

Frequently Asked Questions

Contact Info: Helpdesk – ContSpaceSurvey@vt.edu

1. How do we account for the activity of unpaid undergraduates that are working in a research laboratory where organized research is occurring?

First, if the students are not paid from the organized research award(s) that support(s) activity in that research laboratory, the student work would be classified as Instruction/Other Institutional Activity. When you are completing the Inventory for that room, you should include as one of the occupants a generic employee via Manually Added occupant: "Unpaid Undergraduate Student." When adding a new employee using the Manually Added, indicate how many students were in the lab and what is the combined FTE they represent. Consider the time they were in the lab as well as the duration.

2. How do we account for the effort of graduate assistants that receive a stipend?

If the stipend was processed through the payroll, the employee will appear under the search. If the stipend did not go through payroll, then use the same process outlined above to record graduate assistant.

3. How do we account for coursework and teaching assistant responsibilities of teaching and graduate assistants?

Graduate assistants can receive both a teaching stipend and salary from a sponsored research award. If the graduate assistant is assigned office space that is typically where her teaching duties and coursework would be carried out. Therefore, the high majority (>95.0%) of that student's work in the research laboratory should be classified as Organized Research. If the student is not grant funded (not paid from a sponsored research award), then his/her time in the lab should be coded as 'Instruction', or the function that is assigned to the funding sources.

4. What is the recommended order of completing the Space Survey?

We recommend that the survey be done in the following order: Inventory the lab rooms first (room type 250, 570). If rooms are missing, contact the helpdesk. Identify occupants, designate the PI. Then using the Payroll Guide, determine how the room was used and update the percentages. Once all the lab space is done, complete the inventory of the Service rooms (room types 255, 575). Use the Service process to associate the service room with benefiting labs.

5. *I can't locate an occupant I'm searching for*

It's possible that the occupants you're trying to locate are associated with another department. Simply remove the department number from the search and search by name. The system should return all possible searches. If you still can't find the individual you were looking for, contact the helpdesk.

6. *What if the room type shown for the room is not correct?*

First, ensure that the room type shown reflects the type designated for FY20. If not correct, contact the helpdesk.

7. *What if the room number shown for the room is not correct?*

Contact the helpdesk for assistance with room number changes.

8. *What if the department number shown for the room is not correct?*

If the correct occupying department is known, use the Edit Room button to change the **department** of the selected room. If, however, the occupying department is not known, use the Remove button to indicate that the room doesn't belong to your list. The Controller's Office and Facilities will review these rooms and determine proper ownership.

9. *Should the Principal Investigator be automatically assigned as an occupant?*

Depending on PI's involvement and whether the PI has an assigned office outside of the lab, he/she may or may not need to be assigned as an occupant of the lab. It's recommended to interview all PIs to determine where and how much time they devote to specific activities and where their projects are taking place as well as staff working on those projects.

10. *How to share (split) a room when multiple PI's or Departments share space?*

When it is necessary to assign more than one PI or Department to a room, select the Edit Icon under the Edit/Remove column for the room to be shared. The default feature returns the room with the current assignment which may include more than one room number identifier if/when sharing occurs. Insert the total number of splits/shared users to be accounted for. When the sharing/split is only for PI's within your department it is not necessary to make any other changes. The "new" room numbers will contain a ^ and subsequent identifier, 01, 02, and etc. However, when another department is applicable, in addition to the above, the Department Number (Org) needs to be selected for each split under the Department column. The percentage of use for each split must be indicated in the % Occupied Field such that the total adds to 100%. Select the applicable reason, Shared Room, from the dropdown menu and provide further explanation in the notes field. Click Submit to finalize the changes. Rooms that have been shared/split will appear with a green background color on the Inventory and Survey lists.

11. How do we account for Service Center Space?

Space utilized by/for Service Center functions is identified during the Inventory process. Select the Edit Icon under the Edit/Remove column for the room where the Service Center activity occurs. Check the box under the Recharge column. Select the applicable reason from the dropdown menu, Recharge/Core Room and provide further explanation in the notes field.

12. How do we classify animal space?

During the Inventory Process Space (Room Type 570 Animal Facilities) is used for animals and is divided into two categories; one for housing/quarters and one for procedural rooms. Note how the same Room Type is used for both categories while the real difference will not be noticeable until the Survey process when the housing/quarters is functionalized as it is used; Organized Research and/or any/all other functions applicable to the room in-question. Animal Facilities Service room Type 575 should be used for those rooms housing special equipment and/or other applicable uses similar to Room Type 255 for “regular labs”.

13. How to account for new Projects/Accounts not in the system?

Since the dataset including Project/Account information was as of a specific point-in-time, February 29, 2020, it is possible you may not have this information for new faculty, new awards, etc. During the survey process, account for these new projects via Notes and reflect the anticipated activity in the Survey column. If you encounter problems, contact the helpdesk.