Strategies for Improving Interdisciplinary Research in CBE

Strategies and key performance indicators for improving interdisciplinary research within CBE

CBE recognizes that interdisciplinary research is a powerful method of addressing today’s complex challenges, engaging many ideas for more just solutions, and preparing built environments leaders for our collective future. To increase the number, diversity, and quality of interdisciplinary research efforts, including collaborations across disciplines, units, campuses and sectors, the Task Group identified these strategies as some of the most impactful:

1. **To better understand and communicate CBE’s interdisciplinary research,**
   1.1. Aggregate, analyze, synthesize and communicate data on interdisciplinary research, providing regular college-wide assessments of efforts, drivers, barriers and impacts, enabling researchers and the college to assess, adapt, and improve.

2. **To increase administrative support for interdisciplinary research in CBE,**
   2.1. Have staffing dedicated to leading the college’s strategies and efforts to achieve interdisciplinary research goals, including:
       ■ Facilitating advancement and research development support.
       ■ Providing administrative support for grants and service contracts that specifically relieves fiscal barriers for both cross-campus and community partnerships.
       ■ Providing project management including convening/events/coordination.
       ■ Making available to faculty and staff trainings on interdisciplinary research topics.
       ■ Supporting teaching faculty in integrating interdisciplinary research into curricula through practical training, exercises and/or experience.

3. **To align college-level incentives and address institutional barriers to interdisciplinary research,**
   3.1. Align promotion and tenure criteria, as well as search criteria and position descriptions, to communicate the value of interdisciplinary research and empower faculty to undertake, track and evaluate it as part of their research efforts.
   3.2. Provide professional development, funding, and awards for faculty, staff, and students to engage in interdisciplinary research.