Research space is a limited and valuable resource that supports the University's mission of advancing knowledge and innovation to support our stakeholders and clientele. Schools, colleges, centers, institutes, units, or departments historically managed these needs, due to the varying research space requirements across disciplines. The current process inappropriately facilitates siloed decisions regarding allocating, renovating, and managing research spaces without considering the broader needs of the University. To address the University's needs, the creation of the RSAC will allocate research space in a fair, transparent, and efficient manner aligned with the University's strategic priorities and goals.

II. Definitions

- A. Research Space — refers to wet lab or dry lab space assigned to faculty members and researchers to support their research activities.
- B. Research Space Agreement — the formal document which outlines the terms, conditions, responsibilities, and the reporting requirements under which researcher, faculty, staff or another party or entity is granted access to and use of research space.

III. Procedures/Approvals/Responsibilities

A. RSAC Membership

The Committee includes one representative from each of the following units:

- Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- Office of Research.
- Facilities and Management.
- Director of Research Compliance.
- Director of Environmental Health and Safety.
- Dean of the College of Science and Technology.
- Dean of the FAMU-FSU College of Engineering.
- Dean of the College of Pharmacy, Pharmaceutical Sciences, and Institute of Public Health.
- One (1) Faculty Senate Representative
- One (1) graduate student involved in laboratory research.
- Three (3) grant-funded, tenured faculty representatives, with one appointed by each of the following: the Faculty Senate, the Provost, and the VP for Research.
- Up to two additional deans or department chairs may be appointed as ad hoc RSAC members when research space in their college or department is being assigned or evaluated.

The Provost and VP for Research shall select the Committee Chair and Co-Chair.

B. RSAC Meeting Frequency

The RSAC will meet monthly to review all business.

C. RSAC Authority

The RSAC is an advisory committee authorized to recommend research space assignments to the Provost and VP for Research and to conduct an annual assessment of research productivity. Based on the evaluation, the RSAC makes allocation/reallocation recommendations to the Provost and VP of Research for approval or denial.

D. RSAC Criteria for Research Space Allocation

1. The RSAC shall develop criteria for allocating research space. The criteria shall be based on the following principles:
 - a. **Research excellence:** Allocate research space to support high-quality and impactful research that contributes to the University's reputation and ranking.
 - b. **Research productivity:** Allocate research space to support research activities that generate significant outputs, such as graduate degree production, publications, patents, grants, or awards.
 - c. **Research collaboration:** Allocate research space to foster interdisciplinary and cross-faculty research collaboration that enhances the University's research capacity and variety.
 - d. **Research Innovation:** Allocate research space to support research that addresses emerging and societal challenges and creates new opportunities for knowledge transfer and commercialization.

- e. **Research sustainability:** Allocate research space to optimize existing space and resources and minimize the environmental impact of research activities.
2. In addition, the criteria for space allocation research shall also consider the following factors:
 - a. The availability and suitability of existing research space, as well as the projected demand for new or additional space.
 - b. The alignment of the research activities with the University's strategic plan and the faculty's research strategy.
 - c. The potential for research growth and development, as well as the need for flexibility and adaptability of research space.
 - d. The contribution of the research activities to the University's teaching and learning objectives and the student experience.
 - e. Research activities must comply with the University's policies and regulations, including those related to health, safety, ethics, and intellectual property.

E. Research Space Allocation Process

The RSAC shall develop a detailed process for research space allocation involving the following steps:

1. **Timeline:** The RSAC shall provide a detailed timeline for the application process. The Committee shall outline a detailed timeline from application submission to recommendation.
2. **Application:** Researchers needing new or additional research space should submit a space request application to the Committee outlining their specific requirements. The application is available from the Committee.
3. **Review:** In addition, the RSAC shall outline the review process for the application.
4. **Approval/Recommendation:** The RSAC will recommend approval to the Provost and VP of Research. The RSAC will also monitor and evaluate the use and impact of the allocated research space and report to the Provost and VP of Research.
5. **Notification:** The RSAC will notify the applicants of the outcome of their requests and provide feedback on their applications. If approved, the RSAC will also inform the applicants of the terms and conditions of the research space allocation, such as the duration, the responsibilities, and the reporting requirements.
6. **Implementation:** The applicants who receive research space allocation shall sign a Research Space Agreement with the RSAC and the faculty, dean, or director, confirming their acceptance of the terms and conditions. The applicants shall also coordinate with the Office of Facilities, Planning, Construction, and Safety to arrange the access and arrangement of the research space.
7. **Recordkeeping:** All documentation related to space allocation—including requests, approvals, assessments, meeting minutes, and correspondence—shall be retained in accordance with the Florida Department of State General Records Schedule (GS5 for Public Universities) and University records retention policies.

F. Research Space Productivity Measures and Annual Review

The RSAC will assist the Divisions of Academic Affairs and Research in determining whether research space usage is optimized. The RSAC will create a set of quantitative and qualitative metrics to assess current and future research space allocations. Measures should include a

combination of financial and other key metrics to evaluate research space productivity. Productivity measures for research space can vary based on priorities within each school, college, or discipline and are not always directly tied to financial activity. At the end of the fiscal year, Deans must submit a research space utilization report for all research areas using the previously mentioned metrics. This report may include additional criteria, data, or circumstances, as well as an evaluation rubric developed by the RSAC for minimal productivity standards. If a research space fails to meet these standards, it may be reallocated for other research projects.

Potential metrics can include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Total externally sponsored research expenditures (direct and indirect costs) (\$) / sq. ft.
2. Total research expenditures (direct and indirect costs) (\$)/sq. ft., regardless of funding source.
3. Indirect costs \$ sq. ft.
4. Quality and impact of current externally funded or developing sponsored research projects.
5. Research alignment with the school's strategic priorities.
6. The number of undergraduate and graduate students involved in the research.
7. The proportion of effort dedicated to research versus instruction or service.
8. The portion of research activity financed by external funds.
9. Type of research performed (theoretical, computational, heavy equipment).
10. The number of researchers using the space.
11. Number and quality of health and safety violations.

G. Considerations for the Re-Assignment of Research Space

1. The RSAC, the Provost, and the Vice President of Research will annually review active research spaces that fall below the minimal productivity standards. Faculty members occupying space deemed below the minimal productivity standards for active research will provide the Dean or Director with a plan for increasing research productivity to meet the level required for active research designation.
 - a. If a faculty member does not renew their grant, the Dean or Director should give them up to two (2) years to secure renewal before vacating the research space.
 - b. If a faculty member needs to relocate, at least six (6) months' notice will be provided whenever feasible. The faculty member and the Dean will formulate the relocation plan.
2. In consultation with the Dean, the Provost's Office may designate specific research spaces inactive if they have been unproductive for up to two (2) years. RSAC will develop metrics to assess inactive spaces. These metrics will include, but are not limited to, the absence of sponsored research output, graduate student production, and scientific publication and presentation records.

The RSAC will also develop a process for faculty members to appeal if research space is determined to be inactive. If the research space is labeled inactive, the RSAC will reassign the space to other researchers/projects.

H. Modifications to Assigned Research Space

RSAC's approval is required for any physical changes to research space, including remodeling, installing equipment that requires building utilities, or modifying the building.

I. Space and/or Equipment as a Result of Proposal

RSAC must be notified during the proposal phase if new research facilities, major equipment or hazardous materials are required that necessitate space modifications. Items to consider include, but are not limited to, electrical capacity, vibration sensitivity, temperature requirements, dust containment, exhaust, noise, floor loading, and size (to ensure equipment can be moved into the space). The goal of RSAC is to consult on matters related to appropriate space and equipment, functional new equipment, building system integrity, code compliance, and the prevention of facility impacts.

III. The RSAC shall develop internal operating procedures and/or guidelines to implement this Policy.