# **Vivarium Space Allocation Committee (VSAC)**

1. Function of the Committee: Researchers who require animal care and research space shall be assigned available space by the VSAC. On the SIUE campus there are animal care facilities at the School of Dental Medicine in Alton, the School of Pharmacy building, the Vadalabene Center and the Vivarium in Science Lab West, the latter of which has been designated as a university-wide shared vivarium resource (hereafter shared vivarium space). All of these spaces fall under the oversight authority of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). When animal care facilities are oversubscribed, or conflicting space needs emerge, the VSAC shall apply established criteria to make an assignment from shared vivarium space based on institutional priorities. The VSAC shall give due consideration to availability of all animal care facility spaces, and will have authority to assign space in Science Lab West.
2. Membership: The membership of the VSAC consists the Science West Vivarium Facility Director, the Animal Facilities Managers for Pharmacy, Dental, and Applied Health with one additional faculty member, who has conducted IACUC approved animal research, appointed by the Associate Provost for Research for a three-year term, which may be renewed. The Coordinator of Ethical Compliance will serve as an ex-officio, non-voting member. The chair of the committee shall be selected by the members and serve a three-year term.
3. Procedures and Policies – Assignment of Space
   1. To apply for an assignment in shared vivarium space, a researcher must complete the Vivarium Application Form and submit it to the Facility Director. Vivarium space is assigned for a specific project associated with a specific IACUC-approved protocol. All researchers must have an approved protocol from the IACUC in order to occupy vivarium space. The duration of the space assignment is limited to the duration of the project and conditional on continuing IACUC approval for project protocols.
   2. New faculty candidates are to be made aware, by the hiring unit, of policies and procedures governing assignment of shared vivarium space, and may be appraised of current vivarium space availability, during the interview process, by inquiring with the Vivarium Facility Director.
   3. The VSAC will assess requests and space availability using the criteria below, and will communicate their decision regarding availability of shared vivarium space to the faculty member, the IACUC, and the Associate Provost for Research.
   4. Use of behavior rooms, procedure room, and quarantine room must be requested on the Vivarium Application Form. These rooms will not be assigned to individual researchers, but rather their use will be scheduled by the Facility Director. The VSAC may be consulted by the Facility Director for input when multiple requests conflict.
4. Institutional Priorities for Space Assignment: Every effort will be made to accommodate all researchers proposing IACUC-approved animal research. However, certain principles will guide the VSAC decision to house animals in shared vivarium space. Specifically:
   1. The VSAC will review all applications on a monthly basis.
   2. Space will be granted when available.
   3. When space becomes limiting, researchers using compatible species will be urged to share animal space when possible. When this is not possible, existing protocols will be given top priority and allowed to complete the period specified in their application. However, any resubmissions will be subject to the prioritization detailed below. Specifically, for all new submissions or renewals, the priority (from highest to lowest) for animal care facility space shall be:
      1. Sponsored research (extramural funding)
      2. Sponsored research (internal funding)
      3. Unsponsored research
   4. Appeals for exceptions to these criteria may be made to the VSAC and considered in consultation with the Associate Provost for Research.
5. Departments utilizing facilities will be assessed charges for maintenance of facilities and equipment (such as, equipment service contracts, facilities maintenance, and incidental expenses) proportionally to assigned space, as defined in the Vivarium Space Application form. Funds will be transferred to a vivarium account managed within the Graduate School, and the Vivarium Director shall be listed as the fiscal officer. Facilities charges will only cover operational costs of the facility. Individual investigators will be responsible for the daily/weekly cleaning of their rooms and all animal care, including changing and cleaning enclosures.
6. All animal facility space assignments are provisional. Assignments are made based on protocol, and do not imply permanent assignment to the researcher. Further, space may not be occupied nor may work begin until IACUC approval has been received by the Facility Director.
7. Space must be vacated and cleaned promptly upon the end of a protocol, or when work is completed. Protocols are to be terminated when animal work is completed to allow room for other researchers/projects. Researchers who do not vacate and clean their space promptly upon conclusion of their project may be charged an additional fee equivalent to one month’s room operations fee to cover cleaning and will also be charged for any facilities repair costs. Researchers also may be subjected to a ban on future use of the facility by the VSAC in consultation with the Associate Provost for Research.
8. Investigators and all personnel are to comply with all IACUC policies and rules and procedures for the facility. Anyone entering the facility under the age of 18 must be supervised at all times. Failure to comply may lead to the VSAC, in coordination with the IACUC, making a recommendation to the university to take disciplinary actions.

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