Frequently Asked Questions

General

Q: What do we do with a room that we no longer own or occupy?

A: Please check the box labeled “Delete Room” and list reasons for deleting in “Delete Room Comments” box. Please provide any information you may have on the room’s ownership in the comments section. We will research the space in more detail when we complete the survey walkthrough and change ownership upon confirmation.

Q: Some of our space is not on the summary (SM030) report. How do we report it?

A: Contact your REA representative to obtain a room survey form to complete.

Q: We have a faculty member occupying our space, but he/she belongs to another department. Do I still need to fill out the survey form for this space?

A: Yes, as long as the space belongs to your department, you are responsible for reporting its usage. We can make a note in our database indicating the space is on loan to another department. Please indicate this on the comments section.

Q: I have a faculty member on sabbatical; do I code their space differently?

A: Despite being on sabbatical, normally the payroll costs are treated as if the professor were not on leave. The office space should be assigned functional usage in proportion to payroll records.
Q: How does cost sharing impact the classification of space?

A: Cost sharing has a significant impact on the classification of space. In general, space applicable to mandatory or committed cost sharing on research projects can be claimed as Sponsored/Organized Research but the costs must be charged to a cost sharing sub-account identified as SOR.

Room Description

Q: What is capacity? Do I need to update it?

A: The capacity of a room is the number of available work stations. For example; most faculty offices would have a capacity of one, but many graduate student offices are shared, and could have a capacity of two or more. If there is a change, please enter an updated capacity in the room survey form.

Q: I have a room that has been converted but I don’t know the definitions for Room Category or Room Use. What am I supposed to do?

A: We don’t expect you to learn every definition, and since most of the terms are fairly self-explanatory, make an educated guess. We’ll discuss and capture the changes when we go through the forms and inspect the room on the walkthrough to confirm the correct use and type.

Q: What is the difference between a meeting room and a conference room?

A: A conference room is normally used by a specific department, whereas a meeting room is for a more general purpose, such as community or campus group meetings. The key concept for the meeting room definition is public availability.

Q: A room has several different uses within it. How do I split the space for each room use?

A: In determining a proper room use code (Professional/Technical Office vs Support Staff Office), the room should be categorized according to predominant use.
Program Classification

Q: I have a student academic advisor on our departmental staff; would they fall under the student services classification?

A: If they are funded from central administration funds, then the program classification for Student Services / Student Administration would be correct, otherwise they should be coded as Instruction. For example, someone from the Registrar's office would be Student Services, while a departmental advisor would be classified as Instruction.

Q: We have our own book/periodical collection for our department. Is this considered library space?

A: No. The only time space is classified as Library is when the books and reading materials are catalogued and under the control of the central library system. A departmental collection should be classified according to the activities it supports.

Q: We have a room that is only used for student organizational meetings. What is the appropriate classification?

A: In most cases student organizations are an extension of the academic experience and their activities should be classified as Instruction. One example may be a room that is used by The Society of Civil Engineers. Exceptions would include student organizations set up as social clubs. Those activities should be classified as Other Institutional Activities.

Q: If we have inactive space, how do we classify it?

A: Inactive space is unfinished or unusable space and is not usually assigned on a departmental level. However, if a department's space is being converted/renovated at the time of the survey, leave the classification blank and make a note of the project on the comments section of the survey form. Typically, space that is not in use (vacant) is misidentified as inactive space and is addressed later in this document.
Q: How do I classify students in research space?

A: Special care must be taken when determining the program classification of research lab space involving students.

Research activities of students who are paid from Sponsored/ Organized Research funds (including Research Training) should be classified entirely as Sponsored/ Organized Research. An exception is made when students paid from SOR funds are performing activities within a lab that are unrelated to the Sponsored/ Organized Research activities occurring within the lab. Unrelated activities, such as homework or general studying, should be classified as Instruction. Research activities of students who are either unpaid or paid from general departmental/ instructional funds should be classified as Department Research.

Q: I have some vacant space due to a staff vacancy, but we are awaiting a new hire. How should I code this?

A: If the room is only temporarily vacant, this should be classified according to the usage when it was occupied. If it was vacant for the entire year, then it should be coded as Vacant. However, any space that was used during the course of the fiscal year should be considered fully occupied and coded accordingly. We do not need to prorate any room based on vacancies. For example, if a room was used from July to December and vacant from January to June, it should be classified based on its usage from July to December.

Q: Can we just use effort reporting to determine program classifications for each room?

A: Effort reporting cannot be used to determine program classifications for each room unless the activities taking place in the room exactly match effort reported. Effort reporting measures how an individual’s time was used during a specific period, regardless of space. However, when determining space use, you are interested in the activities occurring in a specific room.

Q: What about Visiting Scholars, Fellows, or Professor Emeritus occupying space in my Department?

A: When these occupants do not receive any funding from the University, they are coded as Other Institutional Activities. If funding is being provided to support the activities, then the program classification would reflect the pay source.
Q: How do we code space occupied by volunteers?

A: Unpaid volunteer activities should be classified as Other Institutional Activities.

Q: Are there any examples of how I should calculate the percentage of use when more than one person occupies a lab?

A: Space should be allocated based on space utilization (all activities). Salaries and wages can serve as a guide to determine program classification percentages, but may vary from effort reports especially related to faculty activities. Take everyone who shares the space into account and use a consistent methodology when applying percentage. See examples below for some guidance.

Feel free to contact Real Estate Administration for assistance with labs that reflect multiple activities.

**Example 1**

Room 101 is a Research Lab used equally by two occupants. Employee X is a PI paid from SOR and State dollars. Employee Y is a professor paid from SOR and State dollars. Employee X only works on SOR activities while in the lab, activities supported by State dollars take place in other rooms. Employee Y works on SOR activities and occasionally (approx. 5% of time in room) visits with students in the lab.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Room 101 Research Lab</th>
<th>Organized Research</th>
<th>Dept. Research</th>
<th>Inst. Activities</th>
<th>Other Spon. Activities</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Organized Research Use of Room</th>
<th>Dept. Research Use of Room</th>
<th>Inst. Activities Use of Room</th>
<th>Percent of Space by Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employee X</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Y</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Percentage of Space by Function for Room**

97% 3%
**Example 2**

Room 101 is a Research Lab with two occupants. Employee X is a PI paid from SOR dollars. Employee Y is a .50 FTE GRA paid from State dollars. Both employees work on SOR activities *while in the lab*. Employee Y’s activities must be classified as Department Research because he/she is *not paid* from SOR dollars.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage of Time Spent on Function in Room</th>
<th>Proportiate Use of Room</th>
<th>Percent of Space by Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Room 101 Organized</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>ResearchInst. Activities</td>
<td>ResearchInst. Activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Inst.</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee X</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>x 67% = 67%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Y</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>x 33% = 33%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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**Percentage of Space by Function for Room**

67% 33%

**Example 3**

Room 101 is a Research Lab with three occupants. Employee X is a PI paid from SOR and State dollars. Employee Y is a .50 FTE GRA paid from SOR dollars. Employee Z is a .25 FTE undergraduate student paid from SOR dollars. All employees work *only* on SOR activities in the room.

*If Employees Y and Z work on something other than SOR, those activities must be accounted for as Instruction or Department Research. This includes thesis composition, homework, and/or general studying.*

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>Percent of Space by Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Room 101 Organized</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>ResearchInst. Activities</td>
<td>ResearchInst. Activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Inst.</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee X</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>x 57% = 57%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Y</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>x 29% = 29%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Z</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>x 14% = 14%</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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**Percentage of Space by Function for Room**

100%