



## **SCSU SPACE COMMITTEE CHARTER AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

### **I. PURPOSE**

The Space Committee at Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU) is charged with reviewing space requests, evaluating utilization, and considering the alignment of space assignments with the university's mission and strategic priorities. The committee will make recommendations regarding space allocation and use, but the final decision-making authority rests with the President of the university. In carrying out its charge, the Committee ensures that space allocation, utilization, and reassignment are guided by these principles:

- **Strategic Alignment:** Advancing the University's Strategic Plan and Campus Master Plan.
- **Academic and Research Excellence:** Supporting student success, academic distinction, and the University's growing research mission as an R2 institution.
- **Operational Stewardship:** Promoting efficiency, financial sustainability, and environmental responsibility.
- **Equity and Inclusion:** Ensuring equity, accessibility, inclusivity, and transparency in the allocation and use of campus resources.

### **II. SCOPE**

This charter applies to all physical spaces owned or leased by SCSU, including instructional, research, administrative, auxiliary, and common-use facilities.

#### **EXCLUSIONS**

Space is excluded from the Space Committee's purview if it meets one or more of the following criteria:

1. **Specialized Design**  
Does the facility contain infrastructure or equipment that makes it unsuitable for conversion to general academic, administrative, or research use without major reconstruction? (e.g., planetarium, NCAA competition venues, specialized labs with unique ventilation/equipment)
2. **Regulatory or Accreditation Requirements**  
Is the facility governed by external health, safety, licensure, or accreditation standards that prescribe its use? (e.g., student health centers, counseling clinics, biosafety-level labs)
3. **Grant or Contract Restrictions**  
Was the space funded, renovated, or designated under the terms of a grant, sponsored award, or contract that requires it to be used for a specific purpose? (e.g., federally funded research lab, core facility tied to grant deliverables)
4. **Mission-Specific or Auxiliary Governance**



Does the space serve a distinct institutional mission or auxiliary enterprise with its own governance, revenue, or community-facing role? (e.g., child development center, Jess Dow Field, Jess Dow Field, James W. Moore Field House, Pelz Gymnasium, Hutchinson Natatorium, Student-Athlete Wellness Center, The Ballpark, Pelz Field, student residential housing facilities)

5. Non-Assignable Space

Certain space types are inherently non-assignable and are excluded from the Space Committee's allocation, reassignment, or review processes. These spaces are designated for building operations and support functions, not for academic, research, administrative, or auxiliary assignments.

**Criteria for Non-Assignable Space:** A space is considered non-assignable if its primary function is to support the operation and maintenance of the building, rather than serving as usable programmatic area. Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Mechanical rooms (HVAC, boilers, chillers, pump rooms)
- Electrical rooms, data/telecom closets, IT network hubs
- Custodial closets, supply rooms, trash/recycling areas
- Utility chases, elevator machine rooms, shaft spaces
- Circulation and building infrastructure (stairwells, lobbies, corridors, restrooms)

#### CRITERIA FOR RETURNING OR ADDING SPACE TO COMMITTEE PURVIEW

A space that was previously excluded (e.g., grant-funded, mission-specific, or specialized) will revert to the institutional space pool and come under the authority of the Space Committee when:

1. Grant or Contract Expiration

The external funding period ends and there are no ongoing sponsor obligations or compliance requirements tied to the space. Example: A federally funded research lab must revert to institutional control after the grant term unless renewed or replaced by a new award.

2. Cessation of Specialized Function

The program or function that required the specialized design or regulatory governance ceases to operate, and the space can reasonably be repurposed. Example: A clinic or academic program is closed or relocated.

3. No Continuing Accreditation or Licensure Requirement

The space is no longer required to comply with specialized external standards (e.g., health accreditation, NCAA compliance).

4. Vacancy or Underutilization Identified

A unit vacates the space, reduces activity substantially, or utilization studies demonstrate the space is not serving its intended purpose.



## 5. Capital Renovation or Renewal

When major renovation or capital funding is applied, the space automatically reverts to the institutional pool for reassignment, unless it meets the criteria for exclusion.

### Internal Use of Assigned Space

For space that has been allocated to a unit, the day-to-day internal assignment and use of that space (e.g., distribution of individual offices, workstations, or labs within the allocated area) is the responsibility of the Vice President or Dean of that unit. This authority applies only within the boundaries of the assigned space and does not extend to reassigning space across units. Any request to expand, reduce, or change the designated use of assigned space must be submitted to the Space Committee for review.

**A space request form will be developed and linked here.**

## III. COMMITTEE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### 1. University Ownership of Space

All space belongs to SCSU. Assignments to departments, colleges, or units are temporary and subject to change as institutional needs evolve.

### 2. Allocation Priorities

SCSU allocates space to support its mission of academic excellence, research growth, student success, and operational effectiveness. While all categories of space are essential, prioritization ensures that limited facilities are aligned with the University's highest strategic needs:

- Instruction and Student Learning – classrooms, labs, and other spaces that directly support teaching and learning.
- Research and Innovation – laboratories and facilities that advance scholarship and sponsored research.
- Administrative and Operational Support – offices and workspaces that provide the infrastructure necessary to deliver academic, research, and student services effectively.

Note: Administrative and operational spaces are recognized as integral to the functioning of the University and will be supported to ensure that core services are delivered efficiently. Preference will be given to shared, adaptable, and interdisciplinary spaces. Utilization will be assessed using data-driven metrics (e.g., classroom utilization rates, ASF/FTE benchmarks, research productivity per square foot).



#### Availability, Utilization, and Funding:

- Allocation will depend on availability within the campus inventory and results of utilization studies.
- Units need to demonstrate that existing assigned space is being used efficiently before new allocations are considered.
- Financial feasibility will be a factor in all allocation requests. Departments are expected to identify potential funding sources for renovations, fit-outs, specialized equipment, or ongoing operating costs.
- Requests without identified funding may be delayed or denied unless the project is deemed a high institutional priority with centrally available funding.

### **3. Space Reassignment and Change of Function**

The university reserves the right to reassign or repurpose space to align with changing institutional priorities. Departments must submit requests for space changes, including changes in function (e.g., converting an office to a classroom), to the Space Committee for evaluation and approval.

### **4. Classroom and Technology-Enabled Spaces**

Classrooms and technology-enabled teaching spaces are centrally managed by the Provost's Office. The university operating budget funds the maintenance, technology, and utilities for these spaces. Scheduling for these spaces is managed centrally to optimize utilization and ensure equitable access across departments.

### **5. Departmental Conference and Meeting Rooms**

Conference rooms and meeting spaces within departmental areas are the responsibility of the respective departments. Departments are accountable for the maintenance, scheduling, and funding of these spaces.

### **6. Space Utilization and Efficiency**

The Space Committee will regularly review space utilization data to ensure efficient use of university facilities. Underutilized spaces may be reassigned to better serve the university's needs.

### **7. Compliance and Safety**

All spaces must comply with applicable safety regulations, including fire codes, accessibility standards, and environmental health and safety guidelines. Departments are responsible for ensuring that their assigned spaces meet these requirements.



## **8. Funding for Renovations and Modifications**

Departments requesting renovations or modifications unrelated to routine maintenance to their assigned spaces are responsible for securing funding. The Space Committee will evaluate such requests to ensure alignment with institutional priorities and efficient use of resources.

## **9. Communication and Transparency**

Recommendations regarding space allocation, reassignment, and renovation will be communicated transparently to all affected parties. The university president will make the final decisions. The Space Committee will maintain records of decisions and provide periodic reports to the campus community.

## **10. Space Assignment Priorities and Reassignment**

All space assignments are subject to ongoing review to ensure alignment with institutional priorities referenced in section III (2). When considering the reassignment of space between units, the Space Committee will evaluate proposals based on strategic institutional needs, space utilization metrics, and alignment with the university's overarching goals.

## **11. Laboratory and Research Space Allocation**

Research and laboratory space is considered a shared institutional resource that must be used effectively to support the University's mission as an R2 institution. Research and laboratory space is assigned based on activity levels, grant funding, staffing, and utilization efficiency metrics. Shared or multi-disciplinary labs are encouraged, and compliance with biosafety, ADA, and safety standards is mandatory. Allocation decisions are guided by the following principles:

- a. **Shared Use is Prioritized:** Whenever possible, research and laboratory spaces should be assigned for shared, multi-user, or core facility models, rather than exclusive use by a single investigator or unit.
- b. **Interdisciplinary Collaboration:** Priority is given to research initiatives that foster interdisciplinary collaboration, cross-college partnerships, or external engagement that advances SCSU's research profile.
- c. **Evidence-Based Allocation:** Space decisions will be informed by metrics such as funding levels, staffing, student involvement, research productivity, and utilization efficiency.
- d. **Periodic Review:** Research space assignments are subject to regular review to ensure alignment with active programs and evolving institutional priorities. Vacated or underutilized spaces may be reassigned.
- e. **Compliance and Safety:** All research spaces must adhere to biosafety, environmental, accessibility, and ethical standards for human and animal research.



#### Grant-Funded Space:

Research or laboratory space constructed, renovated, or designated under an external grant, contract, or sponsored award is allocated for the duration of the award and must remain dedicated to its funded purpose during that period. When the grant or contract expires, the space automatically reverts to the institutional pool and becomes subject to reassignment by the Space Committee in alignment with university priorities. Renewal of funding or a new award may justify continuation of the assignment.

#### **12. Priority of University Events**

SCSU facilities exist primarily to support the academic, research, and student life mission of the University. Any event scheduling at the university will be managed with the overarching goal of advancing the institution's mission. Accordingly, priority will be given to events that directly support academic instruction, student learning, and research activity. Use of university facilities for external or auxiliary purposes will be considered secondary and accommodated only when it does not interfere with academic, research, or other mission-critical functions.

- a. University-sponsored events — including instruction, research, student activities, commencement, admissions/recruitment, alumni, and any other university sponsored events or meetings — shall always receive highest priority in the use of university facilities over any external entity use.
- b. External or community uses of space are permitted only when they do not conflict with university needs. The [Facilities Use Agreement](#) is required in accordance to Connecticut State University System Board Resolution regarding the use of university facilities by non-university organizations and individuals.
- c. Scheduling conflicts will be resolved in favor of university-sponsored events. This ensures that SCSU's facilities remain focused on student success, academic excellence, and community-building for the university, while still allowing external engagement when appropriate and feasible.

#### **6. MEETINGS**

The Space Committee shall meet monthly from September through May to review requests and conduct regular business. Special meetings may be convened by the Chair, either at the request of the President or on petition of at least 40% of committee members to address urgent or time-sensitive matters.

A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the voting members of the Space Committee. No official recommendations on space allocation, utilization, or reassignment may be made without a quorum present. Members participating through approved remote or electronic means shall be counted toward quorum. In the absence of a quorum, the Committee may convene for discussion; however, no



formal action or recommendation may be taken until quorum is achieved at a subsequent meeting. When a quorum is present, Committee recommendations shall be determined by a majority vote of the voting members present. Each voting member shall have one vote. In the event of a tie, the matter will be referred to the President for resolution.

## 7. COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

### Members

1. Vice President for Finance and Administration & CFO (CHAIR)
2. Provost or designee
3. Chief Information Officer (CIO) or designee
4. VP Student Affairs or designee
5. University Registrar or designee
6. University Budget Director
7. Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences or designee
8. Dean of the School of Business or designee
9. Dean of the College of Education or designee
10. Dean of the College of Health and Human Services or designee
11. Dean of the School of Graduate and Professional Studies or designee
12. Director of the Division of Research and Innovation or designee
13. Library Director or designee
14. Chief Diversity & Equity Officer or designee
15. Director of Facilities Operation Services
16. Faculty Senate representative
17. Faculty Senate representative
18. Administrative Senate representative
19. Student - undergraduate representative
20. Student - graduate representative
21. Sponsored Programs & Research (SPAR) representative

### Ex Officio Members:

1. Associate Vice President, Facilities Management
2. Director, Facilities Planning and Architectural Services
3. Environmental Health & Safety representative
4. Director, Auxiliary/Events
5. Chief Human Resource Officer or designee
6. University Police representative
7. Members of PLT



Ex officio members serve in a non-voting capacity to provide specialized expertise, ensure compliance with regulatory and operational requirements, and maintain alignment with master planning and facility operations. Additional subject matter experts may be invited to attend meetings on an ad hoc basis to provide information, technical guidance, or specialized expertise relevant to specific agenda items.

## **VI. REPORTING STRUCTURE**

The Space Committee reports to the President of SCSU. Recommendations on space allocation, reassignment, and renovation are submitted to the President for final approval.

## **VII. REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS**

This charter shall be reviewed every three years to ensure its continued relevance and alignment with the University's mission, strategic priorities, and governance practices. Proposed amendments to the charter may be initiated by the Space Committee and must be approved by a majority vote of the Committee's voting members. All amendments shall be submitted to the President of the University for final approval, as the President holds ultimate authority over space allocation and governance.