

UCM FACULTY RETREAT

Executive Summary

A Faculty Strategic Space Planning Retreat was held on Monday 30 October 2017, to discuss space opportunities and challenges relating to the 2020 Project and the backfill space allocation process for the Merced campus. EVC and Provost, Tom Peterson and Director of Space Planning and Analysis, Maggie Saunders hosted the retreat. The proceedings were facilitated by Jason Martin and his team in the California Room and captured on video via Zoom. Approximately 75 faculty attended some portion of the retreat in person, including the Deans of the three Schools and the Deans of the Undergraduate and Graduate Programs. The presentation material, video and raw data collected during the day are available for viewing at the following link. <http://spaceplanning.ucmerced.edu/facultyretreat2017>.

FORMAT OF THE RETREAT

Each part of the agenda comprised an opportunity for small faculty groups to discuss a particular issue, with thoughts, concerns and ideas collectively discussed and captured. The product of the captured material will be accessible on the link provided above. Additionally, a person was dedicated to tracking comments from faculty tuning in via Zoom, enabling their input to be included.

THE AGENDA

Tom Peterson commenced the retreat with a warm welcome, outlining the goals and objectives for the day. The following agenda was developed to enable a range of topics for both small group and plenary discussion.

8:30am	Introduction. Why are we here? What outcomes are we expecting? Setting the Goal Context
8:45am	Exploration of the challenges and opportunities associated with the 2020 Project and Backfill space allocation process
9:45am	Morning Break
10:00am	Space Survey Results & Discussion
10:50am	Interdisciplinarity: Why is it important to faculty?
11:00am	Experimental Economics Lab
11:50am	Models of interdisciplinary research space and other mechanisms of Interdisciplinarity
12:15pm	Lunch
1:00pm	Interdisciplinary group presentations (faculty) & responses to interdisciplinary group presentations
3:15pm	Afternoon Break
3:30pm	Faculty role in the space allocation process
4:00pm	Closing Remarks
4:15pm	Reception – Wine & Cheese

PART 1: EXPLORATION OF THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

What are the biggest *challenges* that you foresee in the space planning process?

Challenges highlighted by faculty included:

- Resource limitations associated with new space
- Is it better for a bylaw unit or number of collaborative research groups to move en masse or split into two locations?
- How do we prioritize disciplinary and interdisciplinary (space)?
- Who pays for and coordinates the moves?
- Importance of aligning strategic planning (including financial support for maintaining a space & staffing) with space assignments
- The space allocation and management process itself – centralized vs decentralized
- Communication - transparency

Where are the key *opportunities* to innovate or improve?

Opportunities highlighted by faculty included:

- The ability to share 'super' equipment
- Resources for flexible spaces
- Use of 'hoteling' (non-assigned) desks in shared spaces
- Provision of less formal space for 'collision' (people + ideas)
- Allocate space allocation authority to Unit Chairs
- Space charge back for research space, similar to some other research universities

If you had a *magic wand* and could change anything about the space planning process moving forward what would it be?

- Integration of space + budget + workforce planning
- More resources
- Branding opportunities for sponsors & donors (make the story behind the space compelling)
- Trust that decisions are being made strategically
- Periodic review and justification of space
- Create a tool that incorporates a campus map of faculty, space, equipment and activities

- Communicate clear timelines for the space planning process

Summary:

A range of issues and opportunities were discussed, with some issues to be discussed in more detail later in the day (e.g. decision-making process). The idea of shared space appeared to be broadly favorable (such as shared equipment corridors and colloquy spaces), however concerns were expressed as to whom would be responsible for managing these spaces. Some faculty had experienced other institutions where this was not managed well, resulting in poorly maintained equipment and untidy shared spaces. Several faculty expressed that the extent of shared spaces would warrant more resources, currently not budgeted for.

UCM should develop a strategy for managing shared spaces to avoid this issue. Faculty expressed concern about the current decision-making process suggesting that space allocation would be better managed through Unit Chairs.

The idea of a dynamic campus map to find faculty, spaces, equipment and research activities was received particularly well, especially for its potential to assist faculty find potential collaborators.

PART 2: SPACE SURVEY RESULTS

Maggie Saunders and Jo Dane from Woods Bagot (Architects) presented findings from the Faculty Strategic Space Planning Survey, conducted in September, to which 76% of faculty responded. The survey aimed to collect data on a range of space-related elements, including an understanding of which faculty collaborated with whom. The findings were presented in four components:

- a) How faculty feel about their current research space / who needs more space / who is interested in moving to a 2020 project building / who is not interested in moving. The findings indicated that while the majority of faculty feel they are currently in the right location, many would like more space. Close proximity of faculty offices to research labs and graduate students was considered important to the majority of respondents.
- b) An attempt to map the identified current collaborations among various faculty was received by faculty with some trepidation. It was felt that clusters of collaborators might not be accurately captured, although it was pointed out that the maps were based upon responses to Q13 in the survey (qualitative response). These maps will not form the basis of key strategic space planning decisions, but are useful in confirming that significant collaborative research is already taking place at UCM and that many faculty are already working across Schools and by law units. Several faculty volunteered to assist develop these research collaboration maps.
- c) Qualitative survey responses were categorized and presented by School.
 - School of Engineering: approximately 49% of faculty expressed concern for their ability to expand research within their existing space, some stating that space is currently an inhibitor to research growth. Many faculty expressed issues with their current space stating they did not have enough space or needing new types of space.
 - School of Natural Sciences: 25% of faculty expressed their desire to create better spaces for graduate students, including creating better synergies between faculty offices, graduate workspaces and research labs.
 - School of Social Sciences, Humanities & Arts: were somewhat aligned with Engineering, in that 32% of faculty expressed a need for more space to enable growth as well as desiring better proximity between faculty offices and grad students.

A plenary session to further discuss the survey results ensued. The following is a selection of further comments:

- The collaboration maps require further explanation
- There is more collaboration happening than the survey maps captures
- Need to identify the amount of space v function of space
- How will the survey results be used? What is the process?
- Unit chairs to fine tune the survey; potentially carry out a follow up survey
- There is a need to define 'collaborative space'
- How are new faculty going to be represented in the space planning process?
- We didn't ask people if they *didn't* want to move
- Staff feedback is critical to the process
- There was no mention of research centers such as HSRI
- There was no mention of future new schools

PART 3: INTERDISCIPLINARITY: WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO FACULTY?

Associate Vice Provost, Gregg Camfield, argued for the benefits of interdisciplinary and collaborative research, in the context of competitive national research funding environment, which is increasingly prioritizing collaborative research. He contended that complex problems are rarely solved from a singular perspective and that 'well run' collaborative groups are smarter than the individuals that make up a group.

Gregg spoke about the concept of 'community' being the antidote to the traditional hierarchy and individualization of academic research and conveyed optimism for the potential to attract philanthropy and resources through deep collaboration and complex problem solving.

PART 4: MODELS OF INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

Leslie Ashor from Woods Bagot (architects) defined interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary research, to clarify the differences. She provided an overview of four different interdisciplinary research models at universities in the USA, Mexico and Australia, each with varying spatial consequences:

- 1) Arizona State University: the new College of Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences emphasizes experiential learning that spans academic disciplines and encourages an appreciation for all forms of creativity, all within one building.
- 2) Washington University St Louis MO: involves replanning of the campus for their Integrated Science Initiative to create more interdisciplinary campus. This strategy joins new and existing facilities with fluid vertical and horizontal connections, creating interdisciplinary hubs between existing departmental locations.
- 3) University of Sydney Faculty of Engineering & I.T: replanning of engineering campus reflects 10 research themes, each of which is interdisciplinary. Space is assigned based on research theme and lab type, without respect to department or discipline. Departmental identity is maintained through the development of hubs.
- 4) Instituto Tecnológico de Monterrey: consciously disrupts existing silos of academic departments and faculties through the creation of a 'challenge' interaction/collaboration space where faculty collaborate.

PART 5: INTERDISCIPLINARY CASE STUDIES 1 – 6

In preparation for the Faculty Retreat, Maggie Saunders requested that some faculty outline their existing space challenges as well as their future research space requirements. Six case studies were selected for discussion at the retreat, representing the range of space issues currently experienced by faculty. The selected case studies do not indicate a hierarchy of priorities, but rather, demonstrate potential solutions for these space issues.

Each case study outlined: a) the existing space accommodation and challenges; b) future space accommodation requests; and c) the potential space solution. For details of each case study, please refer to the Faculty Retreat presentation slides also at the link provided. The space challenges presented were as follows:

- I. Social Sciences Experimentation Lab (Jeffrey Butler)
Space challenge: Requirement for a new specialty research space in close proximity to relevant faculty.
- II. Sociology (Nella Van Dyke)
Space challenge: Challenge in existing space. There is no available space for growth, graduates have become dislocated from faculty and there is no program office.
- III. Bioengineering (Victor Munoz)
Space challenge: Currently fragmented across three different buildings and multiple floor levels.
- IV. Physics-Optics (Michael Scheibner)
Space challenge: Currently fragmented across multiple levels and several examples of deficient space and research conditions.
- V. Applied Math (Mayya Tokman) & Theoretical Physics (Ajay Gopinathan)
Space challenge: Currently fragmented across multiple buildings, vital collaboration space has been lost due to other space demands, inadequate meeting rooms and lack of computational labs.
(This convergence of challenges led to consideration of a Center for Computational Research.)
- VI. BSL3/ABSL3 Team (Aaron Hernday)
Space challenge: an identified (emerging) collaborative research team has insufficient lab space and insufficient growth space.

After presentation of each potential space solution a plenary discussion occurred. The following documented comments represent some key issues that will need to be considered in future space-planning processes:

- There are different types of physicists with different needs
- Consolidation of computational efforts would be a good addition
- Concerns over the management of space: Who will fix broken equipment? Who will manage scheduling and upkeep of spaces? Governance?
- Need a structure of how to manage shared space
- Shared/Interdisciplinary space could be a recruitment and/or marketing tool to attract grad students
- Anxiety of committing to a model without understanding the whole process
- What is the adjudication process (who/how will decisions get made where space exceeds the demand)?
- Alignment of staff support with space planning [is critical]
- Space for external partners is needed

- Duplications of equipment may occur if we are not co-located. This will add cost.
- Proximity to groups doing similar research is important
- Similar background in lab safety education for co-located lab spaces is important for risk mitigation

PART 6: FACULTY ROLE IN THE SPACE ALLOCATION PROCESS

Maggie Saunders explained that space allocation is currently the responsibility of the EVC & Provost and the Deans. The question posed to faculty was whether a space allocation may be made to individual bylaw units, centers and ORUs, who would then be responsible for space assignments to individual researchers or research groups? Faculty generally supported this concept, although further discussion will be necessary. It was also proposed that Deans should retain control of some space for strategic purposes, along with responsibility for space utilization reviews.

Plenary discussion: What do you think the role of faculty should be in space planning and management?

- Is the area of concern to faculty really one of space assignment and governance as opposed to space allocation?
- Split space into smaller pieces, smaller sub-units having a say in the process
- Allocate down the chain
- Justify allocation through periodic review of space / base space on need
- Space management or governance is an issue
- We need an assignment process that ties in with other initiatives
- Models of interdisciplinary space allocation and governance are needed (can we provide them?)

WHAT NEXT?

The following faculty engagement activities will take place over the next 3 weeks:

1. Call for Research Space Proposal: this proforma is to be completed and submitted prior to 27 November 2017.
2. Maggie Saunders will continue to initiate interviews and meetings with specific faculty
3. There is the potential to conduct a further survey. Faculty interested in participating in this process are to contact Maggie Saunders.

The first draft of the Strategic Space Planning Scenarios will be developed at the end of November; therefore, it is imperative that you **submit the Call for Research Space Proposals by 27 November.**

Further consultation will occur following documentation of the scenarios. Engagement opportunities will be advised early in 2018.

If you have any questions relating to the next steps, please contact Maggie Saunders via email: msaunders4@ucmerced.edu

A reminder that all material from the Faculty Retreat will be made available online at the following link:

<http://spaceplanning.ucmerced.edu/facultyretreat2017>.