

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

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## Space Planning Guidelines

Developed by:  
The Office of Space Planning and Management

**THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS**

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## INTRODUCTION

The UNT Space Planning Guidelines for Office Space have been developed by the Office of Space Planning and Management (OSPM) as a supplement to policy 11.002 Space Management and Assignment and as a reference guide for the planning, allocation, and design of all University space. The guidelines provide reference data for planning and are designed to help define the magnitude of projects in scoping, feasibility, and programming. At subsequent planning and design stages of project development, the guidelines are intended to continue to serve as a reference for the sizing of spaces. While the guidelines are not “standard”, they define typical unique UNT space expectations in coordination with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) suggestions. Modifications from the guides may be necessary in unique circumstances; alternative suggestions and solutions must be reviewed and approved by OSPM.

The guidelines will evolve and be refined as they are applied and as practical issues, new information, and special cases arise. As a result, this document should be considered a “living” document that will be modified as warranted.

Any university unit with internal space policies/guidelines should ensure their guidelines comply with the information provided in this document and the accompanying Policy 11.002.

## VISION

The UNT Space Planning Guidelines provide a framework for the development and allocation of space and cost-efficient interior spaces to support the academic mission of each College and Department through sustainable principles of space planning and design. Pre-design planning may suggest open/shared communal spaces through flexible wall and furniture systems when prudent to promote interactive, open building designs and encourage collaborative teaching, learning, study, and work environments. These interior planning solutions are supported by directives set forth in the UNT Values Statement, Mission and Plans, Strategic Plan, and Master Plan.

*“At UNT, we should equip all UNT students with the knowledge, skills, experiences, and credentials they need to take their talents as far as they want to take them.” President Harrison Keller, PhD.*

## STATEMENT

Ownership of all UNT facilities, regardless of the original source of construction or acquisition of funds, whether on-campus or off-campus, rests with the UNT Board of Regents as an agent of the State of Texas. In addition, space leased in off-campus facilities, for UNT program purposes, is leased in the name of the Board of Regents. The allocation or assignment of space in on-campus or off-campus facilities of the Regents does not constitute, and is not to be inferred as, a transfer of ownership to such space.

Responsibility for the assignment/allocation of space rests with the UNT President and has been delegated to the Office of Space Planning and Management. The President, or designee, will work directly with OSPM for oversight and stewardship of all university space.

All requests for changes to university space including, but not limited to, allocation, reallocation, reclassification, capacity, use, or function must be submitted to the Office of Space Planning and Management for review and subsequent approval.

## THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS CORE VALUES

These guidelines support the UNT Core Values which are ([Values Journey | University of North Texas](#)):

- Courageous Integrity – Model exceptional standards and act in the best interest of our community.
- Be Curious – Cultivate opportunities for learning, creating, discovering, and innovating.
- We Care – Champion a people-first approach to building relationships and community.
- Better Together – Foster an inclusive environment of respect, belonging, and access for all.
- Show Your Fire – Exhibit passion and pride in the experiences we create.

- THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVE

The UNT Student Success Initiative is organized around four strategic approaches to student success: academic design, career-connected learning, proactive and holistic care, and data and technology enablement. [Student Success | University of North Texas](#)

- Academic Design – Academic design focuses on efficient, student-centric curricular pathways regardless of a student’s entry point to the university. This strategy also includes enrollment processes that enable students’ timely progression and the design and delivery of learner-centric course offerings and post-secondary credentials.
- Career-Connected Learning - The majority of UNT students are working learners who are highly motivated to pursue post-secondary education to increase their employment opportunities. Therefore, student success is achieved not only by increasing persistence and graduation rates but also by enhancing the value of a UNT education and expanding career opportunities through deeper connections between students’ work experiences, learning experiences, and career aspirations.
- Proactive and Holistic Care - Proactive care is an approach that leverages early alert data and analytic insights to identify students who are at risk of stopping out and providing the support they need before it is too late. Holistic care is an intentional institutional approach to meet the unique needs of each member of UNT’s diverse student body in ways that best serve them.
- Data and Technology Enablement - Organization and operationalization of data and technologies as an enabler to the three prior strategies, so UNT students, faculty, and staff will have appropriate, timely, and actionable information to support informed decision-making and drive improvement.

- THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS WE MEAN GREEN SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE

The UNT Space Guidelines will support space types and allocation that encourages sustainable and flexible spaces in all new construction, renovations, and reallocations to ensure efficient space utilization and maximum performance in all university and university-affiliated spaces. [We Mean Green Fund | University of North Texas](#).

## SPACE ALLOCATION

These space guidelines have been established to create uniformity, flexibility, and efficiency in the University’s work environments. The guidelines project space sizes for room and occupancy types; the guides do not project room and/or furniture/finish design for any space. Design and construction, for all construction and renovation projects, will be coordinated and developed through the Office of Facilities Planning, Design, and Construction in coordination with the Office of Space Planning and Management.

Space in campus, and associated spaces, is allocated based on programmatic need and academic/administrative priorities, as ultimately determined by the President, and may be reallocated if those needs and priorities change. The following space-per-person projections are based on the THECB suggestions, construction projects, and best practice studies of space guidelines from other colleges and universities and private sector companies.

Space allocation for office space includes rooms that are used as individual, multi-person, or workstation space that is used by faculty, staff, or students when working at one or more desks, tables, or workstations. It also includes support rooms for those offices as well as conference rooms and their support spaces.

Office and office support space will be allocated according to need and space type as determined by OSPM through investigative meetings and in programming and confirmed/modified (as required) in the schematic /design phase of projects. Space is allocated to specific users for limited periods of time. Space use will be

reviewed periodically by OSPM and space assignments reaffirmed accordingly. The University will temporarily reallocate released space as “Unclassified” after all major relocations for spaces that have been completed or after any new building/space is acquired. OSPM will manage unclassified spaces and will initiate a standard occupancy planning study to aid in their decision-making process to determine the most efficient use of space. OSPM will issue Space Allocation Letters when a space is newly allocated to a department or when any changes to existing allocations are needed and/or required.

The assignable square feet (ASF) guidelines represent the standard that UNT strives to achieve for the various categories of office space. These categories include Executive, Academic, Administrative, and Office Support (defined on page 5). For existing spaces, it is understood that current building configurations impact the ability to adhere to these guidelines. For new buildings and renovations, these guidelines will represent the standard for programming space. Square footage ranges are provided to accommodate the varying programmatic needs across the University.

The following table shows the recommended assignable square footage for a person by position type. These guidelines are not a guarantee that an employee, or affiliate of the University, will receive a specific office type or amount of square feet, but rather define a recommended ASF, or range of ASF, a person in a specific role should be assigned.

The table on the following page shows space functions, types, and square footage projections. The types of space occupants/functions do not reflect official titles or classifications. Rather, they are listed strictly for the purpose of showing the relationship between the role, space type, and ASF. The information is to be used in programming and planning and assignment/allocation phases of all projects; care will be given to keep all projected spaces as near as possible to programmed sizes throughout all phases of the project through construction. However, each project presents unique challenges and may require modifications from the guides.

- APPLYING THE GUIDELINES IN SHARED SPACES

The recommended square footages of shared spaces specify the range of office space that is projected for any one person; they do not necessarily indicate the actual size of the office or workspace. For example, a programmatic projection could indicate a cumulative of 240 ASF for three employees (80 ASF/person).

NOTE: ASF (also referred to as Assignable Square Feet) is defined as the area of a building suitable for occupancy measured from the interior walls, including closets and secondary corridors, within assigned space. This excludes main circulation, restrooms, and other non-assignable space.

UNT space types are defined as:

- TRADITIONAL (T)
  - Built construction, fully enclosed, full heights/walled space with a door, sound insulation, individual lighting control, and individual atmosphere/HVAC control.
- FLEXIBLE (F)
  - Systems installed, partial-height wall, panel-based defined area of space with a door, individual lighting control with shared atmosphere. Heights governed by applicable codes.
- OPEN (O)
  - Systems installed partial-height wall, panel-based defined area of space without a door, with shared lighting and atmosphere.

STANDARD SPACE SIZES

Standard Space Sizes (office only)		
<i>All spaces are listed as assignable square feet (ASF)</i>		
Space Occupant / Function	Space Type	Recommended ASF/Person
<b>EXECUTIVE</b>		
Vice President / Vice Provost	Private	200 - 240
Associate Vice President / Vice Provost	Private	140 - 180
Assistant Vice President / Vice Provost	Private	120 - 140
<b>ACADEMIC</b>		
Dean	Private	140 - 180
Chair / Associate Dean / Assistant Dean	Private	120 - 140
Faculty Tenure Track	Private	100 - 120
Faculty Non-tenure track, Consulting, Associate Instructor, Lecturer Visiting	Open or Private	80 - 120
Fellow, Research Associate, Visiting Scholar, Emeritus (Active)	Open	40 - 80
Staff, Professional and Support (Full-Time)	Open	60 - 80
Staff, Professional and Support (Part-Time)	Open or Shared	40 - 80
Student, GI/GA/RA/TA	Shared Open	40 - 60
Staff, Student or Temporary, Hoteling	Shared Open	20 - 40
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE</b>		
Director	Private or Open	100 - 120
Staff, Professional and Support (Full-Time)	Open	60 - 80
Staff, Professional and Support (Part-Time)	Open or Shared	40 - 80
Staff, Student or Temporary, Hoteling	Shared Open	20 - 40
<b>NOTES</b>		
(1) Private offices are considered to be traditional, enclosed single-occupancy spaces and will be allocated based on specific criteria and/or unique factors.		
(2) Open spaces (workstations) will address needs for occasional privacy and/or security, where required, with private areas for discussion and work.		
(3) Open/Shared areas may be designed to allow for open workstations collectively within an enclosed suite for privacy as needed. Shared spaces would allocate the ASF as presented in the standard space sizes matrix (subject to modification).		
(4) Space types and sizes will be determined during the programming/pre-planning phase of all projects by OSPM and Administrators of the campus department involved. Modification may be requested during design.		
(5) Projected spaces can be modified to a lesser ASF in unique circumstances or when approved by OSPM.		

## SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

- COMPLIANCE

The University of North Texas requires departments and offices within the University to take steps to ensure fair and equal access to university services, facilities, and functions. UNT will continue to adhere to applicable codes or legislation in all phases of space planning, design, and construction. These guidelines do not supersede any applicable federal, state, or local building codes or legislation.

For more information on space related issues please refer to:

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):
  - [Office of Disability Access | University of North Texas](#)
  - [ADA | Office of the Texas Governor | Greg Abbott](#)
  - [The Americans with Disabilities Act | ADA.gov](#) – U.S. Dept of Justice
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):
  - [FERPA | University of North Texas](#)
  - [Texas Education Agency](#)
  - [FERPA | Protecting Student Privacy](#) – U.S. Dept. of Education

- PRIVACY AND SECURITY

Certain administrative and academic functions may require a privacy room allocation. Every effort will be made to accommodate these needs with a single occupancy private office, a shared private office, or a flex private office. A combination of a flexible, open space plan, with available private team/focus rooms, may optimize space utilization while meeting privacy needs.

- FACULTY RECRUITING

It is understood that flexibility in space allocations may be needed during and after the recruiting process for certain faculty members. Every effort will be made to ensure that the space assignment adheres to these guidelines; however, support of the core programmatic mission (as noted earlier in this document) is understood to take precedence.

- RESEARCH SPACE

The University strives to provide appropriate support to all three parts of a faculty members role: teaching, research, and service. In many cases, that includes access to research space, but it does not guarantee exclusive access to a given space. As noted in Policy 11.002: Space Management and Assignment, all spaces that are allocated and coded as research and/or any research support function are reviewed and approved by the Research Space Adjudication Sub-committee (RSAS) as a sub-committee of the University Space Advisory Committee. Final review, approval, and allocation, or reallocation, of space is provided by the Office of Space Planning and Management.

OSPM maintains an active research space use and efficiency database that is reviewed annually with the RSAS. This database provides a three-year running evaluation of research spaces to determine the efficiency and productivity usage of the assigned department and Principal Investigator (PI). Productivity thresholds are set yearly by the THECB; any PI whose dollar per square foot (\$/SF) productivity falls below the annually set level for three years is required to produce a sustainability plan. This plan will be reviewed by the RSAS to determine continued use or reallocation of the space. Deans, Chairs, and tenure-track professors are not subject to this requirement.

- GRADUATE / STUDENT SPACE

Departments have various and changing requirements for graduate and student space depending upon the discipline. The teaching function of the graduate student should be accommodated in a manner best suited for the subject. Space allocations for graduate/student space will be determined in the discovery/investigation phase of a project space request in conjunction with the needs of the particular unit.

- OLDER BUILDINGS and NON-CONFORMING SPACE

UNT has a wide variety of building inventory dating back to the creation of the University in Denton. Where existing conditions are non-conforming, or in older buildings, creative efforts will be made to follow the guidelines as closely as possible to achieve space recommendations as presented here. The Office of Space Planning and Management and/or the Office of Facilities Planning, Design, and Construction can assist with creative design options that attempt to meet programmatic space needs within an older building footprint.

- MULTIPLE OFFICES

Assignment of multiple offices for any member of the campus community, including both faculty and staff, is strongly discouraged and, in non-unique cases, not allowed. Faculty with joint or administrative appointments, and persons with staff in multiple buildings, may be temporarily assigned a secondary office as needed on a case-by-case basis. Faculty engaged in research may also be allocated a secondary office adjacent (or near) their assigned lab as necessary. These spaces should be allocated on a temporary basis while research activities are ongoing.

It is understood that in some cases faculty and staff travel from the main campus in Denton to Discovery Park and/or Frisco and therefore require office space in more than one location. Each person will maintain a 'home office' at one of the campuses and utilize hoteling spaces when traveling to other campuses unless otherwise approved in unique situations.

- UNOCCUPIED OFFICES

All departments are strongly encouraged to ensure that all office space is occupied throughout the year. When offices are left unoccupied for significant periods of time (such as during extended leave for any reason) departments should utilize the spaces to alleviate any pressing space needs to achieve a higher density for short term uses. Departments are expected to contact OSPM if space is (or is expected to be) available for extended periods. OSPM, as the designated space stewards of UNT, may occasionally request space allocation reports and/or physically tour space to ensure space efficiencies for the University.

- EMERITI FACULTY OFFICES

UNT recognizes the significant value and contributions of emeritus professors to the life of the University and intends to support their ongoing scholarly and professional activity. However, the highest priorities for space in academic departments are offices for regular faculty, administrators, staff, labs, and support space. Of necessity, the assignment of space to emeritus professors is discretionary and should not adversely affect the quantity or quality of space provided for regular departmental members or activities.

As a campus standard, emeritus faculty may occupy a shared office on campus when they are actively engaged in substantial ongoing work that serves the University. Eligible work will be determined on a case-by-case basis. The assignment of a private office to an emeritus professor should be considered

an exception and based on a level of activity comparable to that of a full-time faculty member. The length of time an emeritus faculty member occupies any space will be determined on a case-by-case basis and determined by the host department administration.

- SPACE SURVEY AND REPORTING

The Office of Space Planning and Management has been delegated the authority to conduct an annual Space Survey to ensure that all allocated campus spaces are accurately recorded in the official space database maintained by OSPM. The Space Survey and subsequent validation efforts are used to develop and submit annual space reports to the THECB for a record of spaces and for funding purposes.

All UNT departments are required through Policy 11.002: Space Management and Assignment to fully participate in the annual Space Survey by providing accurate and up-to-date reporting of each space that is allocated to that specific unit. Departments not completing the Space Survey during the allotted timeframe will be considered delinquent and appropriate parties will be notified for further action to ensure efficient and continued use of space and for timely and accurate records.

- FLEXIBLE WORK | CAMPUS SPACE CONSIDERATIONS

The University has provided the opportunity for flexible work arrangements as noted in UNT Policy number 05.2022 Flexible Work Arrangements. A copy of this policy can be reviewed at: [Flexible Work Arrangements | University Policy Office](#).

Departments that have flexible work arrangements that allow for spaces to be vacant for more than 60% of the standard work-week (8 AM – 5 PM, Monday – Friday) are required to provide the location of these spaces to the Office of Space Planning and Management annually in conjunction with the annual Space Survey conducted by OSPM. Full participation in the Space Survey is required by administration through OSPM as noted in the previous section.

## UNIVERSITY SPACE STEWARD OFFICE

- UNT | Denton, Discovery Park & Frisco
  - [Office of Space Planning & Management](#)

## PEDAGOGY AND THE UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENT

Technological advancement, cultural shifting in undergraduate and graduate learning environments, incorporation of flexible work environments, flexible work arrangements, and subsequent changes in pedagogy place demands on physical space. While there remains a need for traditional, hard-walled office and support space, there is an ever-increasing demand for our campus buildings to be structured in a more flexible and efficient manner to respond to the needs of the University in the future.

Workplace drivers will still address privacy and security issues but will also be intermingled with culture, flexibility, and collaboration. The total workplace will need to balance people, technology, and place in a flexible and efficient design to support student success.

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