



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY

TEXAS TECH
Research & Innovation

2024 Annual Report

for the

Department of Environmental Health and Safety

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

From the Assistant Vice President for Environmental Health & Safety

The 2024 academic year was quite eventful for the Department of Environmental Health & Safety. The university grew to 6,500,000 square feet for the first time as we inaugurated our new Academic Science Building. Additionally, research expenditures for our university reached \$255,000,000 as we welcome the addition of the Texas University Fund endowment election.

In support of our safety mission, our department conducted the first-ever “Gas Cylinder Roundup,” where we picked up and disposed of 54 orphaned compressed gas cylinders across campus. This program was developed after a census of gas cylinders showed many abandoned and unnecessary cylinders had collected across campus over the years.

In support of the university’s AALAC accreditation, our Occupational Health Program was expanded by 200% to include all animal users. This growth represents a substantial investment in the support of animal research of the institution.

We were excited to welcome a new addition to the team Dr. Mychele Jorns who joined us in the role of Chemical Hygiene Officer for the university. While we will miss Todd Germain as he left for other opportunities, we expect great things from the Laboratory safety program under Dr. Jorns leadership.

We were also excited to announce the School of Theatre and Dance as the recipient of the Presidential Departmental Excellence in Safety Award. Their application showcased safety leadership from the college and school levels while utilizing the opportunity of new facility construction and renovations to prioritize safety.

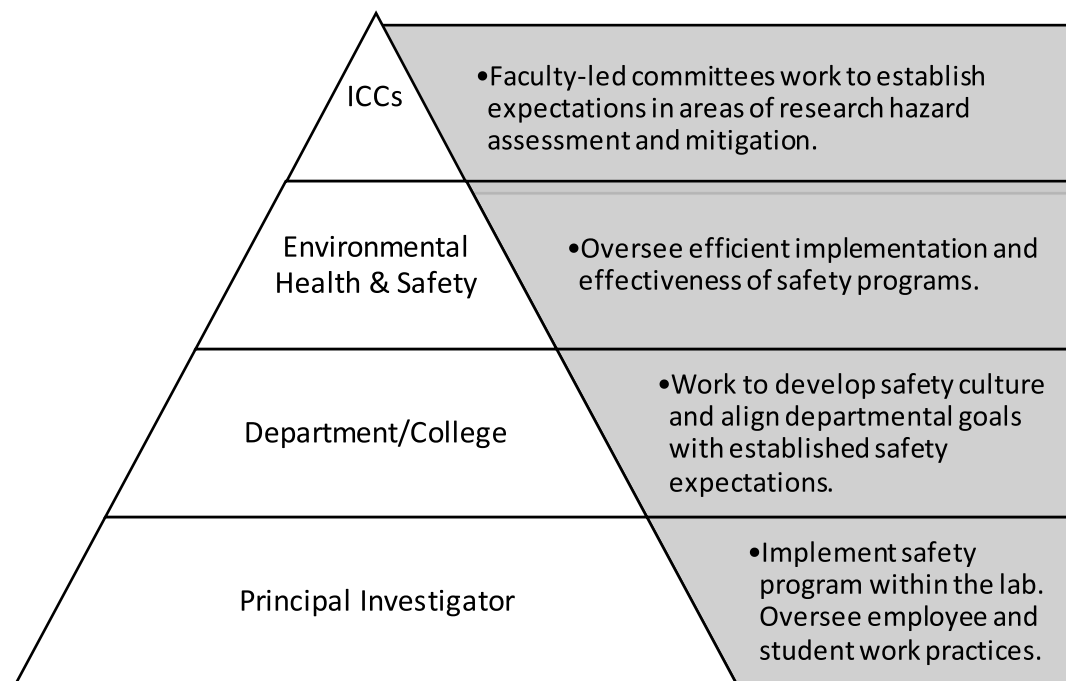
We look forward to a successful 2025 academic year and the opportunity to take our safety program to new heights with expanded programs in occupational safety with our Operations and Auxiliary divisions.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Roe", is positioned above the typed name.

Matt Roe, Assistant Vice President for Environmental Health & Safety

Academic Safety

The Academic Safety section encompasses multiple programs, including Biological Safety, Radiation and Laser Safety, Chemical Hygiene, Field Safety, and Physical Hazards, focusing on reducing injury from academic activities. The Academic Safety program is implemented collaboratively with EHS as a knowledgeable partner and leader in developing these programs.



Academic safety program framework.

Section Highlights

Safety Surveys

EHS was able to conduct inspections of all research spaces, and certify all fume hoods and safety showers. Additionally, we continued the successful multidisciplinary inspection regimen with all academic safety areas inspecting simultaneously during the annual announced laboratory inspections. We updated all inspection checklists to create consistency between the Laboratory Safety Manual and the inspection process and were able to attain an 86% closure rate of corrective actions.

Biological Safety

The biological safety section continued implementing the Cayuse management system for the Institutional Biosafety Committee's review of biological safety protocols. They were able to electronically review all remaining protocols from the 2023 fiscal year and have achieved a record 60-day average review turnaround.

Radiation Safety

In July of 2023, the Texas Department of State Health Services performed a broad license inspection, and the University received no findings and was determined to be “in compliance.”

Occupational Safety

The Occupational Safety section creates and manages programs designed "to ensure so far as possible every working man and woman... safe and healthful working conditions" (Occupational Safety and Health Act 1970). These programs are focused on the proactive control of hazards within the work environment through elimination, communication, and management.

Highlights

Operations Safety

To engage more actively with personnel in the Operations Division, EHS has been working with division management to establish an embedded safety position within this unit that reports to EHS but works within Operations on a day-to-day basis. This program begun in fiscal year 2023 and continued into 2024. Mr. Darby Simonton took over the embedded safety officer position in June. His experience as an inspector for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration has expanded this program and increased EHS's presence in operations by conducting regular site inspections, directly consulting with staff and management on safety issues, and investigating incidents. Mr. Simonton is raising safety awareness in operations and collaborating with Operations staff to expand and develop programs.

Shop Safety

EHS has developed more comprehensive occupational safety checklists within the safety management system that will be implemented during the 2025 fiscal year. These checklists will provide shop area managers and department safety officers the ability to conduct shop safety inspections.

Environmental Protection

The Environmental Protection section focuses primarily on compliance with federal and state environmental regulations. In addition to ensuring the University adheres to compliance requirements, Environmental Protection provides several services to the campus, including:

- Chemical management,
- Hazardous chemical and infectious waste disposal,
- Surplus chemical redistribution,
- Universal Waste and electronic equipment recycling,
- Pollution prevention and waste minimization, and
- Training and education related to waste.

Air compliance responsibilities include permitting, testing, and reporting air pollution sources associated with the Texas Tech University Federal Operating Permit and reporting the quantity of greenhouse gas emissions from the campus annually. Water compliance activities include the inspection, permitting, and reporting associated with stormwater runoff, fuel storage tanks, and sanitary sewer discharges, as well as the management and oversight of the University's four public water systems. These services protect not only individuals on campus, but also the Lubbock community.

Highlights

Assisted in sustainably recycling more than 25 tons of university waste materials and appropriately disposing of more than 24 tons of hazardous waste while containing costs to within five-year average expenditures. During FY 2024, Texas Tech University maintained a "satisfactory" environmental record during all regulatory inspections.

In FY 2024, the section safely conducted over 1,000 hazardous waste pick-ups and collected over 9,000 containers and more than 50,000 lbs. of hazardous waste that was safely disposed at a permitted facility.

Outreach and Training

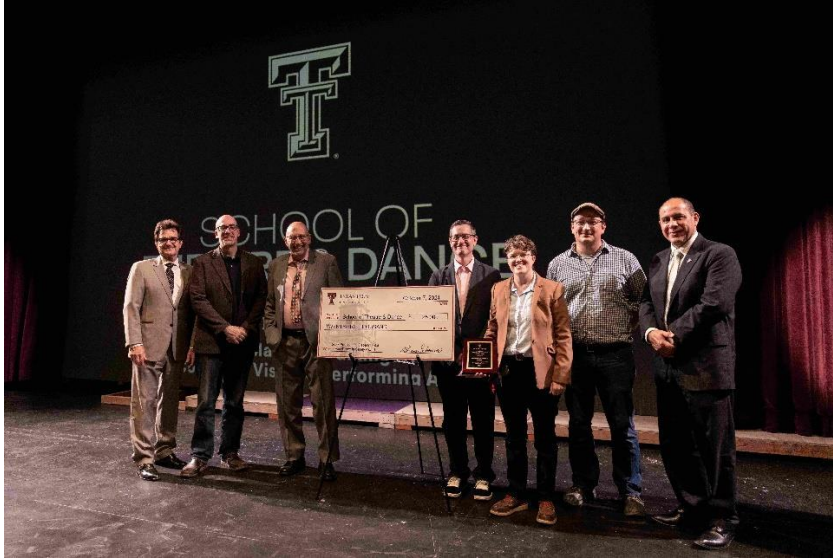
The Outreach and Training section directs programs centered around community engagement in safety and the development and distribution of practical safety training and other informational materials in support of department safety programs. This section seeks to educate the university community about our safety programs and engage faculty, staff, and students in learning opportunities and initiatives to help develop a continuously improving safety culture.

Highlights:

President's Departmental Excellence in Safety Award

The fifth annual Presidential Departmental Excellence in Safety Award was awarded in FY 2024 to the School of Theatre and Dance. The recipient was chosen based on the departmental achievements in safety programs through a competitive review and award process. Many qualified applicant departments showed remarkable strides in department-led safety initiatives during the process.

The award is supported by the Office of the President and the Office of Research and Innovation. The funds allow the recipient department to further its safety mission.



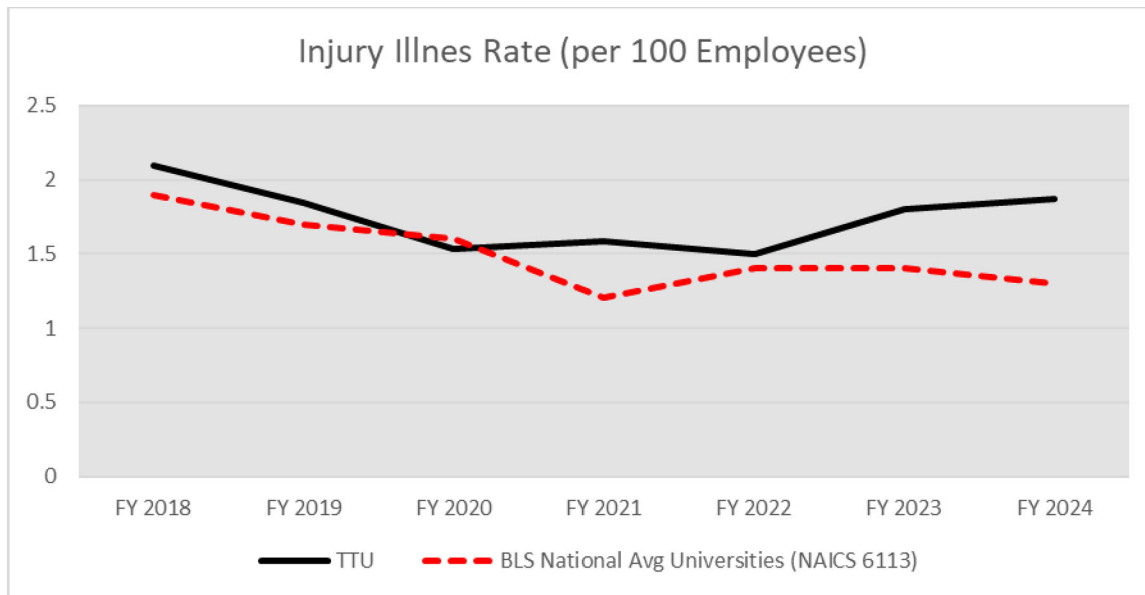
Left to right: President Lawrence Schovanec, Dr. Dimitri Pappas, Dr. Mark Charney, Dr. Paul Reinsch, Ms. Natalie Mayo, Mr. Jared Roberts, and Dean Martin Camacho

New Employee Safety Orientation

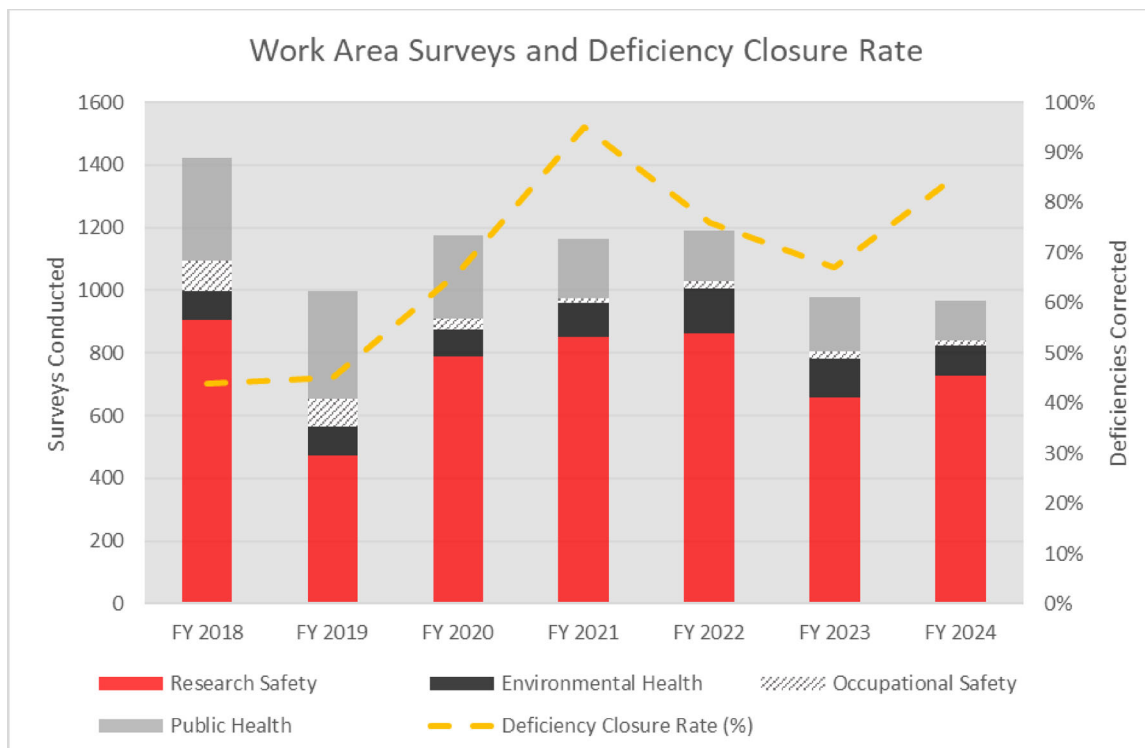
A new initiative was started in the summer of 2024 in collaboration with the Occupational Safety section. EHS has developed a safety orientation for all maintenance staff throughout the university to introduce them to all occupational safety programs before they begin work. This program will help create prepared employees that are aware of resources and assets to help them perform their jobs safely. Feedback on the orientation has been overwhelmingly positive.

Department Metrics

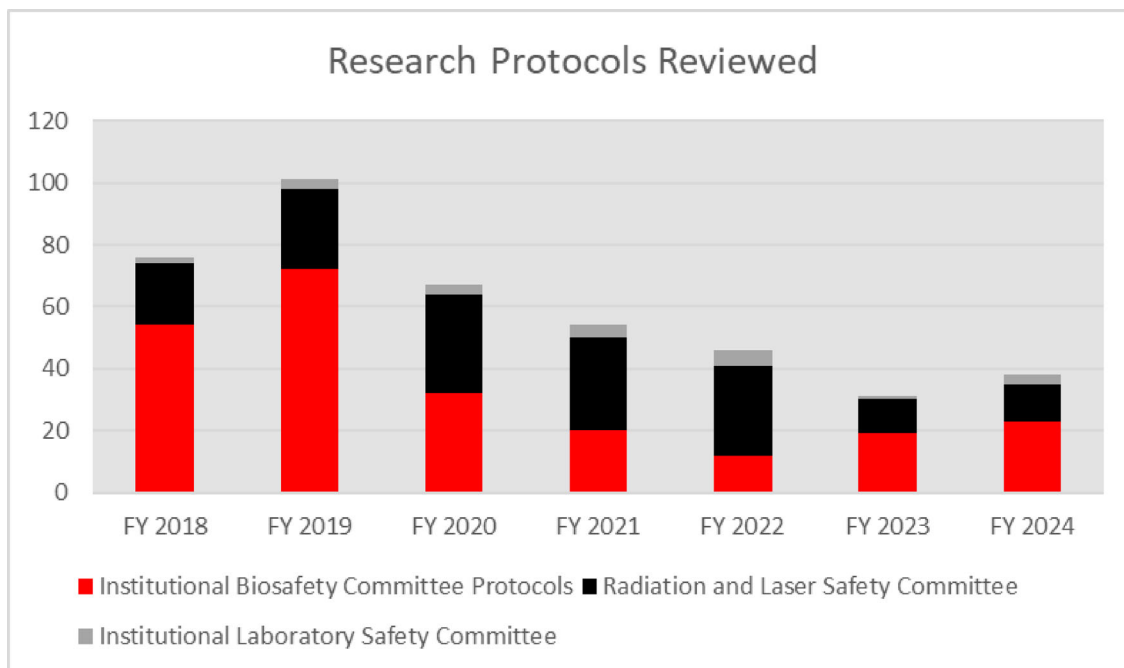
Risk Management:



Injury/Illness rate per 100 employees compared to the National Average of Universities from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

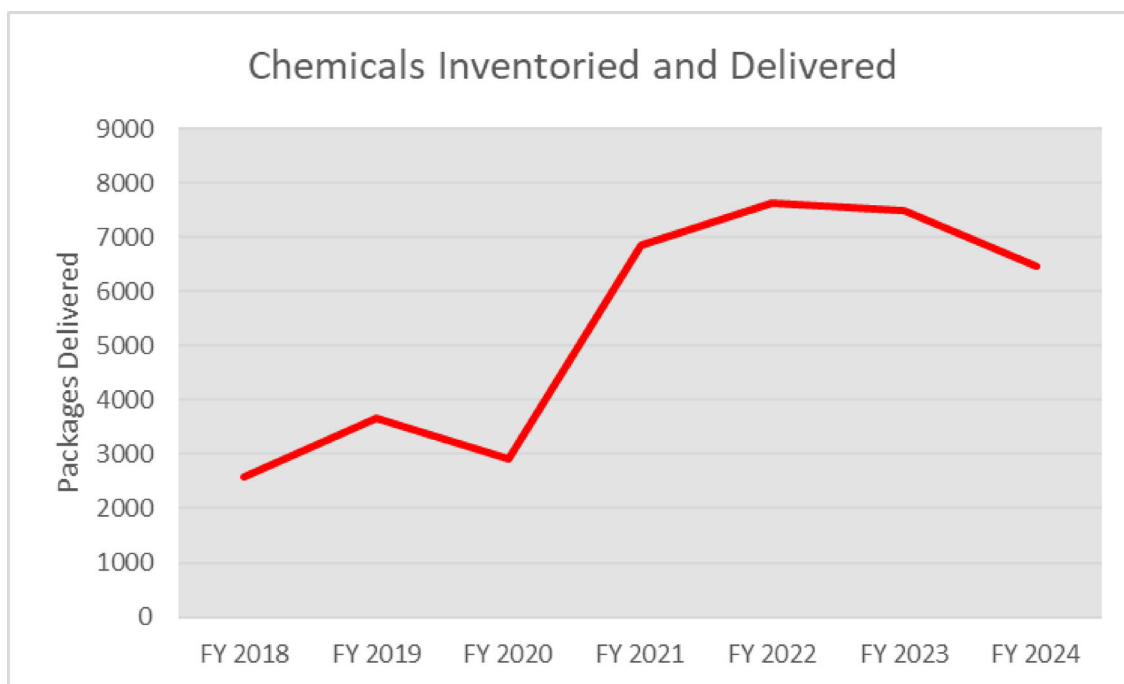


Work area surveys conducted and deficiency closure rate.

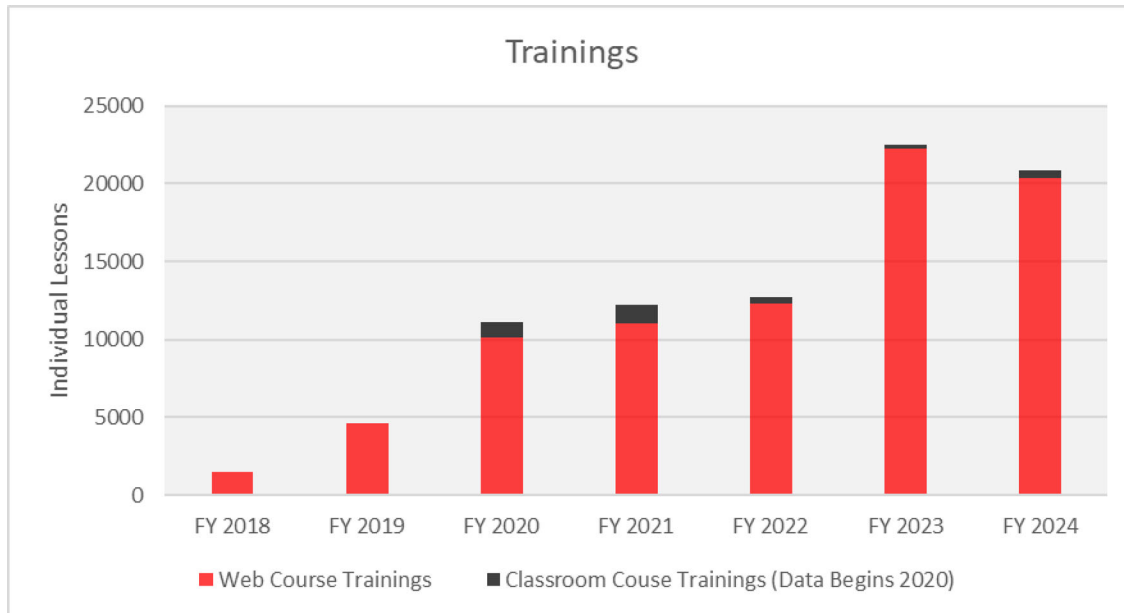


Institutional compliance committee research protocols reviewed.

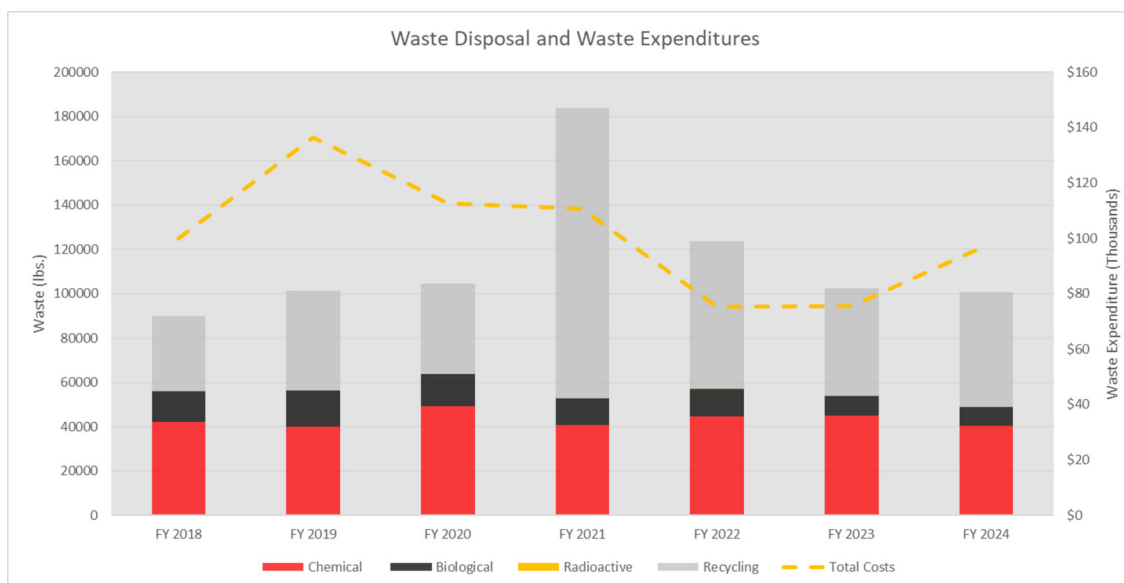
Services:



Chemicals received and entered into the online chemical inventory delivered to academic work areas by EHS personnel. EHS Academic Safety maintains online chemical inventories for all academic work areas on campus.

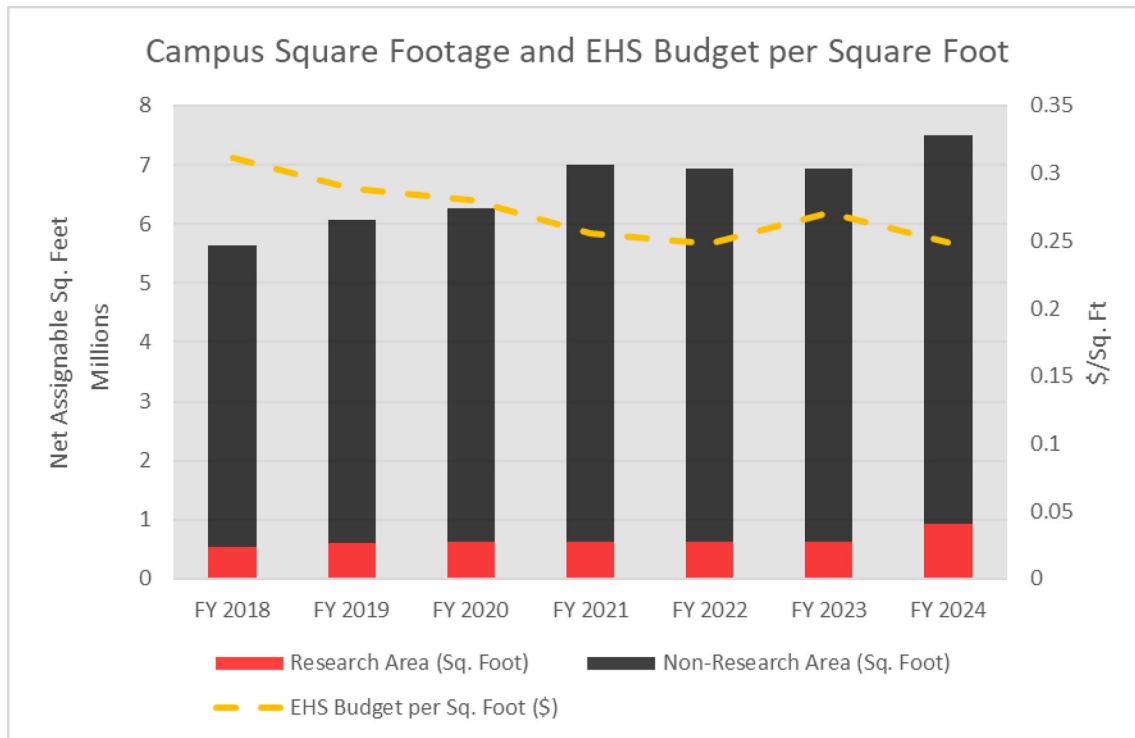


Individual training session enrollments over FY 2018-2020. FY 2020 began tracking in-person class attendance.



Waste disposal and waste expenditures.

Finances:



Campus square footage and EHS budget per square foot. This represents a decrease in budgeted dollars per square foot while realizing an increase in square foot responsibilities.