

MEMORANDUM

To: Deans
From: Jeremy Haefner, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
Subject: Administrative policy on research space
Date: December 2014

I. Overview

RIT aspires to significantly grow its research and creative activities over the next several years, while maintaining its strong commitment to our undergraduate and graduate mission. As a main driver of scholarship and graduate education, research requires judicious planning and development of substantial infrastructure, including space. It is the purpose of this administrative policy, which has been greatly informed by the research space taskforce report, to undergird the effective use of research space at RIT.

II. Types of research

Research space varies significantly across colleges/units depending on their mission and types of scholarship activities. The table below lists various types of research space.

Types of Research Space
Computer labs
Equipment labs
Wet labs
Dry labs
Specialty labs
Research Centers: Director/Staff/Infrastructure
Office and lab space for students
Office Space for postdocs and research faculty
Studios
Workshops

Shared space used for both teaching and research:
labs/studios/workshops

Interdisciplinary space for research across colleges

Storage space for equipment/supplies

III. Space management core principles

The needs for space vary considerably across the University and its many programs. Keeping in mind the diversity of research space, it is valuable to adopt over-arching guiding principles for space management. Application of these guiding principles can facilitate collaboration between the Colleges/Units, the Provost's Office and Central Administration and align decisions for effective and efficient space allocation, creation, renovation and maintenance.

1. All RIT space belongs to the University and is a valuable resource comparable to budget dollars and faculty lines. Authority for academic and research space begins with the President and the Provost and is delegated through organizational hierarchies.
2. Accountability for space utilization management begins locally and proceeds upward through organizational hierarchies. Decision making authority may be delegated to ensure that those with the most in-depth knowledge of the activities and needs determine appropriate allocations. Ultimately, Deans and the Provost's Office are responsible for efficient use and active management of space within each college/unit and the division of Academic Affairs.
 - Colleges/Units in collaboration with the Provost's Office have the responsibility to develop metrics for the evaluation of research space utilization, periodically assess how effectively the current allocation of research space meets their programmatic needs and priorities, and reallocate space as appropriate.
3. The Provost has the authority and responsibility to allocate Academic Affairs space, including research space, to periodically review its utilization, and to reallocate space as appropriate to support the University's mission and strategic plan. The Academic Affairs Space committee, through its spirit of shared governance and collaboration, provides the Provost with a balanced, data-driven set of recommendations with regards to space usage and allocation.
 - Space is assigned from the Provost to the colleges/units based on programmatic needs and strategic priorities.
4. Space allocations are not permanent. Space is assigned to activities and not individuals. Space may be reassigned as priorities, obligations and activities change.
 - Space that is vacant or underutilized should be reassigned.
 - Space that is vacated will revert to the Provost.

5. Space sharing, flexible use of space and clustering of activities should be taken into consideration during space allocation.
6. Space allocations should leverage existing facilities to the extent possible to ensure that current facilities are efficiently utilized before pursuing major construction or renovation activities.
7. The university must support the space needs for interdisciplinary research, which can cross college boundaries.
8. Decisions for space allocations should adhere to university policies as well as applicable health and safety regulations.

IV. Research space metrics

Various research space utilization metrics were considered along three dimensions: Funding, Faculty Scholarship, and Student Success. The list of research space utilization metrics is shown in the tables below. Colleges have the flexibility to determine which of the following metrics are most appropriate for their disciplines and they have the responsibility to weigh these metrics according to their scholarship standards and quality considerations within each metric. However, each college is expected to regularly report the following metrics relevant to the college's assigned space.

Funding Metrics	
Recommended for Research Space Utilization	Comments
External Funding (e.g. NSF, government, industry, etc.)	With consideration to source and indirect cost recovery.
Internal Funding (e.g. FEAD)	
Startup Funding	Time limited funding and space allocation as part of startup packages.
Gifts monetary (e.g. foundations)	
Gifts in kind (e.g. equipment from Industry)	With consideration of use.

Faculty Scholarship Metrics	
Recommended for Research Space Utilization	Comments
Publications (peer reviewed conf./ journal)	With consideration of publication quality.
Patents (Awarded and Provisional)	
Books	
Magazine Articles (favorably reviewing work)	
Exhibits/Media	
Copyrights	
Presentations (external only)	

Student Success Metrics Recommended for Research Space Utilization	Comments
Credit hours Generated by Research/Thesis work using the space	
Number of theses and dissertations per year based on use of research space	
Number of grad/undergrad students using space for research under faculty supervision	Research leading to scholarly output (e.g. disseminating work to conferences)

For space that is used for teaching and research, teaching utilization metrics and research utilization metrics need to be taken into consideration. A list of teaching space utilization metrics is shown below.

Teaching Metrics Recommended for Teaching Space Utilization	Comments
Credit hours Generated from teaching activity in the space (per semester/term)	
Average number of students taught in the space per week (for each semester/term).	
Average number of hours per week that the space is utilized (for each semester/term).	Within the timeframe 8 am to 8 pm, M-F

The weighting of teaching metrics will depend on the proportion of teaching activity taking place within the timeframe 8 am to 8 pm, M-F.

An important consideration regarding the use of metrics is the frequency of data collection and time period over which metrics are averaged. A rolling average will be used as the stable indicator compared to annual fluctuations of the metrics.

V: Framework for assessing research space utilization

The following principles guide the assessment for research space utilization.

- 1) Each college will assess all research space based on the research space utilization metrics. Data collection on the metrics should take place on a regular basis at the college level. Metrics relate to space and projects associated with that space. While the campus will make every attempt to automate the data collection process, the colleges will be expected to provide this data on a regular basis.
- 2) A rolling average of three years will be used for making important decisions.
- 3) The responsibility to interpret the data collected and assess the utilization of research space resides with the college dean.
- 4) The dean has the authority to reallocate space within their college with the following caveats:

- a) Classrooms. Requests for space or the altering of space that involve classrooms must be processed by the academic affairs space committee and be approved by the provost. Classrooms can be converted to other uses as long as a college demonstrates that it has transferred the equivalent in student CH from face-to-face instruction to purely online instruction. Other rationales for converting classrooms will be considered through the space request process below.
 - b) Allocations may not be made if the allocation requires the campus to address subsequent space issues.
 - c) Deans must consult with the provost if the request requires converting space from one category to another; e.g., office space into conference room space.
 - d) Deans must discuss with the provost the reallocation of underutilized space since this represents an important resource for the rest of academic affairs.
- 5) Deans, working with the faculty, are to identify which of the above metrics are most suitable for their disciplines.
 - 6) While the university will not expect regular reports of research space utilization, colleges should be prepared to provide such reports when requests are made that require substantial commitment and financial contribution by the campus.

VI: Space request process

- 1) Space Requests initiated at the college level are submitted for dean's approval. The dean has the authority to reallocate/reconfigure college space subject to section V, if there is no need for funding outside the college.
- 2) The Dean submits requests to the Academic Affairs Space Committee (AASC) when:
 - a) The space of the request includes classroom space.
 - b) New space is needed that cannot be accommodated within the current allocation of the college/unit.
 - c) The space needed/requested is assigned to another college/unit within Academic Affairs or another Division.
 - d) The request requires additional budget or capital funding outside the college/unit.

Note: Requests that require additional dollars but do not require additional space outside the college/unit, should be submitted directly to the Provost; they do not have to go for AASC recommendation.

- 3) The Academic Affairs Space Committee (AASC) makes a recommendation to the Provost.
- 4) The AASC will notify requestors of the recommendations it makes to the provost within four weeks of the submission date. When the recommendation to the provost is to support the request and the provost accepts the AASC recommendation, the notification will include the space assignment when possible. In cases where the request is approved but space is not immediately identified or available, the AASC will provide periodic updates as necessary to the requestor on the progress toward identifying space to meet the approved need(s). The AASC will report to the RIT community once per semester on the work of the committee to include a list of the

requests submitted, the recommendations made the to the provost, and any associated actions.

- 5) The Provost approves (or does not approve) the request and informs the dean who made the request. Following the Provost's approval, the request is submitted to the Institute Space Committee (ISC, also called University Space Committee) when:
 - a) The space requested is assigned to another division.
 - b) New space is needed that cannot be accommodated within Academic Affairs.
 - c) The request involves vacated space due to new construction, major moves, etc.

Note: Requests that require additional dollars or capital funding but do not require additional space outside the college/unit, may be submitted for ISC recommendation at the Provost's discretion.

- 6) The Institute Space Committee (ISC) makes a recommendation to the President, Provost, Sr. Vice President of Finance and Administration.
- 7) The President, Provost, Sr. Vice President of Finance and Administration make decision to approve/fund (or not approve/fund) request and inform the dean who made the request.