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Building Area Definitions

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**Adopted from: Postsecondary Education Facilities Inventory and
Classification Manual (FICM): 2006 Edition**

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Gross Area (Gross Square Feet – GSF)

- A. **Definition.** The sum of all areas on all floors of a building included within the outside faces of its exterior walls, including all vertical penetration areas, for circulation and shaft areas that connect one floor to another.
- B. **Basis for Measurement.** Gross Area is computed by physically measuring or scaling measurements from the outside faces of exterior walls, disregarding cornices, pilasters, buttresses, etc., that extend beyond the wall faces. Exclude areas having less than a 3-foot clear ceiling height unless the criteria of a separate structure are met.
- C. **Description.** In addition to all the internal floored spaces obviously covered above, Gross Area should include the following: excavated basement areas; interstitial space (i.e., mechanical floor or walkways), mezzanines, penthouses, and attics; garages; covered porches, whether walled or not; inner or outer balconies to the extent of a drip line from a roof or balcony immediately above, whether walled or not, if they are utilized for operational functions; and corridors or walkways, whether walled or not, provided they are either within the outside face lines of the building to the extent of the roof drip line or, if covered, to the extent of their cover's drip line. The footprints of stairways, elevator shafts, and vertical duct shafts are to be counted as gross area on each floor through which they pass.
- D. **Limitations.** Exclude open areas such as parking lots, playing fields, pools, courts, light wells, and portions of upper floors eliminated by spaces or lobbies that rise above single-floor ceiling height. Exclude unexcavated basement areas.
- E. **Exception.** Include top, unroofed floor of parking structures where parking is available.





Net Assignable Area (Net Assignable Square Feet – NASF)

- A. **Definition.** The sum of all areas on all floors of a building assigned to, or available for assignment to, an occupant or specific use.
- B. **Basis for Measurement.** Net Assignable Area is computed by physically measuring or scaling measurements from the inside faces of surfaces that form the boundaries of the designated areas. Exclude areas having less than a 3-foot clear ceiling height unless the criteria of a separate structure are met.
- C. **Limitations.** Deductions should not be made for necessary building columns and projections. These small areas are excluded as they represent an insignificant percentage of the total area of an average-sized space. Capturing their area would be unduly burdensome relative to the very small contribution they would make toward precision. Areas defined as building service, circulation, mechanical, and structural should not be included.





Non-assignable Area

- A. **Definition.** The sum of all areas on all floors of a building not available for assignment to an occupant or for specific use, but necessary for the general operation of a building.
- B. **Basis for Measurement.** Non-assignable Area is computed by physically measuring or scaling measurements from the inside faces of surfaces that form the boundaries of the designated areas. Exclude areas having less than 3-foot clear ceiling height unless the criteria of a separate structure are met.
- C. **Limitations.** Deductions should not be made for necessary building columns and projections. These small areas are excluded as they represent an insignificant percentage of the total area of an average-sized space. Capturing their area would be unduly burdensome relative to the very small contribution they would make toward precision. Areas defined as assignable should not be included.





Net Usable Area (Net Usable Square Feet – NUSF)

- A. **Definition.** The sum of all areas on all floors of a building either assigned to, or available for assignment to, an occupant or specific use, or necessary for the general operation of a building.
- B. **Basis for Measurement.** Net Usable Area is computed by summing the Net Assignable Area and the Non-assignable Area.
- C. **Limitations.** Deductions should not be made for necessary building columns and projections. These small areas are excluded as they represent an insignificant percentage of the total area of an average-sized space. Capturing their area would be unduly burdensome relative to the very small contribution they would make toward precision. Areas defined as structural should not be included.

