



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

Facilities and Business Operations

3528 North Perseus Loop, Bldg. 16A
Orlando, FL 32816

Introduction

In Fall of 2023, the university completed an institution-wide space utilization study. The objective of the study was to identify opportunities to advance strategic goals, including achievement of Florida Preeminence, through improved space planning practices. Among its findings, the study recognized the need to optimize research space on campus and reduce rental obligations off campus.

The Provost is requiring the use of Research Space Guidelines and a supporting evaluation rubric to advance these efforts. Colleges and centers should use these tools to assess their space utilization and identify research space needs or opportunities for reassignment. The primary goal of the rubric is to provide data that can inform leadership in best supporting existing research efforts and attracting additional faculty.

The rubric evaluates utilization of individual research lab spaces and is not a performance assessment of faculty or associated personnel. The rubric was designed with flexibility in mind, recognizing that no two units are the same. Rubrics should be kept sufficiently up-to-date to permit responsible space allocation decisions. In any event, rubrics shall be completed a minimum of every three (3) years.

The guidelines and rubric were developed by Real Estate & Space Administration in consultation with university leadership, the Research Council, the University Space Committee, and other university stakeholders.

Research Space Rubric

Per the Research Space Guidelines, an assessment of research space utilization requires consideration of both quantitative and qualitative metrics. Accordingly, the rubric is comprised of both of these types of metrics to assess space utilization. Department leadership will be tasked with entering select qualitative and quantitative data into the rubric.

Quantitative Questions:

1. **Research Expenditures:** Real Estate & Space Administration will pre-populate research expenditure fields within the rubric utilizing data previously submitted by each department.
2. **Research Effort.** Each department shall identify the number of proposals submitted over the prior three years as low, moderate, or high. The numeric range of proposals shall be determined at the department level and be available for review should additional analysis of assessment results be needed.



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3. **Scholarly Output.** Each department shall identify the quantity, quality, and impact of scholarly achievements and activities occurring in assigned space over the prior three years as low, moderate, or high. The numeric requirements for each threshold shall be determined at the department level and be available for review should additional analysis of assessment results be needed.
4. **Student Research.** Each department shall identify the number of recent graduates over the prior three years who have benefitted from activities in assigned space as low, moderate, or high. The numeric range of graduates shall be determined at the department level and be available for review should additional analysis of assessment results be needed.

Qualitative Questions:

1. **Room Requirements.** Identify whether research activities require the use of a wet, damp, or dry lab. These labs are further defined as:
 - **Wet Labs** typically house activities and experiments that utilize chemicals, potentially hazardous liquids, and biological materials to support research and testing. Wet labs are appropriately equipped with the proper plumbing utilities such as piped gases and pure water systems, mechanical ventilation systems that support continuous outside air changes, and an electrical infrastructure adequate to support the research and associated equipment.
 - *Fields:* Includes, but not limited to, Life Sciences, Pharmaceutical, Medical Technology, Molecular Biology, Organic Chemistry, Physical Chemistry, Pathology, Bioprocessing, and Forensics.
 - *Equipment:* Chemical fume hoods, biological safety cabinets, freezers, growth chambers, refrigerators, incubators, centrifuges, evaporators, scales, balance tables, storage and distribution of gases.
 - *Physical Environment:* Controlled environment to include once-thru air, drain and vent services, DI water, eyewash/safety showers, extreme cleanability. Hazards: Chemical, Biological, Physical, Safety, Ergonomic.
 - **Damp Labs** require a slightly different infrastructure-based type of laboratory environment than a wet lab. Damp labs focus on the electrical, optical and technology sciences, which have greater requirements for clean power sources, higher electrical capacity and voltage needs, and can have specific constraints regarding radiation, electromagnetics, and vibration sensitivities of spaces. These spaces might include lab with isolated slabs, high-bays, maker spaces, machine shops, etc.



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- *Fields:* Includes, but not limited to, Cleanroom, Optics, Engineering, Physics, Electronics, Robotics, Biomedical, Imaging, Material Characterization, Simulation, Power and Energy Design, and Automated or Electric Vehicles.
 - *Equipment:* Anechoic chambers, magnetic resonance imaging, computerized tomography.
 - *Physical Environment:* Controlled environment may include humidity and temperature control, clean power, dust control, advanced vibration control. Hazards: Physical, Safety, Ergonomic.
 - **Dry Labs** are typically a lesser infrastructure-intensive type of lab typically utilized for applied or computational mathematical analyses, computer-generated modelling or simulations, coding, data analysis, and other analytical processes that do not pose significant hazards or risks. Dry labs that pertain to nanofabrication research and production require a “cleanroom” level of constructed containment that can maintain a very low levels of airborne particulates.
 - *Fields:* Includes, but not limited to, Computer Science, Bioinformatics, Technology, Information Systems, Humanities and Social Sciences.
 - Dry lab space will include research workspace for RAs and Post Docs, for that part of their job that is performed away from the hazards of wet or damp labs.
 - *Equipment:* Computers, Machines
 - *Physical Environment:* Computer lab, evaluation, and creative arts environments. Ergonomic hazards only.
2. **Research Impact.** Each department shall identify the impact of research occurring in the room, including societal benefits, technological advancements, and contribution to knowledge as low, moderate, or high.
 3. **Collaboration.** Each department shall identify, in the affirmative or negative, whether room activities provide support for innovative research and in particular, interdisciplinary collaborations.
 4. **Shared Space.** Each department shall identify, in the affirmative or negative, whether room occupants share space or equipment.
 5. **Stewardship of Space.** Each department shall identify, in the affirmative or negative, whether the current use of the space is meeting all relevant compliance requirements and aligns with strategic objectives.
 6. **Room Utilization.** Each department shall identify whether the size of assigned space is too large, satisfactory, or too small for its affiliated research activities.



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Comment Section:

The comment section is available to provide additional context. Completion of the comment section is optional. However, additional context should be provided for unique situations, such as uneven funding allocation amongst co-PIs and interdepartmental collaborations.

Funding per Square Foot

The default method for calculating externally funded grant expenditures by research space is to:

- Divide grant expenditures by the total assignable square footage of research spaces assigned to that grant award.
- Grant expenditures per square foot is then multiplied by the assigned square footage of each research space to determine the funding distribution per room.
- All identified grant expenditures per room will then be added to determine total grant expenditures per each research space.

Any preferred deviation to this calculation method should be noted in the rubric's comment section.

Timeframes

It is the expectation that every research space assigned to a college or unit an assessment of utilization completed a minimum of every three (3) years. Completed assessments shall be submitted to Real Estate & Space Administration and retained by the college or unit.