

September 2, 2020

MIT Maker Spaces & Shops

Fall 2020 access policy for research, education, and extracurricular activities

Final Policy

MIT has many maker spaces and shop facilities that enable our research, teaching and learning, and extracurricular activities. Adapting operations during the pandemic response includes guidelines and rules that may be different from our normal ways of operating, but all are in keeping with MIT's ethos of safety and responsibility while working and teaching and learning together. From good hygiene to building security to staff supervision, we will all need to work together to enforce and reinforce the new rules and practices.

Guiding Principles and Framework

The goal remains lower and controlled population density across campus in Fall 2020 (50% at present and until further notice). Shop staff should keep in mind how activity in their spaces affects the capacity of their floor, building, access pod, etc. Anything that can be done remotely should be done remotely. In all scenarios, those accessing these campus spaces are those invited to campus and using Covid Pass as part of all MIT access protocols. All other safe operation and management protocols of such spaces, distinct from but related to those of safe research laboratory operation, continue to apply as adapted for Covid-19. We seek a clear starting point for access to these spaces in Fall 2020, with a shared recognition that succeeding will allow us to consider more adaptations for future semesters.

Space usage can be classified in one or more of three categories, listed in order of prioritized use of the limited resource of these spaces *if and when* such choices need to be made:

1. **Research** (faculty-led, including by faculty-supervised UROPs)
2. **Curricular** (Registrar-listed classes during instructional blocks)
 - a. Unless otherwise approved by the Registrar and Associate Provost, curricular shops will be scheduled through the Registrar for up to three blocks per weekday, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m., 2-5 p.m., and 7-10 p.m. The time between blocks allows for deep cleanings (to be performed by shop staff) and air changes. The time between blocks is also meant to enable students to pick up and consume their meals.
 - b. In order to complete course assignments, students may require access to spaces outside of scheduled class meeting times. If this is the case, the instructor must designate the specific location and time windows where that work can occur as RECITATION blocks with the Registrar's Office.
3. **Extra- and Co-curricular** (hobby, artisan, independent student research or entrepreneurial making, clubs and teams)

Roles, Logistics, and Protocols

- **Responsible faculty member:** All operational spaces must designate an MIT faculty member who assumes ultimate responsibility and accountability for the space. This designated faculty member will approve and submit any usage requests and will form a monitoring & compliance team (composed of faculty and staff members) to oversee the day-to-day operations of the space.
- **Monitoring and Compliance Team:** The responsible faculty member, along with staff leadership, will designate members of a Monitoring and Compliance (M&C) Team that will assist in the development, execution, and oversight of the space plan. Members may include faculty, instructional and technical staff, and others. This can be the same group as the DLC Monitoring and Compliance Committee, referred to in other MIT guidance as the DMC.
- **Authorization and access**
 - All users must have authorized access via the Covid Access system and Covid Pass.
 - Covid Access must be granted by:
 - The Principal Investigator (PI) for faculty-led **Research** uses;
 - The Registrar's Office and IS&T for **Curricular** uses; or
 - The Student Covid Access Request Team (S-CAR) for **Extra- and Co-curricular** uses.

For extra- or co-curricular access, shop staff should email student-car@mit.edu with the student's first and last name; MIT ID#; MIT email; and the building number where the shop is located. Students will be reviewed and added to Covid Access on an ongoing basis. Please make space requests 1 week in advance of when you wish to have student access granted via Covid Access update. Email student-car@mit.edu to remove a student's access.

This step for students assists with ensuring all are in the appropriate testing and daily health attestation protocols, and aids contact tracing because of accurate awareness of buildings approved for access for each of us.

- Individual user access should be recorded by the facility's reservation sign-up system and up-to-date daily access log. This will help the spaces have internal awareness of match to scheduling for the accountable faculty member and M&C team.
 - TAs can be added to the Covid Pass as a course instructor with the Registrar's Office for a space if they need access to conduct course-related activities.
 - Visitors are not allowed under any circumstances.
- **Capacity:** The maximum capacity in a given space will be the lower of 2 numbers rounded down: 125 accessible square feet (ASF)/person, based on a sense of "freedom to operate and circulate" similar to hands-on research activities in rooms that may have some fixed equipment, and the capacity appropriate to the scheduled activity type below.
 - Research: 125 ASF per person, consistent with MIT Phase 2 research operations
 - Curricular: Max of 25 students + instructors + TAs
 - Extra- and Co-curricular: Max of 10 people, inclusive of all persons in the space

When one of these spaces is used for multiple activities, these would ideally be scheduled separately and not operate concurrently; if that is not feasible, the capacity will be the lower (or lowest) of the capacity guidelines above.

Within capacity limits outlined above and with consideration for institutional priorities (research and registered courses for degree completion), shop leadership will have the discretion to establish priorities for allocating space for extra- and co-curricular uses (e.g., independent student projects vs club activities vs first-come, first-serve).

- **Staffing:** On-site supervisory and/or instructional staff must be present at all times during open operating hours for **non-research uses** in the month of September 2020. Staff supervision must be provided by MIT-appointed staff or faculty members as we adapt operating procedures for the spaces with respect to Covid. Graduate and undergraduate students are not permitted to perform this function in the month of September, but are allowed to perform general shop supervision. We will revisit this policy for October 2020.
- **Schedule:** While we are accustomed to many spaces being open 24/7, in the Fall 2020 semester they will be open only for limited and staffed operating hours. Scheduling should be locally managed within posted operating hours or by appointment with required supervision. (One scheduling tool is [Bookkit](#).) Suggested practice for mixed-use spaces is to designate operating hours for each of the activity types, to simplify capacity considerations in each.
- **Users:** To maintain a lower campus density than normal, the guidance to date is that those needing to access campus should spend no more than 25 hrs/week on campus on average (roughly 50% of "normal"). Research labs do this now in terms of pre-arranged schedules for each lab member, reviewed and approved by the faculty PI. Time spent in maker spaces and workshops should be included in this consideration of time spent in the non-residential buildings on campus in Fall 2020. Individuals may spend more or less time than that in a given week, but we are thinking about the time with access to the buildings as something we are all sharing. This means that we would not expect students (or faculty or staff) to be using these spaces for more than 25 hours per week on average, especially if they are using other campus spaces for research or classes. That is a new concept for all of us, but the scheduled hours will help us manage this kind of sharing together as simply as possible, and learn as we go.
- **Public health protocols**
 - Guidelines for work in a shop are to maintain a 2-meter / 6' distance with 2-ply face covering and minimize contact closer than that. If you come closer than 6' to a person for 15 minutes or more in a day, that person is considered a "close contact" for the purposes of contact tracing.
- **Cleaning protocols**
 - Custodial staff will not clean individual lab equipment; they will clean high touch common surfaces such as doorknobs and restrooms. Users and local facility staff will be responsible for additional cleaning of their shops. Space-specific cleaning protocols and daily cleaning logs should be developed and maintained to document practices and promote compliance.

- Wash-in/wash-out for each new use is the minimum safeguard. Masks/face coverings are required. Safety glasses, if required for the operation, are still required; shared PPE is prohibited unless proper sanitizing protocol is followed.
 - See the [Guidance for Shops & Makerspaces Cleaning & Disinfecting](#), [Teaching Lab Guidelines](#), and [MechE Cleaning Protocol](#) for more details and resources.
 - PPE and appropriate cleaning supplies can be ordered from the [MIT Covid Store](#).
- **Security:** Building security is of the utmost importance. All MIT community members should be aware of and help enforce these rules to keep buildings secure. Because of the seriousness of the risks, the consequences of non-compliance will be severe. If there is an override to building access mechanisms or workshop security (such as disabling a lock or propping a door open), usage permissions will be revoked. The first violation will result in the revocation of extra- and co-curricular uses; the second will result in the revocation of curricular uses; the third will revoke research uses. This means that the *MIT space itself will be closed to further use for that purpose*, assuming the individual(s) compromising the space are unknown.
- **Community Accountability and Culture:** Strengthening cultures of accountability and safety will be essential in the coming months. Actions that can support MIT's ethos of safety and responsibility may include some or all of the following:
 - Clear communication, visible signage, and training for all stakeholders
 - Student behavioral “contracts”, which are not necessary for each shop to have but may be a tool that some spaces will find helpful to build user awareness of how things are different right now for all involved
 - Clearly articulated consequences for noncompliance
 - Disabling or circumventing of building or shop entry controls will result in loss of individual lab privileges in addition to the space closure for the duration of the semester (see Security section above).
 - Individual noncompliance with these policies may result in a referral to the [Committee on Discipline](#) and loss of access to campus. MIT reserves the right to take interim measures—including immediate removal from MIT housing—to protect MIT and surrounding community members.