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Overview

Space at Nipissing University is a limited resource that must be managed responsibly and in a way that promotes the strategic priorities of the University. Flexibility needs to be maintained to address changes in function, curricula, programs, and technologies.

This document provides the principles and guidelines for the allocation of office space to the departments within all the divisions on campus. “Office space” includes offices specifically assigned to support Nipissing University’s academic (instructional and research), administrative, and service functions. While the University’s Space Planning Committee is responsible for the overall space management strategy of the institution (including responsibility for analyzing space use, ensuring existing space use is optimized, and forecasting future space requirements), actual space/office assignment is a responsibility of the Facilities department.

Note: Classroom space is managed by the Office of the Registrar, while Research space is managed by the Associate Vice-President, Research, Innovation and Graduate Studies.

Principles

- All space is considered University property and will be allocated, as available, in a manner that best advances the University’s priorities.
- Office space allocations are made to faculties, departments, positions, and/or individuals.
- Office space, like all University space resources, should be deployed in the most efficient and effective manner to best serve programmatic and strategic goals. Accessibility and accommodation requirements will comply with provincial and legal regulations in consultation with Human Resources.
- Any vacated space reverts to the University space pool. The Facilities Office, in consultation with corresponding administrative and/or faculty executives where appropriate, is responsible for reassigning vacant space.

- Existing office space should be used to maximum functionality and efficiency.
- Shared office and open office arrangements will be encouraged as necessary to efficiently use the campus' limited space.
- Meeting rooms, departmental and office spaces are to be shared among all Nipissing faculty and staff and will be managed by the Facilities department.
- Office space that has been allocated to a faculty, department, and/or individual can be reassigned to another faculty, department, and/or individual in response to University needs and priorities.
- Department heads have the responsibility to address office space needs within their respective departments. However, responsibility for allocating and reallocating office space resides ultimately with the Facilities Office in consultation, where necessary, with the corresponding department heads (i.e. Dean, Administrative Director, Senior Manager, etc.)

Guidelines for Allocation of Office Space

- Office space will be assigned based on need, availability, and suitability for the intended use.
- Access to natural light, ergonomics, noise pollution, size of workspace, and other related items will be taken into consideration when allocating office space.
- Offices may be private, shared, open, or in cubicles as appropriate and available.
- Assignment of multiple offices for faculty and staff is not permitted unless there is a true demonstrated need. Under such circumstances, a faculty or staff member may be assigned a secondary office (possibly in a shared arrangement). All decisions related to multiple offices will be made on a case-by-case basis and require the approval of the appropriate Vice-President in consultation with the Facilities Office.
- When offices are left unoccupied for significant periods, these spaces may be reassigned to alleviate pressing space needs. If an office space remains under-utilized for a significant period, the department may be required to justify maintaining the use of the space. A periodic evaluation of office space allocation should be made by the department head to ensure that all office space is being used to maximum functionality and efficiency.
- Emeritus/retired faculty and staff may be provided with shared office space, if space is available, as long as they remain engaged in University activities. These shared offices are intended to allow an individual to maintain contact with their department, discipline, and colleagues. This requires the approval of the appropriate Vice-President in consultation with the Facilities Office.
- When possible, if departments desire to consolidate their space assignments for reasons of academic interaction and/or administrative efficiency, an effort will be made to provide contiguous spaces. However, proximity cannot be guaranteed depending on the space and financial resources available at any given time.
- To support an accurate and complete record of space allocations, departments will notify the Facilities Office of any changes to the allocation of specific office space within their department.

- Office space may not be assigned to non-campus organizations without prior approval from the appropriate Vice-President.

Faculty Office Allocations/Moves

Office allocation decisions will be made in response to notification from Human Resources that a new faculty member will be hired. It is the responsibility of the Facilities Office to assign an appropriate office for the new employee, taking the following considerations into account whenever possible:

- type and length of appointment;
- colocation with other members of the same discipline;
- ongoing or upcoming space requirements.

Immediately upon allocation, information will be forwarded by the Facilities Office to the appropriate Faculty Office, Telecommunications, and University Technology Services. The Facilities Office will arrange for appropriate signage and key access, allocate the mailbox, and arrange for caretaking services.

Written requests for office changes will be considered by the Facilities Office once approved by the department head, an appropriate rationale is presented, and office space is available.

Vacant faculty offices will be allocated in the following order of priority:

- New appointments;
- Move current faculty members to co-locate them with other faculty members in the same department/discipline, assuming space is available and if such moves align with any existing or future plan(s) for co-location of departments; and
- Faculty members with extenuating circumstance(s) who have had their request vetted through the Provost and Vice-President, Academic;
- Change of appointment status (e.g. moving into a tenured position).

In the event a request for an office change is approved, furnishings are part of the office and are not normally transferable. When changing offices, faculty members are to move all their personal effects; however, all furnishings (desk, chair, bookcases, and standard computer) remain in the office they are vacating. Upon request, facilities staff may be available to assist faculty with moving heavy boxes.

Faculty members approved for a leave may be required to clear their office of all personal/departmental belongings for the duration of their leave in the event the space is required for a faculty member, not on leave, and/or to alleviate pressing space needs. If a faculty member requires the use of office space for the duration of their sabbatical/leave, a written request must be submitted to the appropriate Dean. If the request is deemed appropriate, and if there is sufficient office space available, a request will be submitted to the Facilities Office for consideration.

Definitions

Office

- A space housing faculty, staff, or students working at one or more desks, tables, or workstations configured as a private office, shared office, or open office with or without cubicles.

Private Office

- An enclosed workspace for one person, suitable for confidential activities, demands a lot of concentration or includes many small meetings.

Shared office

- An enclosed workspace for two or more people.

Open office

- An open workspace for more than three people with or without cubicles.

Cubicle

- A semi-enclosed workspace for one person within an open office

Workstation

- A workspace for one or more individuals typically without partition walls and within an open office.