**Frequently Asked Questions about the Proposed CCEE Assigned Space Allocation, Access and Management Policies and Guidelines**

**September 27, 2018**

Below is a list of the most commonly asked questions about the draft CCEE Assigned Space Allocation, Access and Management Policies and Guidelines. Answers to these questions are also provided. Note: A number of other questions raised during past reviews of the draft with CCEE faculty, staff, and administrative leadership have been addressed through direct edits to the draft document. Additional concerns and questions submitted through the review cut-off date of September 7, 2018 have been incorporated into this version of the FAQ document under the New Questions section.

New Questions

1. Developing the space allocation formula referred to in the policy document and supported by Appendix A appears to be a thorny challenge. Can it work?

The wording in the policies document and the appendices has been changed to eliminate the use of a formula-based approach for decision-making. The proposed Safety, Health and Space committee will be charged with further developing the appendices to this document. The committee may decide to provide guidance on how a semi-quantitative approach could be used as an aid to the decision-making process for CCEE space allocation/reallocation decisions.

1. One of those quantitative measures in Appendix A might be the difference between research done on a bench top and research that requires larger, specialized facilities. A typical hydro lab or structures lab has more of the latter.

Agreed, and the proposed Safety, Health and Space committee will consider how best to make this differentiation.

1. I still am not sure who will be making the decisions on space?

As described in the document, decision-making will be dependent on the nature of the request—e.g., routine or non-routine. Routine requests will largely be handled by lab managers and operations staff within the department. Non-routine requests will require careful thought by the CCEE Chair about who to engage in the decision-making process. In some cases with a longer-term decision-making timeline, involving the Safety, Health and Space committee will make sense. For time-sensitive decisions, the Chair will likely engage faculty, staff and others internal to or external to CCEE to aid in the decision-making process.

Who are the designees of the chair noted in the document? The Space Committee?

The CCEE chair will engage the Safety, Health and Space committee and/or others within and external to CCEE with expertise relevant to non-routine space allocation requests in order to facilitate timely and well-considered decisions.

A number of the appendices (Appendix D, E, H) have been purposely left blank. Why?

When developing the draft policy document and its appendices, a conscious decision was made to leave full development of the appendix matter to the proposed Safety, Health and Space committee. In Appendices D, E, and H, the committee will describe the process for reviewing proposal space requirements, formulate an approach to managing CCEE short, intermediate, and long term storage requirements, and describe the process for scoping, proposing, planning and delivery of CCEE renovation projects and new capital projects for on-campus and off-campus facilities. Moreover, the committee will finalize the development of partially completed appendices. The committee will develop the research space allocation decision-making approach in Appendix A, lead the development of the automated space request and access justification workbook and fully describe its use at Appendix C, develop the target occupancy and utilization metrics for various CCEE spaces in consultation with FP&M and CoE at Appendix F, and fill in final details of the CoE guiding principles draft at Appendix J once they are completed by CoE.

Under 1.2 of the Guiding Principles section, what is meant by operational requirements?

Although it is not possible to write this document to prescriptively address all requests for space allocation and all potential unintended consequences that may arise as a result of co-location of varied activities in CCEE spaces, the document has been worded in a manner that will ensure consideration of such matters. For example, Section 3.1.9.3 addresses the concern related to programming of activities in spaces that could lead to potential contamination effects on research requiring very clean conditions.

1. If a large piece of equipment is not being used for funded research at the moment, what happens?

Large equipment items, and expensive equipment items/assemblies within the department represent an investment in core capabilities when the purchase and location of the equipment items/assemblies have been well-vetted. CCEE is encouraging through this space policy document the marketing/use of these facilities in order to recover costs associated with their ongoing use, maintenance, upgrade and replacement. As long as the view of CCEE is that the equipment items/assemblies have ongoing value to CCEE and/or are not beyond repair, they will continue to be considered as a part of core facilities of the department that must be appropriately housed for their intended use.

The process for reviewing the space needs of proposed work at 2.4.1 is a good idea, but what assurances will their be that the review can or will be done in a timely manner? (The proposal development process often has very tight deadlines, and the proposed review process should not punish research active faculty nor curtail their efforts.)

This is a legitimate concern, and the proposed Safety, Health and Space committee will need to develop and describe the process fully in Appendix D. To be helpful, the process should not create undue burden on faculty, but what burden it does add should be worth the extra review effort in two respects:  (1) the department doesn't get surprised by a project that gets funded with promises of laboratory capabilities or spaces that cannot be supported/justified by the project and any cost-share negotiated for it, and (2) a quick review of technical details by technical staff or whoever else the chair designates to review the space/equipment needs of the proposal may elicit suggestions that can strengthen the proposal development.

How do you balance needs of new faculty and funded projects noted at 3.1.12?

The proposed Safety, Health and Space committee administering the policies document and its appendices will need to define the way to do this adequately for various types of faculty (e.g., experimentalist, analyst and various combinations of the two) within each focus area.  Given the broad range of research undertaken by CCEE, the definition of "adequate" would be a challenge to put purely in quantitative terms, as also noted in Appendix A.

Can a flowchart of the steps required to access CCEE laboratory spaces also be put in Appendix B?

Yes, with reference to the flowchart already in Appendix B, an additional flowchart can be referenced detailing how a training needs profile is developed for an individual. Beyond the current nine CCEE Safety and Health Committee-mandated online training requirements for lab access, the flowchart can detail the EH&S recommended process of determining additional training requirements for individuals working in laboratory and field environments.

 At 2.3 of the original document (now 2.6 in the revised draft), what is meant by a “laboratory-specific orientation”, and who is “the responsible person(s) managing the space(s)”?

An important point to remember is that the proposed space document and its appendices directly reference the the *CCEE Research and Instructional Laboratories and Field Work Safety Policies and Guidelines* document. The documents are meant to be cross-referenced companion documents. In the safety policies document and the separately prepared *CCEE Safety and Health Committee-Mandated Training for CCEE Laboratory Access and at Completion of Lab Work* document, the questions of what is meant by the laboratory specific orientation and the responsible person(s) managing spaces are clearly articulated. However, the proposed Safety, Health and Space committee can develop a definitions section or a separate appendix to make these terms and others that could easily be confused clear.

At 4.1.5 of the original document (now 1.6 in the revised draft), how can it be ensured that “collegial professionals are expected to work together to share space and equipment in ways that maximize the success of all”? (Graduate students in particular are affected when they cannot access spaces and equipment critical to their work.)

This concern was at the forefront of the decision to include this guidance statement in the document. This space policy defines a process for deciding when access is justified, how space is allocated, and how a request can be revised and resubmitted if needed. The policy framework strives to use factual information in the decision-making process and to integrate many individuals within CCEE into the decision-making process to ensure equitable outcomes.

Shouldn’t CCEE graduate students and postdoctoral research associates be given the opportunity to review the space policies document and its appendices?

While all who work within CCEE will be affected by the policies document, approval of the document will be by CCEE faculty in accordance with the *CCEE Governance Document*. However, when drafting the document, the views of many CCEE undergraduate students, graduate students, postdoctoral researcher associates, staff and faculty have been considered. Moreover, the proposed Safety, Health and Space committee will continue to provide a forum for all within CCEE to provide their feedback about space, health and safety issues, policies and guidelines within the Department and propose changes for consideration by the committee and CCEE when warranted.

Everyone within the CCEE family should be treated equally. (This includes administering of lab fees, consideration of projects relative to each other, and provision of equal access to labs and other types of space.) How will this be ensured?

See reply to question 12. Although interpretation of equality does vary, employment of a clearly defined process within established boundaries (e.g., the Appendices) endeavors to achieve equitable outcomes and also provide a transparent system of checks and balances on the process.

Why shouldn’t the amount of space allocated to an individual research team be proportional to the amount of research projects/funds managed by that team?

The broad portfolio of research conducted by the CCEE Department, and instructional and other commitments required of and made by CCEE make it impossible to operate in this manner at least within the current CCEE space allocation. For example, some research work considered to be of vital importance by CCEE and its stakeholders requires large, core facilities that in many instances will not provide the same return in terms of $/square foot that other research project work can. In instances where the current CCEE space allocation is inadequate, the process defined in the appendices of the space policies will be followed to help meet the space needs of CCEE researchers. As noted in the reply to question 8 and throughout the space policies document, ongoing communication of the needs of researchers at the proposal stage and beyond is necessary for CCEE and CoE to respond to research needs.

How does this policy document ensure that lab fees are reasonable and that the fees are determined objectively with faculty input? How does the document ensure that spending of collected lab fees is decided by faculty and project PIs?

Trust in the development of rates, in collection of fees, and expenditure of fees collected is critical. Section 6.0 (under the revised draft) answers these questions directly. As noted at 6.2.1.1, faculty are invited to participate in the development of rates, and as noted at 6.2.1.2, transparency in the development of rates is mandated. As noted in 6.2, this process will occur at least annually, which provides an ongoing opportunity for input from all affected by the rates.

All lab space, equipment and other spaces and equipment within CCEE ultimately belong to the State of Iowa, and ISU, CoE, and the Department in that order are charged with administering them. Research group and focus area coordinators should not be responsible in any way for managing and allocating these resources. How do the policies support these statements?

A new purpose section 0.0 in the document respects these statements and makes clear that the policies deal with CCEE-assigned and CCEE-developed spaces and resources.

Previous Questions

1. The length of the policy document, its appendix material, and the associated workbooks for space justification can be overwhelming. Is this necessary, and can we find a way to reduce the burden on faculty?

The length of the document reflects a desire to provide clear direction to the space committee or combined space and safety committee that will be charged with administering the document and the CCEE space decision-making process. A decision was made to separately administer the document’s two parts—the Polices and Guidelines section and the Appendices. A significant charge of the proposed new combined space and safety committee or separate space committee would be to finalize the Appendices.

The need for a “short, EZ form” version of the space management workbooks is recognized. A target for the further development of the workbook has been to ensure that communication of a routine request for lab or office space can be made by a requestor in about 10 to 15 minutes via programing of the spreadsheet workbook. Of course, more complex requests will require additional time for completion of the workbook depending on answers to questions related to scope of a given request. More significant advantages and time savings come from a more formalized process of communicating, reviewing and deciding upon requests.

1. The content of this proposed space document and the existing CCEE safety policies document is good, and many good ideals are expressed in both; however, how will we ever be able to manage to these documents and enforce adherence to them?

In a sense these documents comprise the “standard” to which we will manage space and safety in CCEE. For the proposed Safety, Health and Space committee, the safety policies document provides a foundational document from which to manage safety within CCEE. The draft space document can serve as a foundational document for whatever committee structure is decided for space. The committee(s) will also need to continually work through implementation plans that provide guidance on achieving adherence to these space and safety policies and guidelines documents.

1. Why do we even need these space and safety policies and guidelines documents? CCEE has gotten by for many years without them.

No one expects that simply having these approved documents will change anything. However, if we agree that they can be foundational documents from which to manage, expectations can be more easily communicated, and a clearer basis for decision-making and sorting things out amongst ourselves will exist. Accountability to the standards we set for ourselves can then also emerge as a key driver of our space-utilization and safety culture.

1. Will the space policy respect the existing or longstanding uses of space in CCEE and the significant investments that individual faculty have made in spaces?

There are a number of guiding principles and management mechanisms put forth in the space documents that address these types of concerns. Although it is undesirable to treat a specific space as static and unchanging with no ability to adapt it to changing times, needs or resources, the draft document attempts to avoid snap decision making. Instead, deliberations about what core capabilities should be in spaces, methods for dedicating spaces for specific needs, and mechanisms to provide sharing and cost recovery in spaces are key aspects of the draft documents meant to aid strategic management of our spaces to respond to emerging opportunities.

1. Will space workbooks need to be completed by existing users of lab spaces and for submission with proposals (see 2.1.6 of the document)?

Associate deans in CoE have looked at the documents and the associated draft workbook template that has been prepared. They have indicated that if we are asking those with new requests to fill out the workbooks and follow a particular pathway for access to labs (see the flowchart in the policies document), then we should also ask all existing users of our lab spaces to do the same. We do want existing users to also complete workbooks just as we want all who have existing access to our lab spaces to have all the training we now require of anyone requesting new access to our labs. We recognize that this takes time, but we think that this requirement can help CCEE capture unmet needs and other important information to help plan and manage work in our labs over time. Another important use of workbooks is to capture information related to space needs at the time proposals are submitted so that promises of capabilities and space resources that CCEE does not have can be flagged and reviewed.

1. Will we be able to make clear in the policies and guidelines document what the process should be when the answer to a request is “NO”?

Yes, the flowchart in the document appendices now works through the process related to an answer of “NO” to a request. However, the committee that will continue the appendices in support of the proposed framework will want to ensure that the flowchart fully addresses this need. Further review of a request could take the form of an appeal to the committee or a revisiting of the request after additional information is added to the request for reconsideration, etc.

1. What will the process look like for decision making related to more significant requests?

Although the proposed draft puts the responsibility for the significant decisions on the department chair, it is likely that the chair will draw in focus area leaders, staff, faculty with expertise relevant to the request and others as necessary in order to work through consideration of the request and the development of a decision. Documenting the facts from these deliberations would be part of that process. Even routine requests will have a level of documentation associated with them to ensure that all requests are considered in a fair manner.

1. Will the dedicated uses of most of our spaces continue as they currently exist?

With the exception of relatively few spaces within the department, the use of most of our spaces is expected to remain the same. The process laid out in the proposed document does provide guidance toward thinking about and documenting how we use our spaces, and over time, some refinements to how spaces are used to accommodate changing needs (within the context of how a space is intended to be used) would be expected.

1. Can we have a clear list of criteria that can be helpful to those writing proposals relative to any requests that need to be made during preparation of proposals?

Yes, this is a good idea and would be expected to help streamline the process. Again, the need for information at the time proposals are written is primarily intended to capture NEW requests for space or access to existing capabilities needed. It is primarily meant to manage risk.

1. Why do I need to budget to pay for lab usage? Isn’t this something that the University/Department should be expected to provide? How can cost recovery be made fair? How will it be possible to provide the same internal rate structure that all must pay (e.g., students, starting junior faculty, senior faculty and all other “internal” users) when the ability to pay varies widely?

These are important questions, and in short, the department does not have the means to make up substantial shortfalls in budgeting for the execution of work in CCEE labs. Yet, someone has to pay in order to get the work done. Deciding the extent to which fee-for-service operations will be integrated into various CCEE labs, and setting rate structures for fee-for-service and non-fee-for-service activities in our labs is a challenge that can be met with transparent planning and broad participation of all stakeholders involved in any given lab or group of labs within CCEE. Questions related to subsidization of faculty start up, “loss leader” and/or pilot project work, etc. will be addressed in these rate setting forums.