

# DRIVERS AND BARRIERS TO INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH FOR CBE

*\*The bulleted lists below represent a synthesis of data captured through World Cafe conversations in CBE on 12/11/19 and the CBE survey, as well as small group conversations within and across Task Groups.*

## DRIVERS/INCENTIVES for doing IDR in CBE

- Learning across disciplines
  - The value of multiple frameworks and perspectives to help address complex research questions and urban problems
  - Contribute to new knowledge
  - Bringing in expertise I don't have
  - Leading-edge knowledge on complex problems
  - Learning opportunities for saturated research fields
- Real-world problems and emerging issues are interdisciplinary by nature
  - Climate change and environmental justice
  - Homelessness and housing affordability
  - Equitable development
  - Social justice and inclusive design
  - Emerging technology
  - Accessible design
- Learn from and help community partners
  - Partners (industry; agency; clients) are interested in ideas that are interdisciplinary in nature
  - Gain insights from current real-world contexts
  - Mutually beneficial exchange of ideas and results
- Students
  - Opportunity to work with and train future leaders in the field(s)
  - Opportunities for students teaching/training
  - Recruitment of PhD students: students look for this; good for jobs
- Many funders are looking for people to do IDR specifically, recognizing the power and potential
  - More grant opportunities
  - In recognition of the problems funders are looking to solve
- Researcher passion/interest

## BARRIERS to IDR in CBE

- Funding mechanisms and issues with respect to IDR
  - Lack of awareness of funding opportunities
  - Lack of training for students in acquiring funding
  - Funds that support uncommon partnerships
  - Funds to support academy-industry research that isn't just driven by client needs

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- Fiscal mechanisms/research admin support for IDR
  - Grant management support: IDR is more complex
  - All units do this differently
  - Lack of capacity to support more grants
- Lack of physical space conducive to collaboration
- Lack of experience / skills / training in IDR
  - Lack of training for faculty/researchers
  - Perceptions/awareness of support/barriers and how to address
  - How to even start IDR
- Relationships / finding connections with collaborators both inside and outside CBE
  - Meeting people
  - Understanding what they do
  - Process/es for generating research agenda(s) to spur activity
  - Lack of awareness of how to get involved in IDR activities in CBE
- Incompatible goals/timelines/priorities across partners
  - Working with communities for only 10 weeks can do more harm than good
  - Faculty should have long-running relationships with community partners before bringing a class
  - Lack of shared language makes IDR difficult
  - Incompatible software platforms across disciplines
  - Ego
- Institutional barriers/pace of institutional change
  - Hiring, promotion and tenure criteria evaluate faculty on individual contributions -- in CBE, and in academia writ large
  - Moving from talking about the importance of IDR to actually changing CBE to support IDR more effectively
  - Tracking credit for effort in IDR
- Curricular and scheduling constraints
  - Curriculum is mainly focused on one discipline
  - “Design studio over all else”
  - Program is too rigid, doesn’t allow for taking other courses
  - Shared understanding of expectations around ID courses and projects

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DATA FROM CBE SURVEY:

**“Please share your comments related to the [barriers and drivers] question”**

Faculty and Staff:

I don't know anythings about these topics to respond to share an opinion.
Seriously, I only involve with other people from different disciplines by doing a TA job. Besides from that, there is no such an event that we need to collaborate with each other. Everyone tends toward to focus in making a career success in their discipline. All the conferences they have out there are based on disciplinary research. I have seen no opportunity why we need to work together, in terms of researches.
Collabortive spaces are available but the overall spatial structure of the college (Architecture Hall vs. Gould) limits informal engagement and collaboration.
Several questions on this survey are geared towards faculty and teaching. Does not apply to staff, but staff do cooperate on an interdisciplinary level daily with their work.
Allignment of schedules is challenging
Impossible to get any support
Gould hall is underutilized with unusable open space; no faculty meeting spaces besides offices; no student 'work' rooms - we are so backward in our building - open atrium space is great yet wasted; gould gallery is so 'precious' it's always empty; there is no collaborative work space, no comfortable furniture. we are stuck in the 70s. so ironic.
Interdisciplinary research takes a lot more effort to incubate the collaboration. Such nature of the research is not appreciated by all in the college. The T&P process also does not give enough credits to interdisciplinary research.
effective interdisciplinary research starts with faculty members's passion and action for scholarship; these other things are only supplementary
The CBE should be an ideal place for interdisciplinary work in the AEC industry. The relationship between the CBE and research groups at the UW and industry should the topic of constant attention.
Working with communities for only 10 weeks can cause more harm than good. Faculty should have a long running relationship with communities they are working in before bringing a class in and be able to continue the work forward with other classes or research.
I wish question 17 had a box for "I do not participate in interdisciplinary research." As staff, I don't participate in this. As I take this CBE survey as a whole, it feels like the questions are directed to faculty only - I am not sure what value I can add to these questions from a staff side, based on the questions presented.

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I work at City of Seattle full-time on the Innovation & Performance team. We partnered with Urban to try and win a JPAL grant. I am happy to give you details about how that went. I also lead the Innovation Advisory Council at City of Seattle that works with technology, data and design to solve Seattle's most urgent challenges. We are interested in bringing in faculty expertise. Let me know if you are interested in partnering with City of Seattle through the Mayor's IAC.

## Students:

The only thing I feel the college promotes is to put every ounce of effort possible into my design studio and disregard everything else.

had limited to no experience with responses marked 0. It would be beneficial to designate additional collaboration space in Gould Hall (breakout rooms, etc.) would allow for more productive interdisciplinary coordination.

I was answering this as a student whose collaborative research has come from class work, even if it was classwork that involved a client.

I have not had to acquire grand funding for research or anything of that nature, but I do think I lack training in acquiring funding. I find that to be sorely lacking in the College (i.e. training in acquiring grants, fellowships, scholarships, etc.)

Industry professionals are swamped by eager students hoping to partner or collaborate, the college should be thoughtful about this.

Largest barrier I think is starting research. How could a Grad or Undergrad student take on a research project with school curriculum, let alone decide what to research and who to do it with. There is no encouragement from anyone to pursue independent research nor is it an option that is even mentioned to us. If someone asked me today if we can do independent research in the CBE I would say, "Well I don't really know... some faculty approach students to join but i dont think students can just start their own research - there aren't resources for that."

Again, no courses have offered this and thus not pertinent. Questions are missing and N/A or "haven't been offered" selection.

The department might consider encouraging research among the masters students. There is not currently much support for this.

In the case of the interdisciplinary UDP/RE studio, students from different departments learn different software so it made it harder to collaborate (like sketchup vs rhino). Some students also wanted to present themselves as working professionals to our clients while others wanted the safety net of being very clear that this was a student project, so differences in ideology and language.

New student, N/A

I am still a new student so I will continue to explore these opportunities.

I haven't had the opportunity to take any interdisciplinary classes because the program is too rigid and non accommodating to make alterations to the curriculum path.

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I don't know what 'tracking professional credit for effort' is.
I have not been involved in research

External Partners:

**“Please briefly explain your answer to, ‘what does/would motivate you to undertake interdisciplinary research with the College of Built Environments? (identify the top three)’”**

best research w/ CBE should be tri-laterally (min) beneficial to stake holders/participants.
Ever since being mentored by Paul R. Williams, FAIA, I've been involved in increasing the number of architects of color.
Need to increase long term performance of buildings to mitigate real world effects on energy use.
Our organization is focused on shifting nonprofits and institutions that perpetuate white supremacy through policy, organizational structure and actions within the community. I would trust ANY professional or student that has a well grounded analysis for how race and colonialism are still impacting planning and projects in any topic of interest (transit, food, environment, climate etc) today. I would gladly help develop students in order to ensure they become professionals that dont contribute to current systems the exacerbate current disparities, but instead work to dismantle and change them for the sake of ALL community members. especially those that have been historically marginalized and continuously ignored for the sake of revitalization and tax revenue.
I'm not involved with the college anymore, especially since moving out of the area but it seems that the opportunities to address real-world societal needs has always been a foundation of CBE and I think it should continue that role.
Real need is extremely motivating. Money-driven 'need' is less interesting.
Again, seems like your offered answers are narrower than the CBE definition of interdisciplinary research...
I think members of APA Washington would be interested in collaborating
I work for a large and highly visible publicly traded company, so engaging an academic organization such as the CBE would require more of an impetus than casual relationships I might happen to have at the academic organization. Smaller organizations/companies are much easier to partner with academic organizations like CBE, however (less red tape, internal stakeholder persuading, etc required).
Taking from question #12; the changes that we are going through with automated transportation systems and impacts on travel from climate change require on-going research into how society will handle these changes. Many of these changes may be less technological and more sociological.
It would be great if the CBE could be a thought leader in addressing the environmental and climate challenges on the horizon. This would be especially beneficial for areas like Africa with rapidly expanding populations and the need to add to the built environment. The flip side is where the existing built environment has the capacity to house the population but is structurally and functionally outdated.
Universities should always be incubators for real-world societal needs.
I would be thrilled to collaborate with cbe but am in a new position and also don't have a big research role now.

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Being an investor/developer of high end homes does not close my awareness of the needs of homeless and the issues surrounding affordable housing.
I'd like to see the CBE get more action-oriented. Outside of school we don't have time to do research as arch. margins are too slim. So the more action-oriented the CBE gets, the easier it is to support the CBE's efforts.
our organization focuses on affordable housing and advocacy for those experiencing homelessness - expanding opportunities for interdisciplinary research and collaboration would be awesome!
New builds are not properly designed without a strong continuous maintenance plan approved before the construction starts
I don't live near the University of Washington.
The PNW is experiencing a lot of growth not only in the built environments, but also in concepts of democracy and systems related to it. These would be powerful, inclusive practices for many others to understand first hand.
There are numerous emerging issues where professional/academic partnerships could add valuable new knowledge.
The next gen of professionals need to learn to simply communicate challenging ideas.
i have frequently engaged with the LA department over the years and the planning program. i know fewer faculty now (+20 years post graduation) but would be happy to connect.
I was so impressed and molded by my experiences during my time with CBE. My desire is always to make people's everyday lives better. The work we do at NASA is by its nature exploring new horizons. That typically leads to great benefits for those of us that remain terrestrially bound. Finally, raison d'etre is in educating and building up the next generation.
a focus on learning the actual practices and techniques that make buildings low impact would be a good basis for future architectural practice.
nothing
This too the extend that my 60 years of a very diverse career as a planner tom the level of director of city to VP and Publisher for ULI over 30 years on staff and another 12 or so as consultant both nationally and internationally and a International President of LAI. The interdisciplinary honorary society for all land use professions.
The Storefront Studio project described above was the result of previous connections w/ CBE and UW, and I'd be interested to explore other opportunities to address real-world issues. We are also chronically understaffed, so opportunities for internships, fellowships or funding for research would be of interest.
Currently over committed but would be interested in participating in critiques and materials research.
All of the above reasons are valid. My own participation would leverage the greatest impact if: The research directly benefits education low-income schools and neighborhoods (my real world clients), helps bring money to the cause, helps inform future LA and Design professionals.
Achieving a better understanding of social equity and inclusion strategies and relationships. Mentoring students one on one in academic and career development situations

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I would like to solve real issues that are immediate. The pacific garbage patch clean up as a big issue, but also better project delivery methods for shorter term TI projects. The big projects may get the cutting edge efforts, but the TI's and SPD's are where most of us work.
I do not have extra time for unpaid serious pursuits. My time must be paid for, and then I am willing to work hard for the CBE.
Let's leverage the amazing tech available in our region to change the way things have always been done.
Research in the University setting often has limited relevance to the profession. CBE could better communicate how its faculty and student research affects those of us in the environmental design field.
As the capstone option expands, I'd like to find more opportunities for students to collaborate with the City. I'd also love to create a more robust equitable development monitoring program as part of our Comprehensive Plan and Equitable Development Initiative. Finally, I'd like to reform SEPA.
n/a
Integrating family planning objectives (NO growth) with CBE designs. Physical design to support elective elder "check out."
s
We're always looking for ways to address real needs in the community and position ourselves as leaders in building performance and sustainability.
I see academic/professional partnerships with my firm and the UW Architecture program as a win-win -- we get the knowledge and methodical rigor of the university, and they can help us solve real-world problems that are served by a research question.
No further comments.
CBE alums are key to sustaining and furthering CBE
N/A
"does/would" make this into two questions
This might work best through the AIA so firms could work together.
I have always wanted to be an educator and would enjoy having a role in student projects when
Lots of these answers suggest research is for recognition connections or awards. While it may be true that much research happens for this, it would seem to me that if research is happening, it should be for something beyond the benefit of a few people... 2,3,6,8 all kinda feel like research for individual accolades without connection to practice or real world execution.
I am fortunate to be able to spend my energies in fields of personal interest now that I have retired and could anticipate 15-20 years of productive activity.
often alumni and other organizations are not fully aware of faculty research projects and potential capabilities of CBE
These questions just hatched an idea. What about down the road setting up an interdisciplinary education initiative centered on housing/real estate development? It would involve student involvement and learning from CBE, (Planning thru Const. Management), Business School, Engineering disciplines. They would partner with

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private developer, professional and a non-profit housing organization(s) to develop facilities appropriate to the needs of the non-profit.
I work for the private sector and billability/utilization or marketability is critical for me to undertake research efforts that aren't directly tied to a project.
It would be great for the CBE to reach out beyond the Pacific Northwest (Seattle) with alumni in other regions, particularly on the West Coast.
Unfortunately we are geographically removed from the college but I would welcome student interaction. Our firm specializes in residential construction. That usually doesn't excite students since they do not see that as important as more large scale projects.
if the CBE and my firm can mutually benefit from a collaboration, we're game
I believe children are our future; train them well and let them lead the way. (Sure, it's a Whitney Houston song, but you get the gist.)
In the Atlanta Metropolitan Region, as is the case in many metropolitan areas in the United States, phenomenal change is underway in the fabric of urban systems of functional service delivery. The people, families, work and built environments are undergoing dramatic changes without an understanding of how the long term quality of life of communities are being designed to serve as sustainable, wholesome and viable habitats. In metropolitan areas throughout the United States, the increased evidence of homelessness is evidence of social network systems which are apparently not prepared for this unforeseen phenomenon.
None of the other options would be compelling for my organization
Accessibility is a form of social justice, and I am increasingly interested in ways architecture can address social justice, rather than focusing on deep pockets of rich corporations and individuals.
Environmental equity is a vital importance to future cities along with environmental planning for strategies of dealing with global warming.
Providing leadership on emerging technology or concepts through research, workshops, speakers.
There is a need for collaborative thinking about environmental issues to broaden approach and improve outcomes.
I am not encouraged by current developments in architecture or academia and think the next generation is being misled.
There are many areas of need that would solve real world issues, but they would need benefactor funding to achieve initially, so funding of these opportunities is important, and being a seen as a knowledge leader in a given area tend to attract more clients and more practitioners.
Recognition of teal experience at grassroots level
Truth is I am recently retired as a consulting architect. I'm now a full time student at Gage Academy, no longer in the architecture game
I believe I still have insight and experience to pass on to younger generation/upcoming professional insights
Can't afford to do this without request from a client
It's always desirable to be an expert in your field. We value our connection to the UW. And if sharing common goals could elevate us both it might be desirable, yes.



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Funding is biggest factor
Opportunity to mentor and connect with students.
Being a small firm, we would need funding for such work and would be happy to engage the CBE in research for a 'real' project
Would appreciate info from CBE on their annual programs and research.
Would be great to explore/advocate for design that is not purely driven by client demands (our firm does not do this currently)
Help young people grow.
climate change is the challenge of our time
I wouldn't undertake research at my age and in retirement.
UW is too far away
We have identified no need for research participation
Let's please not talk about "brands."