Space Use Committee
Purpose, Membership, Policies, and Procedures
Montana State University Billings

Physical space at MSUB is a valuable institutional resource that must be managed carefully and used efficiently. The State of Montana, through the Board of Regents of Higher Education, owns all university land, facilities, and buildings, regardless of the original source of construction or acquisition of funds. Responsibility for allocation and assignment of space at MSUB resides in the Office of the Chancellor. The Space Use Committee (SUC) is a recommending body responsible for the oversight of space use. Recommendations are forwarded to the Chancellor for final approval or further review.

Part I. Space Use Committee

General Statement and Purpose
Guided by the MSU Billings mission, strategic goals, and master plan, the SUC reviews, inventories current use, and makes recommendations to the Chancellor for the effective, efficient, and equitable management, use, and modification of all University space. SUC is responsible for ensuring that audits and assessments by Facilities Services of the use of space throughout the campus are conducted and that SUC policies and procedures are reviewed annually.

Objectives
The objectives for the Space Use Committee are as follows:

- To employ a data-driven process for making space use recommendations
- To foster a campus-wide community spirit regarding university space use
- To provide open and accessible information for the campus community regarding use of space
- To assure equitable allocation of space
- To review use of space as related to purpose for which it was originally intended and for which it is currently needed
- To advocate for new or renovated space needs for academic, academic support and campus infrastructure
- To work with Facilities Services, to assure campus compliance with all regulatory codes

Meeting Schedule
The SUC will meet monthly throughout the calendar year. Additional meetings may be called as needed.

Committee Structure
The SUC includes members representing the following University constituencies

- Academic Affairs
  - Office of the Provost
  - City College
  - College of Allied Health Professions
  - College of Arts & Sciences
  - College of Business
  - College of Education
Due to staffing pressures, committee members may represent more than one constituency. If a unit of responsibility is unable to fill its position, the position will remain vacant until filled.

Co-chairpersons, appointed by the Provost, serve two-year, renewable terms as ex-officio, non-voting members of the committee. The Provost appoints a staff person to assist with committee clerical responsibilities.

The Space Use Committee will have an Executive Committee, composed of the co-chairs, the Director of Facilities Services, a dean, and a representative of Auxiliary Services. This Executive Committee will act on time-sensitive space proposals until the committee as a whole has a chance to consider those proposals.

Committee members may volunteer for service or be invited to serve but are appointed by the Provost. Term lengths are determined by the role and responsibilities of the individual members. For example, college deans and other staff may serve for undetermined lengths of time while students serve only as long as they are enrolled in the University. With approval of the Provost, persons invited to serve may designate a representative for their areas of responsibility. The SUC strives for consensus among members in its deliberations.

**Voting**
Each member of the SUC will have a vote on committee actions, with the exception of the co-chairs, who serve as non-voting ex-officio members. Members with obvious conflicts of interest will abstain for voting on issues for which such conflict of interest exists. Recommendations from the committee to the Chancellor will reflect the results of that voting.

**Part II. Space Requests, Reviews, Assignments, and General Space Policies**

**Criteria for Space Assignment**
Recommendations for space assignments are made after careful consideration of all relevant factors and in consultation with respective administrative units involved. Suitability of the space to the function to be served influences assignment and reassignment of space. The following criteria will also be used during SUC deliberations:

- Physical proximity of the space in cases where operations and activities can be enhanced by close geographical locations
- Accessibility of the space for individuals with disabilities and compliance with regulatory codes
• Priorities for research, academic programs, and support services established by the University
• Maintenance of accreditation requirements
• Applicability to the University Strategic Plan
• Minimal disruption to ongoing activities of students, faculty, and staff
• Net gain of space (adding or expanding facilities) releasing previous space for reassignment
• Availability of resources to pay for renovation of space

Assignment or Reassignment of Space Currently Allocated
• All changes of function or physical configuration in currently assigned space must be submitted to the SUC for consideration prior to any action being taken. This includes physical alterations that cause a change in the square footage of a room(s), and any change in the purpose or function of a space.
• All changes of occupancy, such as faculty switching offices, will be provided annually for information only in order to maintain accurate assignment information.
• If a space assignment has an identified end date through reorganization, relocation, or downsizing the space reverts back to the SUC for reassignment, and must be vacated by the user within 30 days of the identified end date.

Space Use Committee Space Request Report
So that the committee can make data-driven recommendations on space use, the following types of information are needed:
• Name/Department of the requestor
• Clear identification of the space requested (type, quantity, size, location, adjacencies, etc.)
• Rationale for requesting the space; (including a statement about how the proposed change will contribute to the fulfillment of the University Strategic Plan)
• Indication of whether the request involves a temporary or permanent change to the space use
• Indication of whether the requested space is currently in use by another unit or occupant, and evidence of support for request by current space occupants
  If the space requested is currently a classroom, please specifically address how the existing classes and students will otherwise be accommodated by providing detailed time, day, location of the displaced classes, and information that addresses the space amenities (technology, equipment) required.
• Notification of whether the requestor will vacate space currently occupied in connection with the new space request and location of such space
• Anticipated numbers of users per month, semester, or year
• Proposed funding source for remodel/renovation and furnishings and/or equipment costs involved in reallocation of the space and approved proposal signed by IT and Facilities Services
• Time frame required for remodel or renovation

Resources Required to Renovate Space
Rarely can spaces be reassigned without financial cost to the University, especially if the purpose of the space changes. The SUC Space Request Report includes a section related to estimated cost. Facilities Services and IT will assist in developing an estimated budget required for a project. All costs associated with the discretionary alterations/renovations to a space will be borne by the user unit. This includes renovations, modifications to technology, and moving furniture and/or equipment. Approval of additional space does not imply that the associated funds will be provided.
The SUC does not allocate funds. All necessary funds must be secured by the requesting unit from the appropriate sources. Verification of funding source must be provided in the report.

**Space Use and Assignment Procedures**

Space requests, including the Space Request Report, will be routed through the appropriate administrative structure (including the Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and/or the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs) as appropriate prior to review by the SUC.

**Part III. SUC Website and Other Methods of Communication**

The SUC will communicate to the University community utilizing a variety of methods. The SUC will use a dedicated website (www.msubillings.edu/space) as a central storage for information about its recommendations on space issues on campus. In addition to this policies and procedures document and the Space Request Form, the site will include the Campus Master Plan (in consultation with Facilities Services), and monthly meeting minutes and agendas. Other methods of SUC communication may include directed and broad use of email and popular information sharing methods.

By July 1st of each year, the SUC co-chairs will submit a copy of an annual report to the Chancellor’s office, which will include the major yearly activities of the committee.

**Part IV. Space Inventory and Analyses**

The space inventory is the official record of all space assignments for the University. Facilities Services will maintain the space inventory, which should be updated annually and in accordance with either Banner database or the EMS database, as appropriate. The culmination of the space analyses will be presented in a report by Facilities Services to the SUC committee annually to ensure that all units are meeting current best practices for effective and efficient space use.