

# **RESEARCH LABORATORY SPACE DISTRIBUTION GUIDELINES**

[endorsed by School of Medicine Executive Committee 3/1/2000]

## **Preamble**

Heretofore, MCO's research laboratory space has been under little pressure, allowing virtually everyone who wanted a lab to have one. As productive laboratory-based research programs grow and new programs are added, we must ensure that the lab space requirements of these productive programs continue to be met. For the foreseeable future, the overall amount of MCO research lab space is unlikely to increase. Thus, meeting the demonstrable needs of productive research programs undoubtedly will require difficult administrative decisions regarding distribution of research laboratory space.

The purpose of this policy is to provide objective criteria for periodically evaluating the productive utilization of assigned research laboratory space in order to support those administrative decisions.

Research laboratory space, like money, is a finite institutional resource which must be utilized in support of productive laboratory-based research programs. We must use this resource in the most efficient manner to support MCO's research-related programmatic goals. As such, space decisions are program decisions. We must ensure that research laboratory space is neither underutilized nor under-supported. In all cases, the goal should be to foster research programs supported by significant levels of extramural, peer-reviewed funding from National agencies, such as the NIH or NSF. One of the main criteria utilized in the comparison and ranking of academic medical centers is the level of NIH funding. In order to improve our ranking, research laboratory space is one of the institutional resources we must leverage.

## **Criteria To Be Utilized For Laboratory Space Assignment**

Research laboratory space will be assigned to the research program of individual faculty upon the recommendation by the Chair of the department in which the faculty member's primary appointment to the Chief Academic Officer. In general, the criteria to be utilized by department Chairs in recommending initial research laboratory space assignment should include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- a) Direct cost of extramural support for laboratory-based research for which the faculty member is the Principal Investigator
- b) In the case of a new, junior faculty member, initial assignment of research laboratory space may be based on the availability of start-up funds and the time commitment of the faculty member to laboratory-based research.

In general, initial assignments of research laboratory space to individual faculty research programs should be for a period of three years.

## **Criteria To Be Utilized For Assessment of Productive Use of Laboratory Space**

Although laboratories will be assigned to research programs of individual faculty, it will be the responsibility of department Chairs to "defend" the productivity of laboratory space assigned to their departments. In all cases, retention of departmental laboratory space will be dependent on productivity of that department in laboratory-based research relative to other MCO departments. In general, the criteria to be utilized for assessing the productive utilization of research laboratory space will include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- a) Extramural Funding for Laboratory-Based Research: The direct cost of extramural awards for laboratory-based research for which members of a department are the Principal Investigators. Specifically, a "rolling" 3-year average of awards for the most recently completed MCO fiscal year, plus the two previous years, will be determined for each department annually.
- b) The relationship between departmental extramural support for laboratory-based research (direct cost) and the amount of laboratory space and laboratory-support space assigned to all individual research programs in a department. Specifically, a ratio of the "rolling" 3-year average of research awards to the total square footage of laboratory space will be developed. MCO departments to which research laboratory space is assigned will be ranked and percentiled based on this ratio annually. Laboratory or laboratory-support space shared among departments will be apportioned to each department in a mutually agreed upon manner.
- c) The number (and impact, if measurable) of peer reviewed publications (published and accepted for publication) based on laboratory-based research of the programs to which laboratory space is assigned.
- d) The FTEs committed to laboratory-based research (P.I., graduate students, postdocs, and technicians) working in research laboratories. In general, the total FTEs of individuals in a given laboratory should be consistent with the total research effort of those individuals contained in funded grants/contracts on which the laboratory director is the P.I.

[NOTE: The data source for items a, b, and d above will be MCO Research & Grants Administration.]

It is important to note that these criteria are for "wet lab" space only, and take into account only funding that specifically supports laboratory-based research requiring "wet lab" space. Clinical trial support and support for research or other sponsored activities that do not take place primarily in "wet lab" space are not included.

Some of a department's research laboratory space may be "at risk", if that department's ratio of the 3-year average of grant/contract awards to the square footage of research laboratory space falls below the 75th percentile for MCO departments. Since this ratio is based on a 3-year average of laboratory-based research funding, these data should represent a productivity trend, not just a "snapshot" of current productivity.

The goal should be to increase the "productivity" of MCO research laboratory space to the point that our direct cost/sq. ft. approaches the national average for medical schools within the next 3-5 years.