

# SPACE UTILIZATION STUDY 2022

## BACKGROUND

In October 2021, Wake Forest University initiated the *Space Utilization Study* to understand current and future space needs on the Reynolda Campus as well as the capacity of peripheral campus properties to meet future needs. The University partnered with SmithGroup, a national planning and design firm, for the study.

The *Space Utilization Study* had **four primary goals**:

1. Address the need for additional instructional space, academic offices, and community and support service space on the Reynolda Campus.
2. Identify potential academic and/or administrative uses of University-owned commercial properties located in close proximity to the campus.
3. Assess recently acquired real estate adjacent to the campus for potential academic, administrative, student organization, and recreation uses.
4. Assess the future need of space currently under lease to the University for various academic programs.

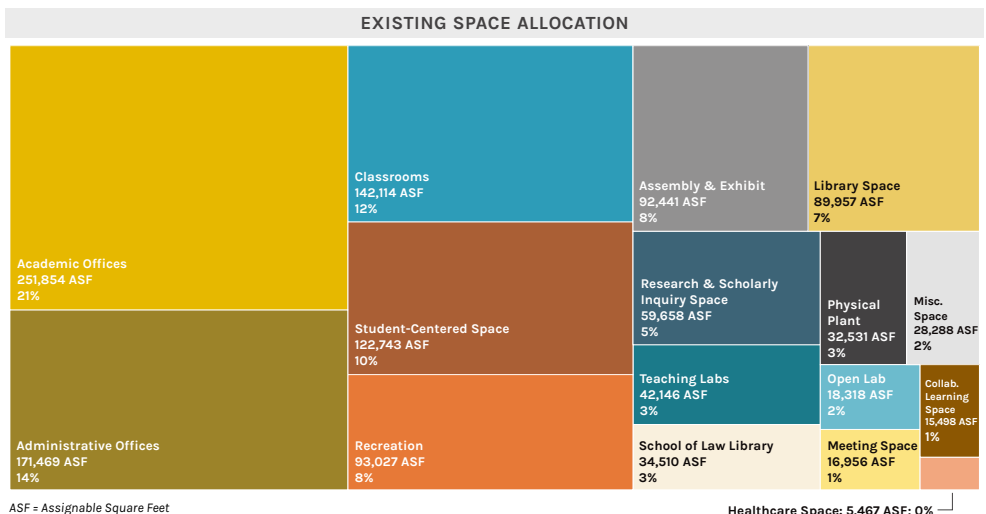
## PROCESS

SmithGroup used facilities, course scheduling, staffing, and enrollment data to complete the analysis. In addition to these key data sets, other information was collected related to research, scholarly, and creative activity, library collections, and study space. The compilation of the data provided a snapshot of activities for Fall 2021, which was used as the baseline for the analysis. This data collection represented one important set of inputs for informing the development of the University's space needs.

SmithGroup engaged with academic, administrative, and student life leadership through a series of listening sessions and open forums. Discussions focused on current and future academic program opportunities, immediate needs, and the lessons learned from the pandemic and its long-term implications to institutional operations. The following common threads emerged:

- Radically collaborative. Radically inclusive.
- Sense of place is important. Need to extend beyond Reynolda Campus core.
- Perspective of the importance of physical adjacency to leadership needs to be broken.
- Break the "we've always done it this way" mentality.
- Change will be a challenge. Need to acknowledge change will support the academic mission.
- Stress of enrollment increase with little net new space.
- University priorities should inform space planning decisions.
- Technology and space in some learning environments hinders being nimble.

Students, faculty, and staff were given the opportunity to participate in a survey



to understand their perceptions of and experiences with Reynolda Campus spaces (2000+ respondents). The survey reinforced the analytical outcomes of instructional space use being concentrated in the core of campus while highlighting preferred attributes, which can inform future upfits. Likewise, the survey confirmed the importance and use of outdoor spaces near Wait Chapel and Hearn Plaza. For example, the outdoor tents used primarily during the pandemic were very popular with students. The survey unearthed other nuances such as the fact that some faculty have not had opportunities to teach in some of the more modern classrooms on campus. This finding, aligned with a more centralized instructional space scheduling practice, identified the need to provide access to more faculty.

Quantitative needs were aligned with existing campus space and requirements for additional space were identified. The study took into consideration the space the University has currently and how it is being used while addressing projected enrollment scenarios, increased instructional space utilization expectations, and sensitivities to modified workplace arrangements for some administrative staff.

# FINDINGS SUMMARY

A space optimization model was developed using Fall 2021 to guide recommendations.

Overall, existing Reynolda Campus square footage, when optimized, supports current enrollment and growth scenarios. However, the surpluses identified in some cases are not easily repurposed to meet current or future needs.

Additionally, quality and configuration of space should be considerations in space optimization. Right-sizing existing space will be necessary to satisfy perceived and real space deficiencies.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

The analysis indicated the Manchester Plaza academic precinct was crowded and lacked faculty office space, dining facilities, and study space. Long-term space strategy includes defining the highest and best use of the three University-owned properties adjacent to the Reynolda Campus to help alleviate space deficits at the campus core.

The following recommendations were made to optimize existing space and provide a process for future decision-making:

- Expand the University's conceptualization of its academic core on Reynolda Campus to include North Campus Dining and adjacent underutilized buildings.
- Invest in the continued renewal of the Reynolda Campus academic core, buildings surrounding Manchester Plaza and Hearn

FALL 2021 ■ OPTIMIZED  
Student Headcount = 7,697 | Staff Headcount = 2,813

Space Category	Projected Existing ASF	Guideline ASF	Surplus/(Deficit)
<b>Academic Space</b>			
Classrooms	142,114	97,728	44,385
Teaching Laboratories	42,146	34,788	7,358
Open Laboratories	18,318	22,208	(3,890)
Research & Scholarly Inquiry Space	59,658	86,640	(26,982)
<b>Academic Space Subtotal</b>	<b>262,235</b>	<b>241,364</b>	<b>20,871</b>
<b>Academic Support Space</b>			
Academic Offices	251,854	224,940	26,914
Administrative Offices	213,376	148,620	64,756
Library Space	89,957	121,178	(31,222)
Collaborative Learning Space	18,740	25,309	(6,569)
School of Law Library	34,510	34,510	0
Meeting Space	16,956	19,814	(2,858)
<b>Academic Support Space Subtotal</b>	<b>625,393</b>	<b>574,371</b>	<b>51,022</b>
<b>Student Space</b>			
Recreation	93,027	108,751	(15,724)
Student-Centered Space	123,199	111,041	12,157
Healthcare Space	5,584	3,849	1,736
<b>Student Space Subtotal</b>	<b>221,810</b>	<b>223,641</b>	<b>(1,831)</b>
<b>Other Space</b>			
Assembly & Exhibit	92,441	79,271	13,170
Physical Plant	32,531	67,523	(34,992)
Miscellaneous Space	27,288	29,611	(2,323)
<b>Other Space Subtotal</b>	<b>152,260</b>	<b>176,405</b>	<b>(24,145)</b>
<b>CAMPUS TOTAL</b>	<b>1,261,698</b>	<b>1,215,781</b>	<b>45,917</b>
Athletics	265,486		
Residence Life	821,160		
Unassigned Space	6,276		
Outside Organizations	496,952		

ASF = Assignable Square Feet

Note: The projected existing space includes build-out space within Athletics.

Plaza, to maximize effective use of space to support the academic mission.

- Repurpose of the University owned properties located in close proximity to the Reynolda campus.
- Develop a strategy for co-locating non-student facing administrative, academic and support services to support renewal efforts in the campus core.

- Strengthen centralized scheduling of classrooms via the Office of the Registrar.
- Establish a University-wide space governance structure and space management program housed within Facilities & Campus Services.

# SPACE MANAGEMENT

With oversight from the University Space Planning Group (USPG), the space management program will provide a framework in which opportunities and needs are integrated with other institutional planning efforts. The space management program will:

- Provide a framework in which opportunities and needs are integrated into future institutional planning efforts.
- Allow for data-informed decision-making within a transparent, visible structure.

