

Florida Atlantic University Research Space Assignment Policy

Office and Research Space

September 2020

I. Preamble: Policy Statement on the Assignment of Research Space

Florida Atlantic University (FAU) spans six campuses across southeast Florida. The land on which the university exists is the property of the state of Florida and the buildings on these land are the property of FAU. These buildings not only provide space for research and education but also house the supporting infrastructure of the university.

Research space can take several forms, including 'dry lab research', such as computational based research done in offices or computer labs, or engineering and physical science research done in labs that provide space for hardware and supporting equipment. Wet lab research provides space for biomedical and biological based research, as well as patient based studies or animal studies which are executed in customized space such as a gait lab, a clinical trials unit or animal quarters.

Research space is a valued and precious commodity, and represents a minority of the campus footprint. As such, research space will be archived and accounted for by FAU Facilities Planning and Space Management (FPSM) and the re-assignment of non-research space to a research-intensive space would be overseen by the Executive Committee on Space Utilizations (ESCU). In this policy, FAU provides guidance for the assignment of existing research space to faculty (existing or newly hired) for the purposes of providing sufficient infrastructure and space to conduct research projects that are supported by extramural or intramural funding.

II. Introduction

The conduct of research requires labs and space that provides an infrastructure to conduct the research project or creative activity. This assigned space may house certain technology, equipment or infrastructure that support the project. In addition, the space should be of a certain size that allow for supported personnel to conduct the work supported by a funded grant, and sufficient space for specialized needs of the research program. Further, research space assigned to faculty will be done in a fashion that locates the research program as close as possible to centralized infrastructure such as core facilities, technology or collaborators. Therefore, the assignment and reallocation of research space will be done based on the needs of the research project, the number of people who participate on the project (students, staff, post-doctoral fellows, faculty) and proximity to supporting, centralized infrastructure and research teams.

Therefore, this document addresses the assignment of research space across all FAU campuses and is intended to be consistent with all FAU policies that apply to all its campuses. The criteria for assigning research space will affirm that:

1. Research space should be assigned with priority to the needs of the project in terms of required supporting infrastructure, funding, number of personnel and proximity to technological support.
2. Each academic unit (department, college, center, institute) has unique space and infrastructure needs unique to their discipline.
3. Oversight and accountability for the assignment of research space will be the obligation of the college or institute that is charged with overseeing the building or facility in which assigned research space exists.
4. The process of assigning space is applied consistently across all academic units.
5. The assessment of research space needs is objective, and are based on need, productivity and the priorities of the academic unit.
6. The process provides for efficient distribution of research space and a process for resolving conflicts that might arise as a result of space utilization, in a manner that is fair and equally applied.
7. That the University has long term strategic plans that can impact how research space is prioritized and assigned and that these priorities will reviewed at regular intervals, including annually at the college or institute level and every five years at the university level.
8. That all research space assignments or reassignments will be communicated to FPSM for inventory purposes
9. That each unit will have a space allocation committee to ensure that the needs of funded research projects are met and that research space is equitably assigned
10. That in the case where multiple academic units assign faculty to research space in a common building or facility, that a cross-college committee be assigned by the VPR and Provost to oversee research space assignments.
11. That specialized, ad hoc committees may be formed to oversee the assignment of space within specialized research facilities, these committees will be appointed by the Dean or executive director that is responsible for the assigned building, and that this committee will have faculty representation.
12. That the registrar retains priority and accountability for the assignment of all instructional space and that space specifically assigned to colleges are managed within those academic units.

III. Policies

1. The purpose of this policy is to set forward criteria that prioritize the assignment of research dedicated space on the FAU campuses, for faculty use, and that the space be supportive of the type of research being conducted, have access to required infrastructure and be able to accommodate individuals supported by the funded research project within that assigned space.
2. This policy will note that a Dean or Institute Director, as assigned by the Provost and/or VP for Research, will have the authority to assign and reallocate research space based on faculty research needs.
3. Where there is joint administration of research space that involve faculty from different academic units, space may be assigned or reassigned consistent with the consent of the relevant Deans or Dean's designees, which should include 3 research-active faculty, and that assignment or reassignment will be based on funding and programmatic needs.
4. The assignment of research space, whether reallocation for existing faculty or for the hiring of new faculty, must include a research space plan that is approved by

the Dean, Institute Director or Dean's designee prior to moving or changing faculty assigned space, or upon offer to hire a new faculty member.

5. There will be an annual review of assigned space by the designated space committee for that unit, and the university (Provost and VPR) will review its prioritization for research space assignment every 5 years, consistent with the University's strategic plan and this review will include 5 research-active faculty members assigned by the Provost and VPR, with the appropriate approval from those faculty members department chair and Dean.
6. The assignment of research space will be dependent upon budget support, personnel, and the unique infrastructure needs of the research project. As such, each administrative unit that oversees research space should develop a set of criteria for the assignment of research space in their unit.
7. The assignment of research space is for the time associated with the externally funded project. It is recognized that sometimes it takes up to 2-3 years to get the grant renewed after the award expires and that accommodations can be made to support research while the PI attempts to get the award re-established, however, after some designated time the lab may have to be re-assigned to another funded researcher. Here, every effort will be made to find space to help the faculty member conduct experiments in support of a new grant application.
8. The allocation of research space may be re-assessed at the time of faculty annual review by the department.
9. The assignment of research space will be considered when clustering faculty around technology or resources that support that support the research efforts of groups of faculty. Examples may be animal quarters, core facilities or clinical trials unit.
10. When research space is vacated, the academic unit should report that space as vacant to the FPSM.
11. The cross-college research space allocation committee(s), in consultation with the Provost's Office and the VP for Research, have the responsibility for examining research space needs across colleges and assessing the assignment of research space based on the need to support college and university research priorities. The research space allocation committee(s) may act on behalf of the colleges. Further, they have the authority to assign and reassign research space within facilities occupied by the colleges. When the research 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 Provost and VPR, who will be the final arbiter in such disputes.

IV. Space Assignment Guidelines and Criteria

A. Research Office Space

FAU will assign all faculty, staff and students appropriate research office space to carry out their roles on the research project. Here, research office space is defined as the faculty members assigned office. These include office space located in or near the main laboratory space or research facility. This may include shared office space, depending upon the needs of the unit and the role of the personnel on the project. It should be expected that all graduate students and post-doctoral fellows participating in research projects will have shared office space.

1. The assignment of office space associated with research will take into account the level of responsibility of the individual and their appointment; proximity to the lab or research facility; proximity to collaborators and scientists with similar research infrastructure needs and level of productivity.
2. All faculty will be assigned a primary office and will only be assigned one office. In cases where faculty have research activities at two distinct sites, 'hotel office' accommodations will be made available at the second site.
3. Emeritus, adjunct or visiting faculty will be expected to share an office (if available) and will not be assigned designated lab space, based on availability of shared space.

B. Research and Related Support Space

All faculty engaged in research and creative activities will be assigned appropriate research space to carry out their projects. This includes visiting research faculty. The PI assigned to space will be responsible for making sure the space is used appropriately and consistent with the research plan. Shared spaces such as autoclaves, tissue culture, or specialized small equipment rooms will be assigned and administered at the unit or college level. If the research space needs for a PI are small and can be shared with another PI, then based on access to technology and collaborations, research space may be co-assigned and shared between investigators. All research space assignments are for the duration of the project and subject to review and reallocation.

It is anticipated that each unit, whether college, department or institute, would identify research space designated as 'community research space' where faculty who have had lapse in funding can perform experiments and generate data that may enable them to write a competitive grant application. This type of space would not be smaller than 125ft² of wet lab or dry lab space (enough to accommodate one person).

It is recognized that undergraduates participate in research projects, and usually part time (due to enrollment in a curriculum). As such, undergraduates who work in an extramurally or intramurally funded research lab would share dedicated lab space. Undergraduates who are working with faculty who have a lapse in funding would work together with the faculty member in 'community research space'. Undergraduates who engage in research as an academic activity that is meant to instruct them or teach them how to conduct research would work under the guidance of a faculty member in appropriate teaching labs, as scheduled by the registrar.

1. Designated research or creative activity space for new hires should be identified and approved in advance of an offer letter. There should be an understanding of the new hires research or creative space needs prior to generating an offer letter. Justification of assignment of research or creative space for a new hire should include some combination of:
 - An active publication record in refereed journals or a creative activity equivalency as defined by the hiring unit.
 - Active and ongoing submission of grants or contracts to support their

- research and creative activity
- Ability to support graduate students and include them in research
- Ability to collaborate with fellow faculty members at FAU
- Evidence of, or potential for, achieving a national reputation in their field of study

2. Research space assignments will be prioritized based on funding that supports the research project and its personnel. Creative space assignments for performances and exhibitions would be the responsibility of the College that sponsors these types of scholarly events (e.g., art exhibitions, performances). Research space will be defined by three disciplines: (a) wet lab, biology, medical, chemical; (b) Engineering, physical sciences needing large equipment space; and (c) Dry lab, computer, social sciences. This prioritization will be based on annual direct costs and personnel assigned to the project, as defined by Table 1:

Table 1: Research Space Allocation Matrix

Discipline	Total Annual External Direct Costs	Annual FTE of Thesis or Dissertation credit of students using the space	Faculty Total Score
Wet lab, biology, medical, chemical	\$100,000 (1) \$200,000 (2) \$300,000 (3) \$400,000 (4)	1 (3) 2 (6) 3 (9) 4 (12)	6 = 750 ft ²
Dry lab, computer, social sciences	Same as above	Same as above	10=1000 ft ²
Engineering and physical sciences needing large equipment space	Same as above	Same as above	4=1000 ft ²

Note: Direct costs were used as they reflect the number of personnel on the project, allowing space to be assigned based on programmatic needs and not on indirect costs generated by the grant (which would favor space allocation for federally funded grants over foundation or state grants).

Examples:

Example 1 - Wet lab. Primary Investigator (PI) of an NIH grant that is valued at \$200,000 per year of direct costs. The budget page indicates salary support for a post-doctoral fellow, a grad student and a technician in addition to the PI – thus, four people. In the above formula, the approximate amount of space required for this project would be calculated as follows:

Column 2: \$200,000 = [2]

Column 3: 1 thesis project = [3]

3+2=5.

If 6=750ft², then 5=625 ft² assigned wet lab space.

Upon conversation with Chair of the Department, it is learned that the project and personnel can fit into a wet lab with 4 'knee holes' accommodating 4 full time personnel in the lab. These labs range from 500 ft² to 1000 ft² and an agreement

on lab assignment is developed between the Chair and the faculty member for lab space in this range of ft².

The decision on lab assignment requires that sufficient dedicated space to accommodate the FTE's supported on the budget require in order to execute the specific aims. If a rationale is given for more space (eg, a large piece of equipment needs to be in the lab), then the Chair and the Faculty member can work together to identify suitable space.

Example 2 – Dry lab/computer, social science. Defined based on personnel to accommodate and equipment. In this case, a faculty member working on a project that only requires a desk top computer, server and internet connection, along with software programs. A grant from the NSF for \$100,000 direct costs and supports the PI and 2 graduate students.

Column 2: \$100,000 = [1]

Column 3: 2 thesis students = [6]

Total score = 6+1 = 7

7=700 ft²

Upon conversation with the Chair, the faculty member uses his/her 150 ft² office for their work, the 2 graduate students occupied a shared office of 200 ft², and a separate room as space dedicated to a server (100 ft²). This falls within the parameters of need.

Example 3 – Engineering, physical sciences (large equipment): PI gets a grant from the DOE for \$140,000 direct costs and uses large instrumentation.

Column 2: \$140,000 = [1]

Column 3: 2 thesis students = 6

Total score = 6+1 = 7

7=1750 ft² of lab space.

Upon conversation with the Chair of the Department, it is learned that the equipment occupies 500 ft² of dedicated space and that the team can work in an additional 750 ft² of space, indicating their needs are 1250 ft² which falls within the parameters of the space calculation and this space could be dedicated or shared based on instrumentation and equipment needs.

In each case, the over-riding concern will be the contractual obligations of the accepted grant award and that sufficient space be assigned to accommodate the FTEs supported by the award and the supported technology and instrumentation.

3. Any assignment of space for new faculty should consider:

- Duration of the project
- Proximity to core facilities and centralized research support services or facilities
- Proximity to potential collaborators

4. Annual review of research or creative activity space needs should include:
 - Square footage of the research space needed for the conduct of the project, as well as the configuration of the lab and related safety requirements
 - Number of personnel in the lab
 - Record of productivity
 - Whether space is shared with other faculty members or PI's
 - Should faculty be asked to move to new space, a minimum of one month notice, maximum of six months notice, will be given regarding the move date. The move plan can be developed in consultation with the faculty member and the Chair.
 - The payment for a move will be the responsible of the unit that is affecting the move. That is, if Department 1 wants to move a faculty from lab 1 to lab 2, then Department 1 pays for the move. If the space is required for institutional programmatic reasons and Department 2 is moving faculty in, displacing the faculty from Department 1, then Department 2 pays for the move.

5. Ongoing assignment of current space for continuation of research projects may include the following:
 - The research is consistent with the academic unit or Universities strategic plan for research
 - Productivity in terms of publications in peer reviewed journals and pursuit of ongoing extramural grant support
 - Interactions with corporate or industry partners (contract work)
 - Ability to support and engage graduate students in research
 - Collaborations with FAU faculty
 - Evidence of an existing or emerging national reputation in their chosen field
 - Strategically oriented research that has economic development implications in terms of jobs and industry development
 - Project duration and planned renewal of the project
 - Planned changes in hiring or staffing for the project
 - Planned changes regarding the configuration and safety concerns associated with the project
 - Proximity to supporting research infrastructure, core facilities and collaborators