



## Space Utilization Policy

**Category:** Space;

**Jurisdiction:** Provost and Vice President, Academic; Vice President, Administration and Finance; Lakehead University Space Committee;

**Approval Authority:** Executive Team;

**Established on:** May 1, 2018;

**Amendments:** None.

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### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedural guidelines to the University community with respect to the use, allocation and re-allocation of space consistent with the University's mission, and to optimize the usage of all space in support of the goals and objectives of the University.

### Principles

#### All Space is Owned by the University

Although space is allocated to specific users, all space is owned by the University and the University has the responsibility to maintain and service the space. Faculties, departments, schools and administrative units do not have exclusive or pre-emptive rights to the occupancy of space.

#### The University has the Responsibility to Allocate Space

The University assigns space to faculties or services for their use and proper management; however, the University, at its discretion, can reclaim and reallocate space as deemed necessary to meet changing needs and priorities.

The Lakehead University Space Committee (LUSC) [Space Committee] functions under the authority of the President and makes recommendations to the Executive Team. The President has ultimate responsibility for space decisions. The Space Committee terms of reference describe the mandate, structure, schedule, and membership of the Space Committee.

## **Guidelines**

### **University Users**

Any changes in space allocation or utilization within any of the following areas should be reported to the Space Committee and the Director of Physical Plant.

### **Students**

Student requests for space assigned to the Lakehead University Student Union (LUSU) should be forwarded to the President of LUSU. Requests for space outside of the audited allocation to LUSU should be forwarded to the Space Committee. Student requests for space allocated to Faculties, departments, or schools should be forwarded to the Faculty Dean through the appropriate Chair or Director.

### **Staff**

The Academic or Administrative Leader of the Unit (Leader) is responsible for allocating staff space in their respective areas and for reporting changes in their areas to the Director of Physical Plant. Requests for space outside of the audited allocation must be forwarded by the appropriate Leader, with support from their Vice President, to the Space Committee.

### **Senior Administration**

Senior administrators are responsible for allocating their audited space, and for reporting the disposition of this space to the Director of Physical Plant. Requests for additional space should be forwarded to the Space Committee.

## **Academic Space**

Classrooms are considered institutional instructional space and are included in the central inventory managed and assigned through Enrolment Services. Laboratories are assigned through the Faculty Deans.

The Faculty Deans are responsible for allocating their audited academic space and for reporting changes in their areas to the Director of Physical Plant. This space includes faculty offices (both full-time and part-time), faculty laboratories and graduate student offices (or working areas). Normally, faculty members, chairs, directors, and academic administrators will be assigned one office only. Requests for exceptions should be forwarded to the Space Committee with an attached rationale. Faculty members on sabbatical or other leaves will not automatically retain their offices. Requests to retain an office while on leave will be forwarded to the Dean through the Chair/Director.

The Vice President, Research and Innovation is responsible for allocating the audited space for Research Centres and Research Laboratories outside of the Academic Faculties, as well as informing the Director of Physical Plant of the disposition of this space. Requests for additional space associated with research proposals (e.g. Canada Foundation for Innovation) beyond the audited space should be forwarded by the appropriate Leader, with support from the Vice President, Research and Innovation, to the Space Committee.

## **Space Allocation**

### **Effective Use**

It is imperative that campus space be allocated to various users in as optimal a way as possible to ensure an efficient and effective planning and management of space. To this end, the Space Committee shall ensure that the occupancy of all University space by Faculties, departments, schools, researchers, administrative units and external users will be subject to review at least every three years. This audit will be a joint responsibility of Leaders. The Director of Physical Plant will be responsible for the overall coordination of the audit and for the maintenance of accurate records pertaining to the allocation of space on campus.

The Space Committee will be responsible for determining space allocation priorities and for developing criteria for the adjudication of space requests, but these must involve consultations with existing and proposed users. To avoid duplication of space, equipment and staff resources, and to avoid unnecessary costs, as many facilities as possible shall be shared by different users. Space allocation may be reviewed or altered based on the evolving needs of the University.

### **Renovations**

All costs associated with minor alterations/renovations (under \$10,000), that don't alter the future use of the space, shall be borne by the user unit. Any such work shall be approved and coordinated by Physical Plant to ensure compliance with applicable regulatory requirements and University standards.

Requests for significant renovations (over \$10,000) must be brought forward to the Space Committee through the submission of a [Space Request form](#) and approved prior to initiation of work. Proposals that fundamentally alter the future usage of the allocated space or requiring infrastructure modifications in excess of \$10,000 are considered significant. Funding for significant renovations may be considered as part of the budget process.

### **Additional Space**

Space requests should first be addressed by the unit from within their current space allocation. Requests for additional space require that a [Space Request form](#) be submitted by the Leader, with support of their Vice President, of the unit. Requests must outline the need in the context of the unit's goals and in alignment with the University Strategic and Academic Plans.

The completed [Space Request form](#) and accompanying documentation must minimally provide the following:

- a clear and detailed description of the space required and the purpose (total area, offices, lab, instructional);
- a review of existing space within the unit and justification of why reallocation is not possible;

- an overview of the users of the space (numbers of faculty, staff, students); including specific details whenever possible (e.g., specific current researchers).

### **Other Users**

The space needs of University users will be given priority over other users. Requests for space from other users or individuals should be forwarded to the Space Committee through the appropriate Leader, with support from their Vice President.

Space for commercial users external to the University will be considered by the Space Committee on the basis of the availability of space and the appropriateness of the commercial enterprise for Lakehead University. Normally, full commercial rent will be charged. (See also policy on "Commercial Activities".) Requests that are external should be sent to the Space Committee through the Director of Physical Plant.

### **Operating Costs**

Under the current budget model, University occupied space is supported through the standard operating budget. Space specifically allocated to non-university activities/units shall be subject to specific financial arrangements for operating costs. In this instance, "non-university" refers to those activities that are not included within the context of the University's operating budget unless a special arrangement has been made and authorized by the Executive Team.

### **Space Audit**

The status of all University space will be recorded by the Director of Physical Plant, and will be confirmed in a space audit conducted at least every three years. The Director of Physical Plant is responsible for coordinating the audit, and will work with the Leaders in corroborating how and by whom space is being used. The Space Committee may request interim site visits and assessments on space utilization in order to identify areas that may not be optimally utilized. Reports generated through this process will be reviewed with relevant Leaders in advance of any actions that would modify space allocation.

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## Communications with Space Committee

Communications regarding space issues should normally be directed through the appropriate Leader, with support from their Vice President, to the Space Committee. Alternatively, space issues may be sent to the Space Committee through the Director of Physical Plant.

## Review

The President shall ensure that this policy is reviewed within five (5) years.

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**Review Period:** 5 years;

**Date for Next Review:** 2022-2023;

**Related Policies and Procedures:** To be determined;

**Policy Superseded by this Policy:** Space Utilization Policy (was previously approved by the President, rescinded on January 10, 2018)

The University Secretariat manages the development of policies through an impartial, fair governance process, and in accordance with the Policy Governance Framework. Please contact the University Secretariat for additional information on University policies and procedures and/or if you require this information in another format:

Open: Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 4:30pm;

Location: University Centre, Thunder Bay Campus, Room UC2002;

Phone: 807-346-7929 or Email: [univsec@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:univsec@lakeheadu.ca).