Promoting Interdisciplinary Collaboration

Assumption: College of Arts and Sciences Faculty would increase the quality and quantity of interdisciplinary collaboration if its members were to become better-informed about the research interests of their colleagues in other disciplines.

Issue for discussion: What actions can the CAS Senate sponsor or undertake that would help College faculty become better-informed about each other’s research, and more effectively identify opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration?

Ideas for Possible Exploration

- The Research Office has sponsored events at which recipients of GUR grants give five-minute summary presentations about their research. Such events might be organized to bring together those interested in sharing their research ideas and/or exploring opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration
  - Events might be organized around interdisciplinary themes
  - Events might be organized through collaboration of specific departments
  - Events can be reported, with recordings posted to the web for later reference by others who are interested

- Direct efforts might be made to “broker” collaborative contacts among individual faculty members who may share research interests. The relevant body would collect information from faculty interested in seeking potential partners for collaboration, and then seek information from relevant departments to help identify such potential partners.

- A separate question is who would organize such efforts to promote interdisciplinarity
  - The Senate could create a new ad-hoc committee charged with this responsibility
  - The Senate could organize itself into official or unofficial “portfolio committees” in which Senators would themselves ideas for events and initiatives that would promote interdisciplinary cooperation involving their fields.
  - Events bringing faculty from specific departments and programs together might be organized by the Chairs and Directors of those departments and programs.