Dear Chairs and Directors,

There has been some confusion concerning the policy related to the Emeritus Faculty title and space allocations. The Emeritus title policy is listed below. The policy clearly states that this is a title for retired faculty in good standing. As an honorary title, the designation of Emeritus does not provide any benefits that are not part of the standard retirement benefits for faculty. This includes the retention of office or lab space upon retirement.

6.3 EMERITUS TITLES
The emeritus title is granted only by the University of Oklahoma Regents upon recommendation of the President of the University. The President may recommend that the title "Professor Emeritus" be granted upon the retirement of faculty members when so proposed by their department and college. The title indicates retirement in good standing and ordinarily will be without the designation of any additional faculty rank (such as "Assistant" or "Associate") except that distinguished professor titles shall be retained when the emeritus status is recommended. For the Health Sciences Center, the President may recommend that the title "Clinical Professor Emeritus" be granted upon the retirement of volunteer faculty when proposed by their department, college, and the Senior Vice President and Provost.

There are two cases that may be appropriate to provide space on campus for a retired faculty member, Emeritus or not, for a limited time.

1. If the faculty member is teaching courses for the University, then they can be provided a touch down space equivalent to an adjunct instructor if the space is available. This would only be during the semesters that they were actively teaching for the University.

2. If the faculty member has an active externally funded research grant that requires research space to accomplish the grant objectives, then the retired faculty member can be provided a touch down space and access to a lab facility for the period of the grant. The space does not have to be the space that the faculty member occupied before retirement. This space would only be available while the retired faculty member has an active externally funded grant.

Deans should consider the space expense when evaluating whether an externally funded grant warrants assignment of space for a retired faculty member. The current office space value on campus is $25.50 sqft annually. A standard faculty office of 150 sqft would have a value of $3,825 annually. The value of research space is variable and starts at $26 sqft. The minimum faculty laboratory space of 300 sqft would have a value of $7,800 annually. Deans should
consider the revenue from the grant in comparison to the need of current faculty and the value of the space before assigning space to retired faculty.
If either the retired faculty member is not teaching or does not have an active externally funded research grant, then the retired faculty member does not have a need for space on campus. That space should be reallocated to current faculty or staff.

In some rare cases, there may have been written agreements with retiring faculty, whether Emeritus or not, that outline space that may stay with the faculty member upon retirement. This is more rare than is often presumed. If a document does exist, then Chris Walker and OU Legal can review the document to determine the options for reallocating space. In the cases where we have moved Emeritus Faculty from their spaces, none had an agreement to retain the space in writing.

If you need assistance with freeing up some space to accommodate new hires and expansions, please feel free to bring me into the conversation. We have assisted Deans in putting office space and labs back into active rotation for new faculty.

Sincerely,

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