

Space Occupancy and Allocation Policy

Unit: Office for Academic Affairs

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Title: Associate Provost for Academic Affairs

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Purpose:

The University of Alabama's (UA) physical facilities are a limited resource that must be managed and utilized effectively to promote the highest and best use of University space. In order to address changing and unmet space needs, the University must adopt effective methods to analyze and evaluate facility requests, plan for campus space needs, and track, manage, and allocate facility resources appropriately. This policy applies to the extended use of interior building space only. Temporary usage of University space for activities and events is governed by the Facilities and Grounds Use Policy.

Policy:

All physical facilities belong to the University and are assigned to a division, college, academic unit, or department for specific uses. Current users or occupants of the facilities do not own the space, but may have control as delegated by the Provost or a Vice President. Assignment of space to a particular college, department, or school is subject to change. All Vice Presidents, Deans, Directors, and Department Heads responsible for assigning space shall ensure that all allocated space is being utilized efficiently and in a manner consistent with the intent and/or academic program associated with the original allocation. All space shall be assigned in a manner that best advances the following space utilization goals:

- Accomplishes the institution's mission of teaching, research, and service;
- Implements priorities established by the institution's leadership as guided by the University's Strategic Plan and Campus Master Plan;
- Achieves operational efficiency;
- Maximizes space use and land use;
- Improves accessibility;
- Produces a safer and healthier environment; and
- Improves the appearance of the institution.

All space is to be used for the purpose for which it has been assigned. **Space designated and assigned for office, conference room, laboratory, or classroom purposes shall not be used for storage.** Vacant space should not be used for any other purposes (storage, conference room, etc.) without prior approval. Space that is vacated in Academic buildings through the relocation of an occupant immediately returns to the Provost. For all other buildings, vacated space returns to the appropriate Vice President.

Requests for Space - A request for new space and/or modifications to existing space (e.g. change in primary purpose of the space) may be submitted by a Dean or Associate/Assistant Vice President or their designee through the Space Request Form

(<https://spacemanagement.ua.edu/wp-content/uploads/Space-Request-Form.pdf>). Each request is reviewed by the Provost, Vice President, or their designee. Some requests may be forwarded to the Space Advisory Group (defined below) for evaluation and consideration.

Prior to initiating a potential lease agreement for external space, a Space Request Form should be submitted for review and recommendation. A determination will be made if UA owned space is available to be utilized as opposed to leasing space. Payment for leased space is the responsibility of the requestor unless previously committed to by the Provost or a Vice President.

A request to provide space to an external entity or agency must be submitted and approved by the Provost or the appropriate Vice President prior to recruiting or entering negotiations.

Emeritus faculty status does not guarantee assignment of office and/or lab space. However, if office and/or lab space is available and an individual's scholarly and/or educational activities justify the use, space assignment for emeritus faculty may be requested contingent upon the following criteria:

- Is the individual actively involved in scholarly and/or educational activities of the University? If so, and if available, space may be provided.
- The size of office space allocated should be proportional to the emeritus faculty member's scholarly and/or educational activities. Shared offices would be the norm for emeritus faculty members maintaining less than full time involvement and contribution.

Such request must be submitted to the Associate Provost for approval. The allocation of space to emeritus faculty will be reviewed annually.

Departing faculty (retired or voluntary separation) are generally not provided office and/or lab space. If the Dean of the respective faculty member's college deems it necessary to provide temporary office and/or lab space, a Space Request Form must be submitted by the Dean or the Dean's designee.

The Space Advisory Group reserves the right to change the Space Occupancy and Allocation Policy without prior notice as necessary to address emergent issues.

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees (both faculty and staff). Activities or events that require temporary access to University facilities and grounds are governed by the Facilities and Grounds Use Policy.

Defined Roles and Responsibilities Related to Space Management:

The Space Advisory Group, the Office of Space Management, and departmental Space Representatives serve critical roles in tracking, managing, and planning for the utilization of campus space. Each of these roles and responsibilities is defined below.

Space Advisory Group: The Space Advisory Group was established to evaluate and recommend space policies, processes, and procedures; initiate or conduct studies to improve space efficiencies and/or use; enact space priorities; disseminate relevant space information to the Dean's Council; review and recommend action on assignment/reassignment of space; and modify space usage. The Group meets every quarter or as needed. The Group consists of the following members: Associate Provost, Ex Officio Dean Representative, Assistant Vice President for Finance and Operations, and Associate Vice President for Student Life. The Senior Facility Analyst for Academic Affairs and Senior Associate Vice President for Campus Development serve as advisors to the Group.

Office of Space Management: The Office of Space Management is located within the Division of Finance and Operations and exists to track, document, and report on University space and asset data. The Office of Space Management includes Building Information Services (BIS), the Facility Condition Assessment (FCA) Program, and the Senior Facility Analyst for Academic Affairs. The Office of Space Management develops policies, procedures, and guidelines applicable to space data management that require the review and approval of the Space Advisory Group.

Building Information Services (BIS): BIS is a part of the Office of Space Management. BIS develops and maintains accurate floor plans for all University facilities, along with a space inventory database that includes room square footage, room usage/type, room occupant, and additional space utilization data. BIS conducts periodic space reviews for verification of floor plans and space utilization. BIS provides space utilization reporting to the Alabama Commission of Higher Education and internal UA entities upon request.

Senior Facility Analyst for Academic Affairs: The Senior Facility Analyst for Academic Affairs is a team member of the Office of Space Management. For new construction that includes classrooms or class labs, the Senior Facility Analyst reviews the new facility space to determine capacity for teaching space. The Senior Facility Analyst records the data and notifies the Office of the University Registrar regarding classrooms and/or classroom labs to be input into the University's classroom scheduling software. The Senior Facility Analyst also reviews and approves requested changes/additions/deletions to any space housed in the classroom scheduling software. The Senior Facility Analyst works closely with BIS to perform facility space audits, primarily focusing on the utilization of academic space (classroom, classroom labs, faculty offices, etc.).

Space Representatives: The Space Representative(s) for each department/college serves as a point of contact for the Office of Space Management. This person is responsible for verifying and managing the space data for their respective area. The Office of Space Management will provide an annual space audit packet for the Space Representative to review and update.

All Space Representatives will meet twice per year to receive training and discuss issues/challenges regarding the space audit process. This meeting will be scheduled and facilitated by the Office of Space Management.

Procedures for Maintenance and Reporting of Space Data:

Building Information Services (BIS) maintains the space inventory database for the University. This database includes square footage and space utilization data for each facility and room. BIS captures this information by conducting annual space audits of each University facility. The process involves BIS drafters walking through a facility and recording any apparent changes in square footage or room usage.

Once BIS has completed a space audit for a facility, the information is placed into a space audit packet that is distributed to the Space Representative(s) responsible for the space data of that respective school/college. BIS or the Senior Facility Analyst will contact the Space Representative(s) to schedule a time to discuss the information included in the packet. Space Representative(s) shall verify the following information:

- Room Use – indicates the primary use of the room. Examples are office, classroom, lab, and closet.
- Office Occupant Type – identifies the primary occupant type of the office, i.e. Faculty, Staff, Student, Administration, or shared office space. (Applicable to office space only.)
- Office Occupant – identifies the occupant(s) residing in the office. (Applicable to office space only.)
- Space Assignment – identifies the department organization code for the entity that utilizes the space. This may be a department of a college (e.g., Management, Marketing), an administrative department (e.g., Office of Information Technology, Financial Accounting), or multipurpose space (e.g., Academic Affairs, Finance and Operations).

The space inventory database is a valuable tool for planning and reporting purposes. Conducting annual space audits are critical to ensure BIS is maintaining accurate floor plans and space utilization data for the University's facilities. The accuracy of the data is dependent upon BIS, the Senior Facility Analyst, and the Space Representatives working closely together to audit and verify campus space.

Approved by:

Dr. Kevin Whitaker, Executive Vice President and Provost