
Interdisciplinary Academic Programs Collaboration Advisory Committee Report

August 9, 2025

Executive Summary	2
1. Strategic Context and Purpose	2
2. Guiding Principles for Interdisciplinary Academic Programs	3
3. Framework for Collaboration (MOU)	3
4. Governance and Administrative Structure	3
5. Faculty Engagement, Support and Incentives	4
6. Financial Strategy and Sustainability	4
7. Professorships of Distinction	5
8. Curriculum and Student Success Strategies	5
8.1 Program Development and Improvement Processes	5
8.2 Curriculum Innovation	6
8.3 Student Support	6
9. Recommendations and Next Steps	6
9.1 Establish the Foundation: Financial Models	7
9.2 Develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Documentation	7
9.3 Implement Core Program Enhancements	8
9.3.1 Governance and Administrative Structure	8
9.3.2 Curriculum and Program Innovation	8
9.3.3 Faculty Support and Recognition	8
9.3.4 Student Support and Experience	9
9.3.5 Community Building and Resources	9
Appendix A: Definitions and Scope of Interdisciplinary Academic Programs	10
A.1 Interdisciplinary Graduate-Level Programs	10
A.2 Interdisciplinary Undergraduate-Level Programs	11
A.3 Other Interdisciplinary Academic Programs/Initiatives (Spanning Levels or Co-curricular)	11
Appendix B: Interdisciplinary Program Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Template	13
Purpose and Scope of this MOU	13
1. Program Information	13
2. Governance Structure	14
2.1 Governing Body	14
2.2 Executive Committee	14
2.3 Program Director	14
2.4 Curriculum Committee	15
2.5 Role of the Home Department Heads	15
3. Administrative Home and Support	15
4. Faculty Engagement, Support, and Recognition	16
4.1 Leadership Endorsement	16
4.2 Adherence to Guidelines	16
4.3 Specific Arrangements	16
5. Financial Model and Sustainability	16

5.1 Budgetary Responsibility	16
5.2 Revenue Sources	16
5.3 Expense Categories	17
5.4 Financial Reporting	17
6. Facilities and Space Management	17
7. External Grant Funding and Indirect Costs (If Applicable)	17
8. Signatures	17
Appendix C: Governance and Administrative Frameworks	19
C.1 Core Governance Components and Responsibilities	19
C.1.1 Governing Body Responsibilities	19
C.1.2 Program-Level Executive and Curriculum Committees	19
C.1.3 Program Director	20
C.1.4 Heads of Home Departments	20
C.1.5 Program Faculty	20
C.2 Administrative Homes and Support Models	21
C.2.1 Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost (Office of University Interdisciplinary Programs and Office of Academic Strategy, Innovation and Solutions)	21
C.2.2 Graduate School (Graduate Program Model)	21
C.2.3 Leading College (Undergraduate Degree Programs)	22
Appendix D: Faculty Engagement, Support and Incentives	23
D.1 Academic Home	23
D.2 Levels of Faculty Involvement	23
D.3 Evaluation and Recognition	23
D.4 Faculty Incentives	24
D.5 IAP Educator Community of Practice	24
Appendix E: Strategic Financial Planning Guidelines for IAPs	25
E.1 Building a Sustainable Financial Framework	25
E.2 Revenue Sources and Allocation	25
E.3 Credit Hour Allocation and Tracking	26
E.4 Financial Reporting and Oversight	26
E.5 External Grant Funding and Indirect Costs (If Applicable)	27
Appendix F: Financial Planning Worksheet	28
F.1 Major Financial Needs (Direct Costs)	28
F.2 Institutional Costs	29
F.3 Revenue Sources	29
F.4 Credit Hour Allocation Mechanism	30
F.5 Financial Sustainability Assessment	30
F.6 Impact Metrics	30
F.7 Reporting and Evaluation Framework	31
F.8 Formalization in MOU	31
F.9 Summary Narrative	31

Appendix G: Best Practices in Program Development and Continuous Improvement	32
G.1 Designing, Developing and Proposing New IAPs	32
Phase 1: Initial Planning and Pre-Proposal Development for a new IAP	32
Phase 2: Program Proposal and MOU Development	33
Phase 3: Program Launch	33
Phase 4: Program Evaluation and Continuous Improvement	34
G.2 Continuous Improvement of Existing IAPs	34
Appendix H: Interdisciplinary Curriculum Development, Approval and Innovation	36
H.1 IAP Curriculum Review and Approval Process	36
H.2 Consultation Process	37
H.3 IAP-Specific Course Prefix	37
Appendix I: Student Support Best Practices	38
I.1 Graduate Student Services	38
I.2 Undergraduate Student Services	38
Appendix J: Survey Instrument	39
Appendix K: Survey Findings Summary - Key Insights and Recommendations	40
K.1 Program Variety and Participation	40
K.2 Administrative Structures	40
K.3 Faculty Access and Appointments	40
K.4 Curriculum Development and Control	41
K.5 Student Support	41
K.6 Funding Models	41
K.7 Key Challenges Identified	41
K.8 Suggestions for Improvement	42
Conclusion	42

Executive Summary

This report responds directly to Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Warwick Arden's [charge](#) to the Interdisciplinary Academic Programs Collaboration Advisory Committee. It proposes a universitywide framework to strengthen interdisciplinary academic programs (IAPs) by establishing sustainable governance models, formalizing faculty engagement and evaluation guidelines, designing financially viable program structures, and enabling strategic cross-college collaboration. It also highlights supporting strategies such as curriculum innovation and student engagement. Together, these recommendations aim to position NC State as a national leader in interdisciplinary education aligned with [Wolfpack 2030: Powering the Extraordinary](#), the university's most recent strategic plan.

1. Strategic Context and Purpose

To address Provost Arden's charge effectively, the committee employed a multi-faceted methodology. We conducted a thorough literature review to understand best practices in interdisciplinary program administration and faculty engagement at peer institutions. Simultaneously, we designed and deployed a campus wide survey (see [Appendix J: Survey Instrument](#) and [Appendix K: Survey Findings Summary - Key Insights and Recommendations](#)) to gather crucial data on the landscape, successes, and challenges of existing interdisciplinary academic programs at NC State.

Building on these inputs, the committee engaged in bi-weekly meetings, often utilizing smaller subgroup discussions focused on specific charge objectives (e.g., financial planning, faculty engagement). This structured approach, combining external research, internal data collection and collaborative deliberation, allowed us to identify the key themes, challenges and opportunities presented in this report and formulate recommendations directly aligned with the five core objectives outlined in the charge letter. The committee was tasked with:

- Developing a flexible Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) framework;
- Defining faculty engagement and support strategies;
- Recommending models for interdisciplinary professorships;
- Proposing financial strategies and incentives; and
- Clarifying governance roles and responsibilities.

During our work, the committee also identified additional institutional needs beyond the five charges. Specifically, we recognized the importance of strengthening the program development process, promoting curriculum innovation and enhancing student support. These areas emerged repeatedly through campuswide feedback and data analysis. Therefore, we have included recommendations that extend beyond the original scope of the charge to ensure a more holistic and sustainable approach to interdisciplinary academic program success.

For clarity, definitions of program types ("program" primarily refers to any structured university-level educational initiative contributing to a broader academic credential) and the scope considered in this report are detailed in [Appendix A: Definitions and Scope of Interdisciplinary Academic Programs](#).

2. Guiding Principles for Interdisciplinary Academic Programs

IAPs at NC State transcend traditional boundaries by integrating diverse perspectives to address complex challenges. We recommend these principles to guide their structure and strategy:

1. **Integration Across Disciplines:** IAPs deliver innovative educational experiences combining knowledge and methods from multiple fields, preparing students to tackle problems no single discipline can fully address.
2. **Adaptive Administrative Structure:** IAPs ideally operate within centralized units (college or university-level) for long-term stability, though department-level structures may suit specific programs. Faculty retain home department appointments for disciplinary connection and alignment with Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure (RPT) processes.
3. **Clear Governance and Faculty Roles:** Effective oversight requires a defined governance structure. Faculty roles and responsibilities must be clearly defined via MOU or Statement of Faculty Responsibilities (SFR) to ensure recognition and stability.
4. **Cross-Department Collaboration:** IAPs should operate beyond departmental constraints to promote flexibility, innovation and rapid adaptation to emerging trends.
5. **Continuous Evaluation and Improvement:** IAPs must adopt established program review practices, using data-driven assessments for ongoing improvement and alignment with institutional goals for both new and existing programs.

3. Framework for Collaboration (MOU)

The proposed MOU framework provides a crucial structure for launching and sustaining successful interdisciplinary academic programs. It establishes clear agreements on **governance structures, administrative responsibilities, faculty engagement protocols, financial planning, resource sharing and overall operational procedures**. Sections 4 (Governance and Administrative Structure), 5 (Faculty Engagement, Support and Incentives), and 6 (Financial Strategy and Sustainability) provide essential background and supporting recommendations for the components detailed within the MOU. Designed to be adaptable overall and across program types, the MOU template offers a consistent yet flexible approach for formalizing collaborations in both new and existing initiatives; it also provides structure for both new and existing initiatives. See [Appendix B: Interdisciplinary Program Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\) Template](#) for the full framework.

4. Governance and Administrative Structure

Effective governance is critical to the success and long-term sustainability of IAPs. It ensures that program structures, leadership, and resource allocation are aligned with institutional priorities and the program's explicit goals. These goals must be articulated, consistently communicated and reflect the university's mission.

Designing the right administrative structure involves trade-offs. Centralized models offer efficiency, visibility and strong top-down support to overcome institutional silos. However, they must be intentionally designed to enable deep disciplinary integration and foster faculty ownership, often better supported through coordinated departmental collaboration. The optimal governance structure is context-dependent. It should reflect institutional culture, leadership capacity, and the specific objectives of each program.

Regardless of the model, ambiguity in governance, whether in roles, responsibilities, reporting lines, or funding structures, undermines program effectiveness and sustainability. To support this, **we recommend a three-tiered model: a governing board, executive committee and curriculum committee.** Each group plays a defined role in oversight, curricular integrity, and resource planning. Administrative homes should be designated based on program scope (Office of University Interdisciplinary Programs (OUIP), Office of Academic Strategy, Innovation and Solutions (OASIS), Graduate School, or leading college). See [Appendix C: Governance and Administrative Frameworks](#) for details.

5. Faculty Engagement, Support and Incentives

Advancing IAPs requires more than structural alignment. It demands a cultural and systemic shift in how faculty contributions are valued and supported. Clear roles, recognition in academic reviews, meaningful incentives and opportunities for professional development are essential to sustaining faculty engagement. To achieve this, **we recommend the following specific actions:**

- Faculty retain their home department for academic processes (RPT, SFR, reviews);
- Define distinct faculty involvement levels (Instructional, Core, Engaged);
- IAP contributions should be formally reviewed in annual evaluations, with Program Director input included in RPT reviews;
- Provide incentives like course buyouts, stipends, seed grants, and establish recognition programs; and
- Foster an IAP Educator Community of Practice with support from relevant university offices.

See [Appendix D: Faculty Engagement, Support and Incentives](#) for details.

6. Financial Strategy and Sustainability

Sustainable funding is critical to program stability. **We recommend each IAP should develop a comprehensive budget plan outlining instructional costs, administrative support, and student funding. The plan should detail revenue streams—state appropriations, tuition, grants, and philanthropy—and define credit hour allocation and tracking.** MOU/MOAs will govern financial commitments between units. See [Appendix E: Strategic Financial Planning Guidelines for IAPs](#) for guidelines and strategies, and [Appendix F: Financial Planning Worksheet](#) for a worksheet template.

The committee recognizes that while these guidelines provide a foundation for financial planning at the program level, they do not specify institutional models for strategic budget allocation between IAPs and participating academic units. We acknowledge that greater clarity is needed, as faculty and departments are interested in understanding how resources will be allocated and how IAPs and disciplinary programs will best work together financially. While developing these detailed models was outside the scope of the committee, addressing this is an important area for continued focus during implementation. Thoughtful engagement and clear communication will be key to building a shared understanding and fostering a collaborative approach to resource allocation.

7. Professorships of Distinction

The Provost's charge directed the committee to formulate guidelines and templates to aid in securing distinct professorships within IAPs. While the committee did not develop a prescriptive, detailed framework, it recognizes the opportunity presented by potential philanthropic interest in establishing Professorships of Distinction embedded within specific IAPs. These positions can play a vital role in attracting and retaining top faculty, enhancing program visibility, and advancing interdisciplinary scholarship and education.

The specific responsibilities, expectations, term length and resource allocation (including use of philanthropic funds) for such a position should be clearly defined and codified via a formal MOU and gift agreements, agreed upon by the faculty member, the IAP leadership, the home department head, the relevant dean(s) and the advancement office within the appropriate unit (either University Advancement or the relevant college).

Programs wishing to develop such distinguished professorships may look to existing models for guidance. For instance, the Shelton Leadership Center's model for its Shelton Distinguished Professor in Leadership, which utilizes termed appointments, could serve as a useful example. It is crucial that these IAP-embedded professorships are structured carefully to be complementary to — and not in competition with — traditional distinguished professorships housed within departments.

8. Program Development, Curriculum and Student Success Strategies

Beyond the core frameworks for governance, faculty engagement, and finance, the committee recognized that sustained success for IAPs hinges on several critical supporting conditions outlined in this section.

8.1 Program Development and Improvement Processes

Effective IAPs rely not only on innovative curricula but also on structured processes for their design, launch and ongoing enhancement. Clear guidelines, stakeholder engagement, defined roles, and continuous improvement cycles are crucial for sustainability and success. Detailed best practices and frameworks covering the program life cycle, from initial planning to continuous improvement, are provided in [Appendix G: Best Practices in Program Development and Continuous Improvement](#). While the principles discussed may be relevant to various [interdisciplinary academic initiatives](#), the detailed procedural frameworks presented here are primarily designed for and most applicable to IAPs proposing formal academic credentials, such as degrees or certificates, which require navigating full institutional approval processes.

8.2 Curriculum Innovation

Developing IAP curricula requires intentional design, clear learning goals focused on synthesis, and pedagogical approaches fostering cross-domain connections. The IAP curriculum review process should mirror the rigor of traditional departmental/college processes, involving a Program Curriculum Committee review followed by Administrative Unit(s) review and proceeding through standard university approvals. Consultation follows established guidelines. IAPs may request a specific course prefix for identity and efficiency, but must address concerns about overlap and credit attribution via clear MOUs.

Interdisciplinary curricula offer significant opportunities but require intentional design, clear learning goals emphasizing synthesis and suitable pedagogy. Streamlining development and approval processes is essential for agility and rigor. The guidelines are detailed in [Appendix H: Interdisciplinary Curriculum Development, Approval and Innovation](#).

8.3 Student Support

Student success in IAPs requires intentional support structures that address the unique challenges and opportunities of learning across disciplines. Beyond strong curricula, fostering a positive student experience through tailored advising sensitive to IAP nuances, robust High-Impact Experiences (HIE) learning opportunities (like research, internships, first-year experiences) and dedicated community-building efforts is essential. Ensuring clear academic pathways integrated with university systems (e.g., degree audits, course catalogs), providing dedicated staff support where feasible, and addressing specific needs like sustainable graduate assistantship funding are critical components for enhancing student engagement, retention, and overall success. Detailed

best practices for both graduate and undergraduate students are outlined in [Appendix I: Student Support Best Practices](#).

9. Recommendations and Next Steps

The guiding principles outlined in this report are intended to be actively applied in the design, development and evaluation of all interdisciplinary academic programs at NC State. To put these guiding principles into practice and address the challenges facing IAPs, this implementation plan outlines actionable steps for the university. The committee recommends these implementation items based on three criteria:

- **Priority (Urgency):** How quickly should this be implemented?
- **Importance (Strategic Alignment):** How strongly does this align with strategic goals and Wolfpack 2030 implementation initiatives?
- **Impact (Outcome and Benefit):** What positive outcomes will this recommendation generate?

This plan outlines foundational financial steps, core program enhancements that can proceed in parallel and overarching support mechanisms as outlined below.

9.1 Establish the Foundation: Financial Models

- **Action:** Convene a Financial Planning Workgroup to develop and implement standardized financial planning tools and budget frameworks for IAPs.
- **Action:** Clarify and document university policies and processes for IAP revenue sources (institutional funds, tuition models, grants, donations) and allocations.
- **Lead:** Provost's Office (Vice Provost for Budget and Business Operations)
- **Resource Impact:** Staff time; potential financial analysis support; policy review and documentation effort.
- **Success Metrics:** Workgroup convened. Standardized templates developed and approved. Policies clarified and associated process documents published/communicated.

9.2 Develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Documentation

- **Action:** Develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and associated documentation detailing key processes for IAPs (e.g., program proposal, MOU development, faculty engagement documentation, financial planning steps). Determine and establish the designated online location (likely within the central repository) for hosting these SOPs and related resources.
- **Lead:** OUIP/OASIS in consultation with Graduate School, colleges, and relevant administrative units.
- **Resource Impact:** Staff time for drafting, consultation, review, approval and web content management.

- **Success Metrics:** Key SOPs for core IAP processes developed, approved and accessible online via the central repository. Clear guidance communicated to stakeholders.

9.3 Implement Core Program Enhancements

These critical improvements should progress concurrently with financial foundational work to maximize impact and efficiency.

9.3.1 Governance and Administrative Structure

- **Action:** Communicate the roles and responsibilities of different IAP administrative support models.
- **Action:** Support IAPs in reviewing and drafting governance documents aligned with established best practices and university guidelines.
- **Lead:** Administrative Units (OUIP/OASIS, Graduate School, Colleges).
- **Partners:** Program directors, executive committees.
- **Resource Impact:** Staff time.
- **Success Metrics:** Documentation on roles and responsibilities distributed and reviewed with IAP leadership. Increase the number/percentage of IAPs with updated, compliant governance documents.

9.3.2 Program and Curriculum Innovation

- **Action:** Implement a best practice framework for launching new IAPs.
- **Action:** Implement a streamlined IAP curriculum review and approval process, ensuring consistency, equivalency and efficiency.
- **Action:** Support existing IAPs using committee guidance for self-assessment and continuous improvement.
- **Lead:** Administrative Units (OASIS, Graduate School, in partnership with the University Courses and Curricula Committee (UCCC)).
- **Resource Impact:** Staff time.
- **Success Metrics:** Documented streamlined curriculum review process implemented. New IAP proposals adhere to the established framework; required MOUs established efficiently. Evidence of existing IAPs completing self-assessments using guidance and implementing identified improvements.

9.3.3 Faculty Support and Recognition

- **Action:** Develop recommendations and propose revisions to integrate IAP contributions into faculty annual reviews, SFR and RPT procedures.
- **Action:** Develop and disseminate best practices for evaluating interdisciplinary faculty contributions.
- **Lead:** Office for Faculty Excellence (OFE).
- **Resource Impact:** Staff time.

- **Success Metrics:** Best practices document developed and distributed. Updated or supplementary RPT guidelines addressing IAP contributions published following appropriate faculty governance review.

9.3.4 Student Support and Experience

- **Action:** Work with relevant units to integrate IAP courses into degree pathways and ensure accurate visibility in Student Information System (SIS) tools (e.g., degree audits, course catalogs).
- **Lead:** Administrative Units (OASIS/OUIP, Graduate School, UCCC, Colleges, Registration and Records).
- **Resource Impact:** Staff time for coordination and potential SIS adjustments.
- **Success Metrics:** Improved accuracy and clarity of IAP course information in student planning tools and degree audits. Reduction in advising challenges related to IAP course identification and application.

9.3.5 Community Building and Resources

- **Action:** Launch an IAP Educator Community of Practice (CoP) to foster collaboration and sharing of best practices.
- **Lead:** Administrative Units (OFE, OUIP and OASIS).
- **Resource Impact:** Primarily staff time for coordination and facilitation.
- **Success Metrics:** Community established; regular meetings/events held; active participation and positive feedback from members.
- **Action:** Establish a central online repository for IAP best practices, guidelines, and resources.
- **Lead:** Administrative units (OFE, OUIP and OASIS).
- **Resource Impact:** Staff time for curation and maintenance; minor platform costs.
- **Success Metrics:** Repository established and populated; measurable utilization by faculty and staff; positive feedback on resource relevance and accessibility.

Appendices

Appendix A: Definitions and Scope of Interdisciplinary Academic Programs

For the scope of this report, "program" primarily refers to any structured university-level educational initiative that contributes to a broader academic credential, such as a degree or certificate. It may also include cross-college collaborations and supported initiatives that do not independently confer a credential, such as interdisciplinary courses (e.g., Wicked Problems, Wolfpack Solutions) and thematic initiatives (e.g., first-year programs, Integrative Sciences Initiative).

The term "interdisciplinary education" encompasses a wide range of approaches. While faculty may interpret such programs differently, students and employers prioritize relevance, skills, and outcomes over formal classifications. This report acknowledges the diversity of perspectives and the shared challenges in navigating them.

The following categories were identified through survey responses (See [Appendix J: Survey Instrument](#)) to move beyond definitions and focus on structures that support student learning and collaboration. In examining the successful implementation of interdisciplinary academic programs (IAPs), two key hallmarks emerge: curriculum integration and pedagogical innovation. We identified success factors as embedding interdisciplinarity directly into the curriculum structure and adopting innovative teaching and learning methods that build interdisciplinary skills, such as high-impact experience (HIEs), project-based learning (PBL), design thinking, and systems thinking. It is not a complete inventory but serves as a foundation for our analysis.

A.1 Interdisciplinary Graduate-Level Academic Programs

- **Interdisciplinary Graduate Degree Programs:** An interdisciplinary graduate degree integrates knowledge and methods from multiple fields to tackle complex topics. It includes cross-departmental coursework, co-advising and research that blends disciplines.
- **Interdisciplinary Certificate Programs:** Small size credential that provides focused, cross-disciplinary knowledge and skills in a specific topic area often aligned with industry needs or emerging research trends.
- **Interdisciplinary Graduate Minors:** Focused sets of courses allowing students pursuing a graduate degree in one field to gain structured exposure to an interdisciplinary theme or area.
- **Umbrella Fellowship Programs:** An umbrella fellowship often supports first-year Ph.D. students from diverse disciplines through both curricular and co-curricular experiences—such as core courses, mentoring, workshops and collaborative projects. It fosters interdisciplinary foundations before students join specific departments or labs.

A.2 Interdisciplinary Undergraduate-Level Programs

- **Interdisciplinary Majors:** Fully-developed degree programs where the curriculum is intentionally designed to integrate specific fields. Some are pre-structured, while others allow students significant flexibility in designing their own course of study with faculty guidance.
- **Interdisciplinary Minors:** Smaller, coherent sets of courses allowing students majoring in one field to gain structured exposure to an interdisciplinary theme or area.
- **Interdisciplinary Certificates:** Similar to minors, often focused on applied skills or specific professional areas drawing from multiple departments.
- **Thematic Course Clusters:** Groups of related courses drawn from different departments that students can take to fulfill general education or elective requirements around an interdisciplinary theme. *Examples: GEP Interdisciplinary Perspectives, GEP Thematic Track Option.*

A.3 Other Interdisciplinary Academic Programs / Initiatives (Spanning Levels or Co-curricular)

The survey also identified programs representing a distinct category that may operate across different educational levels or function as both curricular or co-curricular activities.

- **High-Impact Experiences (HIEs):** At NC State, HIEs are immersive, hands-on learning opportunities that promote deep learning through student engagement and real-world application, fostering skills like reflection, mentorship and collaboration. NC State's 2024-2029 Quality Enhancement Plan, *Packways: Learning by Doing*, references five types of student engagement through HIEs: early cohort, professional, scholarly, community and global. Many of these HIEs are forms of interdisciplinary education opportunities at the undergraduate level.
- **First-Year Experiences:** Designed to introduce students early to interdisciplinary thinking, often theme-based and focused on developing critical inquiry and communication skills within a broad context. First-Year Experiences often qualify as HIEs. *Examples: Environmental First Year (EnvFY), Wicked Problems, Wolfpack Solutions (WPWS), Life Sciences First Year.*
- **Fellowships:** Typically selective programs offering specialized opportunities, often with financial support or stipends. They focus on developing advanced skills, research capabilities, or expertise in a specific interdisciplinary area. The purpose of fellowships is often to cultivate future leaders, researchers or practitioners in the field. Activities often involve mentorship, dedicated seminars, cohort-based learning, project work and sometimes travel or fieldwork. They usually supplement a degree program rather than being degree programs themselves. *Example: Global One Health Fellows program.*
- **Leadership Programs:** Programs specifically designed to cultivate leadership competencies, ethical awareness, and practical skills to equip participants with the knowledge and abilities to lead initiatives and drive change. Common elements include workshops, guest lectures from established leaders, mentorship, team-based projects, case studies, and experiential learning activities. They may be co-curricular or extra-curricular

and might not always offer formal academic credit. Leadership programs often qualify as HIEs. *Examples: KIETS Climate Leaders Program (CLP), Shelton Leadership Center programs*

- **Center-Based Education:** Educational activities linked directly to the research, resources, and expertise of a specific university research center or institute. They aim to translate the center's specialized knowledge and research findings into educational experiences, often focusing on cutting-edge topics or methodologies. Educational activities range widely, including hosting seminars, workshops, summer research programs for students (like REUs), developing curriculum modules for existing courses or providing unique internship opportunities related to the center's mission. *Example: STEPS Center educational programs.*
- **Problem-Focused (Theme-Focused) Initiatives:** Interdisciplinary efforts often focusing on addressing a particular contemporary challenge, opportunity or strategic goal, mobilizing resources and expertise (research, education, engagement) around a defined theme or problem. Educational aspects include developing new courses related to the initiative, hosting symposia or public forums, funding student research projects within the theme, or creating experiential learning opportunities connected to the initiative's goals. *Examples: Blue Economy Innovation Program, Coastal Resilience and Sustainability Initiative.*
- **Outreach / Professional Development:** Programs extending university resources and knowledge to audiences beyond traditional, matriculated university students, such as K-12 or working professionals. Activities include workshops, non-degree credential programs, short courses or summer camps. *Example: Data Science and AI Academy K-12 programs.*

Focus of Report: For the purpose of this committee report, the primary focus is to address the governance, administrative structures, curriculum design, faculty engagement, financial models and program development processes specifically for graduate and undergraduate interdisciplinary academic programs. While programs categorized as 'Other Programs/Initiatives' (which may span levels or be co-curricular) are acknowledged, a detailed analysis of their operational models is not the central aim of this report, although the guidelines and best practices discussed may certainly hold relevance for these initiatives.

Appendix B: Interdisciplinary Program Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Template

For detailed background, guidelines, and best practices related to specific sections of this MOU template, please refer to:

- [Appendix C: Governance and Administrative Frameworks](#)
- [Appendix D: Faculty Engagement, Support and Incentives](#)
- [Appendix E: Strategic Financial Planning Guidelines for IAPs](#)
- [Appendix F: Financial Planning Worksheet](#)

Purpose and Scope of this MOU

- **Purpose:** This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) establishes the administrative, financial, and governance framework for the [Insert Program Name] interdisciplinary program at NC State University. It outlines the commitments, roles, responsibilities and operational procedures agreed upon by the participating academic units (colleges, departments) and administrative offices to ensure the program's success and sustainability.
- **Intended Audience:** This document is intended for deans, department heads, program directors, faculty, and relevant administrative staff involved in the [Insert Program Name] program.
- **Usage Guidelines:** This template serves as the formal agreement guiding the collaboration. It should be completed collaboratively by representatives from all participating units and reviewed periodically as specified herein. Issues not explicitly addressed will be resolved through mutual agreement of the signatories.
- **Relation to Program Proposal/Review:** This MOU complements the detailed academic mission, vision, curriculum and learning outcomes documented in the official Program Proposal (for new programs) or the Self-Study document (for existing programs undergoing review).

1. Program Information

- **Official Program Name:** [Insert Program Name]
- **Program Level:** [e.g., Undergraduate Certificate, Graduate Minor, Undergraduate Major, Master's Degree, PhD Program, Non-Degree Initiative]
- **Participating Colleges/Departments:** [List all Colleges and Departments formally participating]
- **Coordinating/Administrative Home:** [Specify the primary administrative unit: e.g., Provost Office (Office of University Interdisciplinary Programs(OUIP)/Office of Instructional Programs (OASIS), Graduate School, Lead College Name]
- **MOU Effective Duration:** From [Start Date] to [End Date] (e.g., 3-5 years)
- **Scheduled MOU Review/Renewal Date:** [Insert Date - Recommend review begins 6 months prior to End Date]

2. Governance Structure

2.1 Governing Body

- **Composition:** This body provides strategic oversight. Membership shall include: deans (or their designees) of all participating colleges, representatives from the Provost's Office administrative units (Senior Vice Provost for University Interdisciplinary Programs and/or Senior Vice Provost for Academic Strategy and Innovation), dean of the Graduate School (or designee, for graduate programs), and the Program Director (ex-officio)
- **Responsibilities:** Provide strategic oversight aligning the program with university goals; facilitate resource sharing; formally approve MOUs and significant revisions; conduct regular high-level assessments of program progress and impact; appoint the Executive Committee.
- **Meeting Frequency:** [e.g., Annually, Biannually]

2.2 Executive Committee

- **Composition:** Appointed by the Governing Body. Includes the Program Director (chair), program faculty representatives and relevant administrators from participating colleges/departments.
- **Responsibilities:** Provide strategic guidance for program implementation; address cross-departmental challenges; oversee operational planning; review annual reports and metrics; advise on budget and resource allocation; appoint Curriculum Committee members.
- **Meeting Frequency:** [e.g., At least once per semester]

2.3 Program Director

- **Appointment:** Selected by [Describe selection process, e.g., a committee co-chaired by Deans of participating Faculties]. Reports to [Specify reporting line, e.g., Dean of Coordinating Faculty/Admin Home, relevant SVP].
- **Term:** [Specify term length, e.g., 3-5 years] and renewal process.
- **Responsibilities:** Manage daily operations (budgeting, scheduling, faculty coordination); serve as primary liaison between program, faculty, students, administrative home and participating units; lead program planning and implementation; oversee student recruitment and admissions (as applicable); facilitate communication; prepare annual reports; chair relevant committees; ensure adherence to MOU terms.
- **Compensation/Support (If applicable):** [Describe any stipend, course release, or administrative support provided]. (*Terms of Reference may be appended*)

2.4 Curriculum Committee

- **Composition:** Appointed by the Executive Committee. Includes faculty representatives from each participating college/department involved in the curriculum. Chaired by the Program Director or a designated faculty lead.
- **Responsibilities:** Oversee curriculum development, revision, and delivery; maintain academic rigor and interdisciplinary integration; ensure alignment with learning outcomes; manage the program-level curriculum review and approval process before submission to university committees; coordinate course scheduling where applicable.
- **Meeting Frequency:** [e.g., As needed, minimum once per semester]

2.5 Role of the Home Department Heads

- **Responsibilities:** Serving as the signatory on MOUs representing departmental commitment; endorsing faculty participation in IAPs; ensuring accurate documentation of faculty IAP effort and contributions in SFRs; incorporating formal input from the IAP Program Director into faculty annual reviews and RPT processes; participating in strategic meetings during program development regarding departmental resource commitments (faculty effort, etc.); managing the faculty member's academic home processes.

3. Administrative Home and Support

- **Designated Administrative Home:** [Reiterate the chosen Administrative Home: OUIP/OASIS, Graduate School, or Lead College Name]
- **Rationale for Choice:** [Briefly explain why this unit is the appropriate home]
- **Responsibilities of Administrative Home:**
 - **Administrative/Staff Support:** Provide necessary administrative infrastructure and staff support for program operations.
 - **Financial Oversight:** Support budget development and management; process financial transactions; ensure effective use of funds.
 - **Curriculum Management Support:** Facilitate program curriculum approval process in alignment with university curriculum procedure.
 - **Student Services Coordination:** Collaborate with colleges and departments to ensure adequate resources for advising and access to student support services.
 - **Faculty Coordination Support:** Assist Program Director in coordinating faculty assignments and facilitating MOU development for faculty effort.
 - **Degree Conferral (if applicable):** [Specify the college conferring the degree, often tied to the admin home].

4. Faculty Engagement, Support, and Recognition

4.1 Leadership Endorsement

Participating department heads and college deans endorse the importance of faculty participation in the [Insert Program Name] interdisciplinary program. They agree to support faculty engagement in alignment with the university's strategic goals for interdisciplinarity.

4.2 Adherence to Guidelines

All parties agree that faculty time, effort, responsibilities, evaluation, recognition (including SFR documentation and input for annual/RPT reviews), and any associated compensation (buyouts, stipends) related to participation in this program will adhere to the principles and guidelines established in the Interdisciplinary Academic Programs Collaboration Advisory Committee Report and its associated appendices.

4.3 Specific Arrangements

Detailed arrangements for individual faculty contributions, effort commitments, and financial support (if applicable) will be documented separately (e.g., via addenda, appointment letters, or specific faculty assignment MOUs) based on the aforementioned university guidelines and agreed upon by the faculty member, Program Director, home department head, and relevant dean(s) prior to the commitment.

5. Financial Model and Sustainability

5.1 Budgetary Responsibility

The Program Director, in collaboration with the Executive Committee and the Administrative Home, is responsible for developing and managing the program's annual budget. A detailed budget projection using the university's standard format (e.g., Financial Planning Sheet) must be maintained and reviewed annually.

5.2 Revenue Sources

The program anticipates funding from the following sources (check/detail all that apply):

- Institutional Base Funding: [Specify amount/source, e.g., Provost's Office, Participating Colleges]
- State Appropriations/Tuition Revenue (via Budget Model): [Describe allocation mechanism]
- Differential Tuition/Program Fees: [Specify details if applicable]
- External Grants (Research, Training): [Specify details if applicable]
- Philanthropic Donations/Endowments: [Specify details if applicable]
- Other: [Specify]

5.3 Expense Categories

The budget will cover direct program operating costs, including but not limited to:

- Instructional Costs (faculty buyouts/stipends, TAs, course materials)
- Student Support (assistantships, scholarships, awards, travel)
- Administrative Costs (staff support, supplies, IT, communications and marketing, events)
- Indirect Administrative Costs (If applicable, charged by Administrative Home/coordinating faculty, specify nature and calculation)

5.4 Financial Reporting

The Program Director will provide an annual financial report to the Executive Committee and Governing Body, detailing revenues, expenditures, and surplus/deficit status.

6. Facilities and Space Management

- **Faculty Offices/Labs:** Primary office and lab space for participating faculty remains the responsibility of their respective home departments/colleges.
- **Program Space:** [Describe any dedicated or shared space allocated for program administration, teaching, meetings, or collaborative activities, and specify which unit provides/manages it].

7. External Grant Funding and Indirect Costs (If Applicable)

- **Grant Management:** Grants naming an IAP faculty member as PI will typically be managed through the PI's home department/college.
- **Indirect Cost (F&A) Allocation:**
 - **Default:** F&A costs recovered will typically be credited according to standard university and home department/college policy.
 - **Program-Specific Allocation (Optional):** For grants directly supporting the IAP's activities (e.g., training grants), an alternative F&A allocation may be negotiated prior to grant submission and documented here or in an addendum. [Specify agreed percentage/amount of F&A to be directed to the IAP account to support program sustainability, if applicable].

8. Signatures

The undersigned acknowledge their agreement to the terms outlined in this Memorandum of Understanding.

Program Director:

_____ Date: _____
[Printed Name]

Head, Department of [Dept 1 Name]:
_____ Date: _____
[Printed Name]

Head, Department of [Dept 2 Name]:
_____ Date: _____
[Printed Name]
(Add lines for all participating Department Heads)

Dean, College of [College 1 Name]:
_____ Date: _____
[Printed Name]

Dean, College of [College 2 Name]:
_____ Date: _____
[Printed Name]
(Add lines for all participating College Deans)

Dean, The Graduate School (if applicable):
_____ Date: _____
[Printed Name]

Senior Vice Provost, [Title of Relevant Representative, e.g., OUIP or OASIS]:
_____ Date: _____
[Printed Name]
(Add signature for other if required by Admin Home structure)

Appendix C: Governance and Administrative Frameworks

Effective governance is critical to the success and long-term sustainability of Interdisciplinary Academic Programs (IAPs). It ensures that program structures, leadership and resource allocation are aligned with institutional priorities and the program's explicit goals. These goals must be articulated, consistently communicated and reflect the university's mission.

Designing the right administrative structure involves trade-offs. Centralized models offer efficiency, visibility, and strong top-down support to overcome institutional silos. However, they must be intentionally designed to enable deep disciplinary integration and foster faculty ownership, often better supported through coordinated departmental collaboration. The optimal governance structure is context-dependent. It should reflect institutional culture, leadership capacity and the specific objectives of each program. Regardless of the model, ambiguity in governance, whether in roles, responsibilities, reporting lines, or funding structures, undermines program effectiveness and sustainability.

To support this, the committee proposes the following guidelines for governance roles and structures. These recommendations aim to ensure consistency, clarity, and sustainability across all interdisciplinary academic programs, while honoring the diverse approaches and strengths within our academic community.

C.1 Core Governance Components and Responsibilities

C.1.1 Governing Body Responsibilities

- **Composition:** Includes deans (or their designees) of participating colleges, SVP of OUIP and/or SVP of OASIS, the dean of the Graduate School or designee (for graduate programs), and the Program Director.
- **Aims:**
 - Provides strategic oversight, aligning interdisciplinary academic programs with the university's mission and strategic goals.
 - Facilitates resource sharing and formalizes Memorandums of Agreement (MOAs/MOUs) to clarify roles, responsibilities, and financial commitments.
 - Conducts regular assessments of program progress and impact, using data-driven insights to ensure continuous improvement.
 - Appoints the Executive Committee to oversee program implementation and cross-departmental collaboration.

C.1.2 Program-Level Executive and Curriculum Committees

- **Executive Committee:**
 - Appointed by the Governing Body, the committee includes program faculty and administrative leaders from participating colleges.

- Offers strategic guidance, addresses cross-departmental challenges, and ensures balanced representation in decision-making.
- **Curriculum Committee:**
 - Includes faculty from each participating college that the Executive Committee appoints.
 - Oversees curriculum development, maintaining academic rigor and integration of interdisciplinary content.
 - Streamlines curriculum approval processes, reducing delays and maintaining program agility.

C.1.3 Program Director

- The Program Director role aligns with graduate and undergraduate program directors, varying by program scope and vision.
- Responsibilities include managing daily operations, budgeting, scheduling and faculty coordination.
- The Program Director serves as the primary liaison who ensures collaboration and facilitates effective communication and streamlined administrative processes to enhance efficiency and minimize bureaucratic barriers.
- Titles may differ based on program structure. Should an alternative title be used, both the specific title and the associated responsibilities should be clearly defined in the MOU.

C.1.4 Heads of Home Departments

- Serving as the signatory on MOUs representing departmental commitment.
- Endorsing faculty participation in IAPs.
- Ensuring accurate documentation of faculty IAP effort and contributions in SFRs.
- Incorporating formal input from the IAP Program Director into faculty annual reviews and RPT processes.
- Participating in strategic meetings during program development regarding departmental resource commitments (faculty effort, etc.).
- Managing the faculty member's academic home processes.

C.1.5 Program Faculty

- Faculty participation in the IAP can take various forms, ranging from direct teaching contributions to deeper engagement in curriculum development, mentoring and governance.
- Faculty appointments will remain in their home departments for RPT.
- The time and effort dedicated to the IAP should be discussed and agreed upon among the faculty member, the IAP leadership, and the home department, with clear documentation in the SFR, annual review and the RPT process.
- Their involvement should align with defined expectations, including appropriate buyout arrangements, effort recognition and formalized agreements through an MOU when necessary.

C.2 Administrative Homes and Support Models

Building upon the foundational principles outlined in the report, the centralized administrative support models for interdisciplinary academic programs ensure structured governance for curriculum development, financial sustainability and faculty collaboration while ensuring faculty remain connected to their academic home. Faculty appointments will stay within their home departments, preserving their academic identity and faculty academic processes (i.e., RPT, SFR, annual reviews). This structure supports interdisciplinary engagement without altering primary departmental affiliations, reinforcing the importance of maintaining strong connections between faculty and their home departments. Collectively, these models provide flexible yet structured approaches to supporting interdisciplinary education at the university level.

C.2.1 Office of University Interdisciplinary Programs and Office of Academic Strategy, Innovation and Solutions

- The Office of University Interdisciplinary Programs (OUIP) and the Office of Academic Strategy, Innovation, and Solutions (OASIS) play a critical role in fostering interdisciplinary education and building key institutional capacities at NC State. They serve three distinct but complementary functions:
 - **Strategic Capacity Builder:** OUIP/OASIS plays a key role in developing and supporting strategic interdisciplinary academic initiatives (e.g., Global One Health, Integrative Sciences, Data Science and AI) that leverage NC State's strengths and contribute to the university's mission.
 - **Incubator:** OUIP/OASIS propels interdisciplinary innovation by incubating new initiatives, providing seed funding, consultation, and administrative support. Nascent programs may transition to other administrative organizations (colleges, Graduate School) if they demonstrate potential for formal degrees.
 - **Administrative Home for Large-Scale Non-Degree Initiatives:** OUIP/OASIS serves as the centralized hub for established, large-scale, non-degree programs (e.g., interdisciplinary academies, certificate programs) benefiting from centralized resources, coordination and quality focus.

C.2.2 Graduate School (Graduate Program Model)

- The Graduate School provides the administrative home for established interdisciplinary graduate programs, leveraging its specialized expertise.
- It facilitates curriculum development, ensuring coherence across disciplines.
- The Graduate School offers resources for graduate professional development, enhancing cross-disciplinary skills.
- The school plays a key role in graduate program admissions and branding.
- Its focus on the graduate student experience and specific administrative needs (thesis/dissertation oversight, funding) makes it ideal for interdisciplinary graduate programs.

C.2.3 Leading College (Undergraduate Degree Programs)

- For interdisciplinary undergraduate degree programs, the appropriate administrative home is typically within a college, especially for programs matured into recognized disciplines with strong roots in a specific college.
- Unlike graduate programs, undergraduate programs often have a more direct connection to a specific disciplinary base.
- This model allows programs to benefit from existing college infrastructure for undergraduate education (advising, curriculum management, resource allocation).
- While this model has presented challenges, it remains viable when one college has made significant investments and possesses necessary resources.

Given the evolving nature of IAP, academic and administrative units should function as an interconnected ecosystem rather than rigid structures, with administrative models adapting through periodic program reviews. Existing programs should use the proposed guidelines to assess whether an alternative structure would be more beneficial. If the current model proves effective, programs may continue with their existing approach.

Appendix D: Faculty Engagement, Support and Incentives

Advancing Interdisciplinary Academic Programs (IAPs) requires more than structural alignment. It demands a cultural and systemic shift in how faculty contributions are valued and supported. Clear roles, recognition in academic reviews, meaningful incentives, and opportunities for professional development are essential to sustaining faculty engagement. This appendix outlines key recommendations to better support, incentivize, and recognize faculty contributions to interdisciplinary education.

D.1 Academic Home

All faculty participating in interdisciplinary academic programs retain their academic home. This academic home manages faculty academic processes (e.g., Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure (RPT); Statement of Faculty Responsibilities (SFR); annual reviews).

D.2 Levels of Faculty Involvement

Distinct levels of faculty participation should be defined to clarify roles and expectations:

- **Instructional Faculty:** Faculty who teach courses directly within the interdisciplinary education program.
 - *Key Activities:* Delivering instruction for IAP courses; limited involvement beyond teaching.
 - *Time/Effort:* Aligned with standard teaching load; calculated based on percentage of full-time load per course.
- **Core “Program” Faculty:** Faculty who actively participate through mentoring, advising, and curriculum development; hold formal status within the IAP (e.g., graduate faculty status) and contribute substantially to strategic initiatives.
 - *Key Activities:* Leading curriculum design/revision; mentoring/advising IAP students; serving on program governance committees.
 - *Time/Effort:* Mirrors expectations with similar responsibility in the home department.
- **Engaged Faculty:** Faculty who make less formal contributions (mentoring, guest lectures, project collaboration).
 - *Key Activities:* Mentoring students on research/projects; occasional teaching/guest lecturing; supporting IAP goals informally.
 - *Time/Effort:* Calculated based on specific contributions.

D.3 Evaluation and Recognition

- **SFR Inclusion:** All levels of engagement with the IAP should be clearly documented in the faculty member’s SFR to ensure appropriate recognition in annual reviews and RPT processes.
- **Annual Review and RPT Input:** Implement an evaluation process where interdisciplinary contributions are formally reviewed. Input from the Program Director should be formally

solicited and integrated into the faculty member's home department annual performance evaluation and promotion and tenure reviews to fully recognize these contributions.

- **Best Practices:** Develop and disseminate best practices for evaluating interdisciplinary faculty contributions.

D.4 Faculty Incentives

To encourage and sustain faculty participation, consider providing:

- Course buyouts, teaching credits, or stipends for faculty engaged in interdisciplinary teaching, mentoring, or program leadership.
- Research funding or seed grants to encourage interdisciplinary collaboration and support innovative projects.
- Establishment of a formal recognition program (e.g., awards) for outstanding contributions to interdisciplinary academic programs.

D.5 IAP Educator Community of Practice

The Office for Faculty Excellence (OFE), Office of University Interdisciplinary Programs (OUIP), and Office of Academic Strategy, Innovation, and Solutions(OASIS) should actively engage with IAPs to foster awareness and implementation of best practices for interdisciplinary teaching and faculty development. Strategies could include hosting seminars, supporting collaborative course/curricular development workshops, showcasing successes, creating TA/learning assistant development opportunities, maintaining communication channels, and integrating relevant Quality Enhancement Plan aspects.

Appendix E: Strategic Financial Planning Guidelines for IAPs

Note: While these guidelines provide a foundation for financial planning at the program level, they do not specify detailed institutional models for strategic budget allocation between IAPs and participating academic units. The committee acknowledges that greater clarity on institutional models is needed and sees this as a critical next step during implementation to ensure shared understanding and avoid perceptions of inequity.

A transparent, comprehensive, and sustainable financial plan is required for the approval and continuation of all IAPs. This aligns with institutional expectations for fiscal responsibility, mirrors financial planning processes necessary for traditional new degree programs, and ensures that program leadership and participating faculty understand the full scope of operational, instructional and student-support costs necessary to establish and sustain the IAP. Each IAP's financial plan and budget must be developed collaboratively by the Program Director, the Executive Committee and the relevant administrative units (e.g., OUIP/OASIS, Graduate School), ensuring clear revenue-sharing agreements and a defined approach to managing costs across units.

E.1 Building a Sustainable Financial Framework

All IAPs should develop and maintain a comprehensive financial plan using the standardized template provided in [Appendix F: Financial Planning Worksheet](#). This process will be facilitated by the designated administrative home (e.g., Graduate School, OASIS). The Financial Planning Worksheet mandates the detailed projection of key budgetary components, including:

- **Operational Costs:** Administrative support, program activities (seminars, workshops, networking events), office supplies, IT support, marketing and advertising expenses.
- **Instructional Costs:** Faculty compensation (including course buyouts and stipends), software licenses, lab expenses, Teaching Assistantships (TAs), and equipment required for program delivery.
- **Student Support:** Graduate assistantships (GAs), scholarships, awards, travel support, and financial aid for undergraduate and non-degree students.

The budget for each program is managed by the Program Director in collaboration with the centralized administrative unit, ensuring transparency and effective use of funds.

E.2 Revenue Sources and Allocation

The financial plan should identify and project the mix of funding sources anticipated to ensure sustainability. Potential sources to detail include:

- **Institutional Funding:** Base funding commitments from the Provost's Office and participating colleges, specifying coverage (e.g., core operations, startup costs).

- **State Appropriations and Tuition Revenue:** Projections based on anticipated state funding allocations and tuition models generated through the university budget model. Programs proposing premium or differential tuition should use the approved business plan to detail how surplus revenue supports program costs and faculty/student support.
- **Grants and External Funding:** Projected revenue from external grants (research, training). The plan must specify how indirect costs (F&A) will be allocated, potentially directing a portion from IAP-specific grants back to the program via MOU.
- **Donor Contributions and Endowments:** Philanthropic donations and endowment funds can provide long-term financial stability, supporting scholarships, faculty chairs (including Professorships of Distinction), and special program initiatives. Coordination with the university's development office ensures alignment with donor interests and strategic priorities.

E.3 Credit Hour Allocation and Tracking

The allocation of credit hours (CH) is a critical element in financial planning for interdisciplinary academic programs, impacting revenue distribution via the budget model. CH allocation can be managed in two primary ways:

- **Enrollment in Participating Academic Units:** Students enroll directly in courses offered by participating departments. The credit hours are allocated to those units through standard processes, ensuring departmental recognition and financial attribution for contributing faculty.
- **Enrollment in IAP-Prefix Courses:** For courses using a dedicated IAP prefix, credit hours are tracked centrally by the administrative home (e.g., Graduate School, OUIP, OASIS). A mechanism must be established (typically via MOU) to ensure these credit hours are appropriately credited back to the faculty's home department for budget model and faculty activity reporting purposes. This approach ensures transparency, faculty recognition and equitable budget impacts.

E.4 Financial Reporting and Oversight

To maintain financial transparency and accountability, interdisciplinary academic programs should implement the following practices:

- **Regular Financial Reviews:** The Program Director, in collaboration with the Executive Committee, conducts annual financial reviews, assessing the budget against actuals, revenue sources and expenditure patterns. Adjustments are made as needed to align with program goals and changing financial resources/landscapes.
- **Clear MOUs for Resource Sharing:** Establish detailed MOUs between the administrative home and participating colleges/departments. These MOUs must outline financial commitments, resource sharing agreements (including cost-sharing for shared personnel or activities) and credit hour tracking/attribution procedures.

- **Facilities and Space Management:** Faculty office space, lab access and research facilities typically remain the responsibility of the home departments of participating faculty. Collaborative workspaces and shared facilities may be used for program activities, enhancing flexibility and reducing overhead costs. Any costs associated with shared program space should be included in the program budget and addressed in the MOU.

E.5 External Grant Funding and Indirect Costs (If Applicable)

- **Grant Management:** The allocation of indirect costs (F&A) from external grants should be clearly defined in the MOU *before* grant submission.
- **F&A Allocation:** Typically, F&A costs are credited to the principal investigator's (PI) home college/department according to standard policy. However, for interdisciplinary training grants or program-specific grants integral to the IAP's mission, the MOU may specify that an agreed-upon percentage of the recovered F&A costs be allocated directly to the interdisciplinary program's account, supporting its operational costs and long-term financial sustainability.
- **Negotiating F&A Returns:** The Program Director should collaborate with PIs, home departments, and the administrative home during grant proposal development to negotiate and document any agreed-upon F&A returns earmarked for program support.

Appendix F: Financial Planning Worksheet

Instructions: This financial planning sheet is designed to guide faculty and program proposers in developing a comprehensive financial plan for Interdisciplinary Academic Programs (IAPs), consistent with the guidelines in the report on IAPs (See [Appendix E: Strategic Financial Planning Guidelines for IAPs](#) for details). It includes key sections for identifying financial needs, revenue sources, impact metrics and assessing alignment with institutional priorities. Consult with your college financial officer and the relevant central administrative unit (OUIP/OASIS, Graduate School) during development.

F.1 Major Financial Needs (Direct Costs)

List the anticipated direct costs associated with starting and sustaining the program over a 3-5 year period. Provide estimated annual costs.

- **Instructional Costs:**
 - Faculty Compensation (e.g., % effort buyouts based on home department rates, stipends for specific roles): [Estimate \$]
 - Graduate Teaching Assistants (Number, stipend level, tuition/fees): [Estimate \$]
 - Software, Specialized Lab Equipment, Licenses (Specific to program delivery): [Estimate \$]
 - Course Development (e.g., significant new curriculum materials, external expertise): [Estimate \$]
 - Other Instructional: [Specify and Estimate \$]
- **Student Support:**
 - Scholarships / Fellowships (Undergraduate/Graduate): [Estimate \$]
 - Graduate Student Assistantships (GAs - Number, stipend level, tuition/fees, benefits): [Estimate \$]
 - Student Travel/Research Support: [Estimate \$]
 - Other Student Financial Support: [Specify and Estimate \$]
- **Infrastructure:**
 - Physical Space Needs (If dedicated space beyond home depts is required - renovations, specific furnishings): [Estimate \$]
 - Technology Support (Hardware/software beyond standard university provisions): [Estimate \$]
 - Facility Upgrades/Maintenance (Specific to program needs): [Estimate \$]
- **Operational Costs:**
 - Administrative Support (e.g., % effort for program coordinator/staff): [Estimate \$]
 - Office Supplies & Standard Equipment: [Estimate \$]
 - Communication, Marketing and Advertising: [Estimate \$]
 - Event Costs (e.g., workshops, seminars, advisory board meetings): [Estimate \$]
 - Other Operational: [Specify and Estimate \$]
- **Other Costs:**

- Travel Funds (Faculty program-related travel, e.g., recruitment, partnerships): [Estimate \$]
- Accreditation or Regulatory Fees (If applicable): [Estimate \$]
- Professional Development (Specific to IAP faculty/staff needs): [Estimate \$]

F.2 Institutional Costs

IAP programs utilize central university resources and infrastructure. These institutional costs must be considered. To account for the broader costs of developing and implementing a new program (e.g., overhead, administrative support, utilities), estimate institutional costs as 50% of the total direct costs. This percentage ensures that the university's resource investments are properly reflected in the financial plan.

Example Calculation:

Total Direct Costs: \$1,000,000
 Institutional Costs (50%): \$500,000
 Total Program Costs (Direct + Institutional): \$1,500,000

F.3 Revenue Sources

Identify all potential sources of income projected over a three- to five-year period.

Tuition Revenue: Estimating the actual net tuition revenue impact of an IAP requires careful analysis beyond simply multiplying projected enrollment by tuition rates. Some IAPs may primarily involve students shifting existing credit hours rather than generating entirely new institutional enrollment, potentially resulting in minimal new net tuition revenue. Accurately projecting the net financial impact attributed to tuition requires understanding the university budget model and factors like program type, student residency, relationship to existing programs and potential SCH substitution effects. Therefore, consultation with the relevant college budget/finance office and the provost office during development is critical to develop realistic estimates. Document the assumptions made based on these consultations.

- **Projected Net Tuition Revenue Attributable to Program:**
 - Projected Enrollment (Annual FTEs - Undergrad/Grad): [Estimate #]
 - Applicable Tuition Rates (Standard, Differential): [Specify]
 - Projected Gross Tuition Income: [Estimate \$]
- **Grants and Contracts:**
 - Specific Funding Opportunities Targeted (Federal, State, Foundation): [List]
 - Projected Grant Revenue (Direct Costs to Program): [Estimate \$]
 - Projected F&A Recovery (Associated with Grants): [Estimate \$]
 - Industry Partnerships/Contracts: [Specify and Estimate \$]
- **Donor Contributions:**
 - Projected Philanthropic Donations (Specify purpose, e.g., setup, scholarships, professorships): [Estimate \$]

- Projected Endowment Payouts (If applicable): [Estimate \$]
- **Institutional Support:**
 - Committed Seed Funding (Source: Provost/College/Dept, Duration): [Specify \$]
 - Committed Reallocated Funds (Source: Unit, Duration): [Specify \$]
- **Other Revenue:** [Estimate \$]

F.4 Credit Hour Allocation Mechanism

See Appendix [E.3 Credit Hour Allocation and Tracking](#).

Describe the planned mechanism for tracking student credit hours (SCH) generated by the program and ensuring appropriate attribution/crediting to participating faculty home departments/colleges, especially for courses using an IAP prefix. [Describe mechanism]

F.5 Financial Sustainability Assessment

- **Cost vs. Revenue Projections:** Provide a three- to five-year financial forecast table comparing total projected expenses (Direct + Institutional/Indirect) with total projected revenues.
- **Break-Even Analysis:** Based on the forecast, estimate when the program is projected to achieve financial self-sufficiency (revenue matching/exceeding costs), if applicable.
- **Contingency Planning:** Outline strategies if enrollment or revenue targets are not met (e.g., scaling options, alternative funding).

F.6 Impact Metrics

Describe the anticipated broader impacts of the program.

- **Enrollment and Credit Hours:**
 - Target Student Enrollment per Year (Steady state): [Estimate #]
 - Projected Annual SCH Production (Undergrad/Grad): [Estimate #]
- **Institutional Priorities:**
 - Alignment: How does the program align with specific NC State strategic goals [Describe]
 - Reputation/Contribution: How might the program enhance university reputation, rankings, or research profile? [Describe]
- **Research Impact:**
 - Collaboration: How will the program foster new interdisciplinary research? [Describe]
 - Outputs: Anticipated publications, grant applications, patents, etc.? [Describe]
- **Community and Industry Impact:**
 - Workforce/Societal Needs: Does the program address specific needs? [Describe]
 - Partnerships: Opportunities for industry, non-profit, or public engagement? [Describe]

- **Student Outcomes:**
 - Anticipated graduate employment, career advancement, or further education pathways. [Describe]
 - Contribution to alumni networks. [Describe]

F.7 Reporting and Evaluation Framework

Outline the plan for monitoring and evaluating the program's financial health and overall success.

- **Annual Financial Reporting:** Commitment to preparing annual reports comparing budget vs. actuals, tracking revenues, SCH and enrollment.
- **Impact Assessment Plan:** How will the program track and assess its contribution to institutional goals, research productivity and student success over time? (Include plans for collecting student/faculty/stakeholder feedback).
- **Program Review:** Acknowledge requirement for periodic comprehensive program review per university guidelines covering financial health, academic quality and impact.

F.8 Formalization in MOU

Acknowledge that key financial commitments, cost-sharing agreements, revenue/surplus sharing methods, F&A allocations for IAP grants, and credit hour attribution mechanisms identified in this plan should be formally documented and agreed upon in the official program MOU ([Appendix B](#)) signed by all participating units.

F.9 Summary Narrative

Provide a brief narrative summarizing the overall financial strategy, the case for investment, alignment with university priorities and the path to sustainability.

Appendix G: Best Practices in Program Development and Continuous Improvement

This appendix outlines key best practices for the lifecycle of Interdisciplinary Academic Programs (IAPs), from initial development through ongoing operation and enhancement. These practices emphasize structured planning, stakeholder engagement, clear documentation and continuous improvement.

While the principles discussed may be relevant to various [interdisciplinary academic initiatives](#), the detailed procedural frameworks presented here are primarily designed for and most applicable to IAPs proposing formal academic credentials, such as degrees or certificates, which require navigating full institutional approval processes.

G.1 Designing, Developing and Proposing New IAPs

The process for launching a new IAP should be well-structured, ensuring clear planning, strong stakeholder engagement and streamlined approval. Below is a simplified, best practice framework:

Phase 1: Initial Planning and Pre-Proposal Development for a new IAP

Step 1: Pre-Proposal Coordination Meeting

- Engage key stakeholders early, including faculty, deans of participating colleges, representatives from either the Graduate School or the Office of Undergraduate Courses, Curricula, and Academic Standards (OUCCAS), and representatives from the OUIP/OASIS.
- *Focus Areas:*
 - Review program guidelines and strategic goals;
 - Discuss target learner population (e.g., existing students, new students);
 - Assess program viability and alignment with the Academic Master Plan;
 - Establish a timeline for proposal development and submission based on intended program launch;
 - Identify resource needs and sources of funding;
 - Present the program concept at the Council of Deans for feedback and early support; and
 - Identify faculty and FTE needs for the program.

Step 2: Founding Faculty Meeting

- The core group of faculty discusses curriculum design, new degree program proposal requirements (if applicable), and establishes a communication channel for collaboration.
- *Key Deliverables:*
 - Draft curriculum and learning outcomes;
 - Initial list of program faculty with proposed percentage effort;
 - Overview of required resources; and
 - New degree program proposal documents (if applicable).

Step 3: Strategic Meetings with Administrative Units

- Representatives from administrative units of the Provost's Office meet with deans to finalize financial and resource commitments.
- Deans (and representatives from the Graduate School and administrative units of the Provost's Office, if requested) meet with department heads of affiliated faculty to review commitments.
- *Considerations:*
 - Identify funding sources (e.g., institutional support, grants, differential tuition).
 - Identify percentage effort in SFR of each affiliated faculty member for discussion and negotiation with administrative units.
 - Confirm graduate assistantship allocations (where appropriate) and operational costs.
 - Agree on shared resources, such as lab space and administrative support.

Phase 2: Program Proposal and [MOU Development](#)

Step 1: Program Proposal Development

- The working group drafts the full proposal, including program goals, curriculum, staffing, program evaluation and budget.

Step 2: Discussion and Development of Administrative Needs

- Program faculty roles and responsibilities;
- Faculty workload determination, including all realms of faculty responsibility where effort contributes to the program;
- Faculty compensation calculation;
- Provision of student support services;
- Course access needs;
- Advertising, marketing and communication of the program;
- Graduation celebrations and acknowledgements; and
- Consideration should be given to governance structures (e.g., admissions committee, curriculum committees, expectations to become program faculty).

Step 3: Drafting and Signing MOUs

- Department heads from the home departments of participating faculty should develop and propose MOUs detailing roles and responsibilities, financial commitments, resource-sharing agreements, course access expectations, faculty workload determination, faculty compensation calculation and the Statement of Faculty Responsibilities (SFR) approvals.
- MOUs are signed by the department heads, deans and the OUIP/OASIS/Graduate School representative, establishing a formal framework for program development.

Phase 3: Program Launch

Step 1: Implementation Preparation and Onboarding

- Once approved, the Program Director will work with the Graduate School or appropriate offices in Enrollment Management and Services to update admissions applications, set up course schedules, establish student support services, develop the program website, implement marketing and communication plan and coordinate onboarding with relevant administrative units.
- The Program Director should also work with OFE to ensure faculty who will provide instruction in the IAP have the necessary credentials to do so.

Step 2: Formal Launch

- Upon launch of the program, the Program Director should execute the student recruitment plan, work with Records and Registration or the Graduate School to admit and matriculate new students, and continue to implement the marketing and communication plan.

Phase 4: Program Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

IAPs that lead to academic credentials will be reviewed as part of the institution's existing program review process. As part of the existing program review process, IAP program directors are encouraged to re-evaluate key areas, such as program viability, resource availability and constraints, as well as governance and administrative structures.

G.2 Continuous Improvement of Existing IAPs

NC State faculty and staff have been successful in both developing and implementing IAPs. Given their variability, unique challenges among existing IAPs may exist. In the spirit of continuous improvement, program directors are encouraged to utilize the entirety of this guidance document to strengthen existing IAPs. Program directors can apply one, some or all of the principles discussed throughout the document and make adjustments as needed. Listed below are considerations for just some of the critical principles.

- **Governance and administrative structures** (see [Appendix C: Governance and Administrative Frameworks](#))
 - Does the existing IAP have governance and administrative structures in place?
 - Are the current governance and administrative structures active? Are they effective for the current needs of the IAP?
 - Are MOUs in place that detail roles and responsibilities, financial commitments, resource-sharing agreements, course access expectations, faculty workload determination and faculty compensation calculation?
 - If the IAP could benefit from the implementation of revised governance and administrative structures, who should be consulted? Who should be notified? What is the timeline for implementation?
- **Operational excellence**
 - Does the existing IAP have a program director who manages the day-to-day operations of the IAP?
 - Which administrative role is responsible for conducting the program assessment?

- Is there a defined and consistent process for how program and curriculum actions are routed for review and approval?
- To which office does the IAP report (e.g., dean's office, Graduate School, OUIP/OASIS)?
- Does the reporting structure support the current and future needs of the IAP?
- **Faculty integration**
 - Are the faculty preparing for and progressing in rank?
 - Do the faculty have Interdisciplinary Review Plans in place for future promotion considerations?
 - Does the Program Director provide information to the department head to be used for the annual review process?
- **Program enrollment**
 - Has the IAP achieved its projected enrollment?
 - Which learner populations were the initial targets for the IAP?
 - Is an expansion (or contraction) of the target learner population needed?
- **Financial resources**
 - Is the IAP supported through grant funding or other external funding sources?
 - Has the IAP experienced financial resource constraints (e.g., expiration or non-renewal of external funding, reallocation of resources, budget cuts) or are resource constraints anticipated?
 - In the absence of new financial resources, is the IAP sustainable?

Appendix H: Interdisciplinary Curriculum Development, Approval and Innovation

Interdisciplinary curricula offer significant opportunities to align with evolving academic and professional needs. Developing IAP curricula that truly integrate knowledge across disciplines requires intentional design and thoughtful pedagogy. IAPs should define clear learning goals beyond mere exposure to multiple fields, emphasizing the ability to synthesize perspectives, methods and concepts from different disciplines to generate new insights or solutions. It also requires pedagogical approaches that guide students in making meaningful connections across domains. Clarifying and optimizing curriculum development and review processes is essential to support academic agility while maintaining integrity and rigor.

H.1 IAP Curriculum Review and Approval Process

To ensure efficiency while maintaining rigor equivalent to traditional programs, the following streamlined process is recommended for IAP curriculum review and approval:

Step 1: Program Curriculum Committee Review:

- This review is equivalent to a traditional department-level review.
- The IAP's Curriculum Committee (as defined in [Appendix C: Governance and Administrative Frameworks section C.1.2](#)) reviews proposals for academic quality, interdisciplinary integration, alignment with program goals, and feasibility.
- The committee must ensure appropriate interdisciplinary representation from participating units.

Step 2: Administrative Unit Review:

- This review is equivalent to a traditional college-level review.
- It is conducted by the designated Administrative Unit for the IAP:
 - OASIS/OUIP (for incubated initiatives and large-scale, non-degree programs).
 - Graduate School (for graduate degree programs).
 - Lead college (for undergraduate degree programs).
- This review focuses on governance alignment, resource implications, strategic fit and overall feasibility before the proposal moves forward in the standard university process.

Step 3: University Curriculum Approval Process:

- Following approval by the Administrative Unit, the curriculum proposal proceeds through the remaining steps of the established university curriculum approval process (e.g., UCCC, Graduate Council, etc.).
- These subsequent steps are identical for interdisciplinary academic programs and programs originating within colleges/departments, ensuring equitable and consistent treatment.

H.2 Consultation Process

Consultation with potentially overlapping or impacted programs/departments during curriculum development and review will follow the same criteria and established university processes used for programs originating within colleges. This ensures consistent and equitable review of all program proposals. Key elements like notification, review periods, communication, documentation and timelines defined in university policy should be adhered to.

University Consultation Guidelines

- [Consultation Guidelines for Graduate Course & Program Reviews](#)
- [Consultation Guidelines for Undergraduate Courses & Programs](#)

H.3 IAP-Specific Course Prefix

IAPs may request an IAP-specific course prefix. This can be particularly useful for establishing a distinct identity for courses or curricula reflecting a new emerging interdisciplinary field or employing a unique interdisciplinary pedagogical model focused on integration. Such a prefix can signal that these courses complement, rather than replace, traditional disciplinary offerings by emphasizing specific cross-cutting competencies.

- **Potential Benefits:**
 - *Administrative Efficiency:* Streamlines curriculum actions within the Course Inventory Management (CIM) system under the designated administrative unit.
 - *Brand Recognition:* Enhances visibility for students, employers and external partners.
 - *Data Tracking:* Simplifies course tracking, enrollment analysis and marketing efforts.
- **Considerations and Requirements:**
 - Proposing an IAP prefix requires careful consideration of potential concerns from existing departments/colleges.
 - Proposers must ensure minimal content overlap with existing disciplinary courses.
 - They should clarify how IAP courses will integrate into established degree requirements (often requiring consultation/approval from departmental curriculum committees).
 - The nature of any credentials associated with the IAP must be clearly defined.
 - Concerns regarding credit-hour attribution and academic content ownership must be proactively addressed through clear MOUs established during program planning. These agreements should outline credit allocation models (see Appendix [E.3 Credit Hour Allocation and Tracking](#)) and ensure contributing departments have appropriate input/representation in curriculum governance.

Appendix I: Student Support Best Practices

Fostering student success in Interdisciplinary Academic Programs (IAPs) requires intentional support structures that address the unique challenges and opportunities of learning across disciplines. This includes tailored advising, robust experiential learning and efforts to build a strong sense of community.

I.1 Graduate Student Services

- **Funding Research/Teaching Assistantships:** A key element impacting graduate IAPs, especially at the PhD level, is the reliable funding for graduate assistantships (GAs), including teaching assistantships (TAs) and research assistantships (RAs often funded through PI grants or training grants). In many current IAPs, formal agreements for the long-term continuation of assistantship lines (particularly TAs often provided by departments) are lacking, creating precarious situations for students. Clear, sustainable funding plans and agreements (documented via MOU) for GA/TA support are critical.
- **Experiential Learning:** Expand access to internships, unique research placements (potentially leveraging center affiliations), and project-based learning opportunities that enhance interdisciplinary skills and employability.
- **Community Building:** Host regular networking events, interdisciplinary seminars, workshops and potentially shared physical spaces to foster a strong sense of community and intellectual exchange among graduate students and faculty from different disciplines. Ensure access to relevant graduate professional development resources.

I.2 Undergraduate Student Services

- **Advising, Course Integration, and Academic Progression:** Provide tailored academic advising sensitive to the nuances of navigating interdisciplinary curricula. Ensure IAP courses integrate smoothly into degree requirements (counting appropriately for majors/minors/GEP) and are accurately reflected in student information systems (SIS) like degree audits and course catalogs to support timely degree completion and financial aid eligibility. Enhance program visibility through clear pathways and consider dedicated advisors, especially for new interdisciplinary majors.
- **Experiential Learning:** Expand and coordinate access to diverse High-Impact Experiences (HIEs) (internships, co-ops, research via Office of Undergraduate Research, capstone projects, service-learning). Leverage professional advisory groups and potentially develop central resources or databases to connect students with relevant opportunities that enhance interdisciplinary skills and employability.
- **Community Building:** Foster a strong sense of community among undergraduate students in IAPs through coordinated events, cohort activities (where applicable), shared spaces and support for faculty in implementing interdisciplinary teaching best practices that encourage collaboration.

Appendix J: Survey Instrument

The committee discussed and developed the following survey to gain a better understanding of the landscape of IAPs at NC State. The survey link was shared by committee members with their respective groups, including department heads, academic associate deans and relevant university listservs (such as the OUIP listserv). The survey is below.

Survey: Interdisciplinary Education Programs: Understanding Existing Models and Best Practices

We recognize that there are various types of interdisciplinary education programs across our campus, ranging from first-year programs, interdisciplinary fellowships, Wicked Problems, Wolfpack Solutions, interdisciplinary certificates, and degrees, to other models we may not yet be aware of. To better understand these existing programs, we are conducting this survey. Your responses will help us develop guiding principles for the creation and administration of interdisciplinary academic programs, with the goals of advocating for innovation, supporting cross-college collaboration, ensuring effective governance, streamlining curriculum management, achieving financial sustainability and providing comprehensive support for students. Thank you for your time and insights.

Survey Questions

Q1 Program Name: What is the name of the cross-college interdisciplinary education program you are involved in?

Q2 Participating Units: Which departments and/or colleges are involved in this program?

Q3 Credential Offerings: Does the program generate any credentials? (e.g., minors, certificates, degrees). If yes, please specify.

Q4 Administrative Structures: What administrative structures (e.g., advisory boards, program committees) support this program?

Q5 Faculty Access: How does the program access faculty (e.g., joint appointments, course buyouts, volunteer basis)?

Q6 Curriculum: Who has control over the curriculum of this program? Please describe the process for curriculum development and approval.

Q7 Student Support: What resources (e.g., advising, mentoring, lab space, GA/TA positions, etc) are available to support students in this program?

Q8 Funding Structure: Please describe how the program is funded, including both instructional costs (e.g., faculty salaries) and operational costs.

Appendix K: Survey Findings Summary - Key Insights and Recommendations

K.1 Program Variety and Participation

- **Variety of Themes and Scopes:** Interdisciplinary academic programs span various themes, such as "Innovation and Entrepreneurship," "Global Health" and "Environmental Studies." They range from large, multi-college initiatives to smaller, focused minors or fellowships, indicating the broad application of interdisciplinary education.
- **Scale and Unit Involvement:** Programs differ in scale, involving multiple colleges or fewer departments based on scope. Centralized administrative units often aid in coordination but may pose governance challenges.
- **Participation Models:** Collaboration varies from formal departmental partnerships to informal arrangements, influencing resource sharing and long-term support.

K.2 Administrative Structures

- **Advisory Boards and Governance:** Many programs utilize advisory boards with faculty representatives, enhancing balanced decision-making. Programs without such structures may face challenges in aligning objectives and coordinating efforts. The administrative structures are primarily supported by faculty members, with program directors also key participants. External stakeholders feature prominently in seven programs, while deans are less frequently involved but provide strategic input.
- **Central vs. Decentralized Administration:** Programs with home departments or centralized oversight have clear structures but may struggle with flexibility in expanding curriculum or integrating new departments.
- **Program Leadership and Personnel:** Programs with designated directors and curriculum committees demonstrate stronger administrative practices, ensuring effective curriculum updates and coordination.
- **Departmental Designation Transitions:** Certain programs are evolving towards a home department structure, which can offer benefits like direct funding but risk losing interdisciplinary breadth.

K.3 Faculty Access and Appointments

- **Joint Appointments:** Faculty are often accessed through joint appointments, facilitating expertise but adding complexities in workload distribution and prioritization.
- **Course Buyouts:** Buyouts allow faculty dedication but require sustainable funding.
- **Volunteer Faculty Participation:** Relying on voluntary involvement brings enthusiasm but can lead to staffing instability and affect consistency.
- **Graduate and Staff Support:** Graduate assistants and specific staff roles help alleviate administrative burdens, though funding for these positions may be inconsistent.

K.4 Curriculum Development and Control

- **Faculty-Led:** Leverages expertise but can challenge coordination.
- **Centralized (Program Director/Curriculum Committee):** Streamlined but may lack diverse input.
- **Departmental Control:** Clear authority but potential for silos.
- **Executive or Advisory Committee:** Strategic oversight but potentially slower decisions.
- **Multiple Departments/Units (Common implied model):** Fosters collaboration but requires complex coordination.
- **Approval Processes:** Often depend on administrative structure, potentially involving multiple layers.

K.5 Student Support

- **Best Practices:** Effective programs prioritize tailored advising, structured mentorship, integrated experiential learning and dedicated staff support.
- **Challenges:** Include resource limitations for advising/mentoring, inconsistent financial aid, coordination difficulties across departments, securing relevant experiential opportunities and low participation in support events.

K.6 Funding Models

- **State and University Funded:** Provides stability but can lack flexibility and require advocacy.
- **Donor and Endowment Funding:** Offers flexibility but may require alignment with donor expectations.
- **Grant Funding:** Supports innovation but is time-bound and creates continuity challenges.
- **University Partnerships and Collaborative Funding:** Pools resources but requires intricate planning and coordination.
- **Premium Tuition/Self-Funded Models:** Offers independence but is sensitive to enrollment fluctuations.
- **Sustainability:** Requires strategic planning, diversification and adaptability. Many programs benefit from a diversified approach.

K.7 Key Challenges Identified

- **Funding and Resource Allocation:** Lack of clarity, consistency and sustainability in funding models; difficulty securing funds for non-instructional expenses; disparities in resource allocation (SCH impact).
- **Faculty Engagement and Incentives:** Limited incentives; need for clearer recognition in promotion/tenure policies.
- **Program Recognition and Integration:** Difficulty gaining institutional buy-in and establishing a stable identity; need for formal validation.

- **Administrative and Logistical Support:** Significant administrative burden; need for dedicated staff/coordinators.
- **Space and Physical Resource Constraints:** Lack of dedicated office, lab, and support space; challenges funding TAs/RAs.
- **Student Support and Engagement:** Need for more robust, tailored support and community building.
- **Curriculum and Teaching Models:** Interest in team-teaching challenged by resource alignment; desire for streamlined curriculum processes.
- **Equity and Accessibility:** Concerns about program structures potentially benefiting select groups; need for auditing requirements.

K.8 Suggestions for Improvement

- **Streamlined Administrative Processes:** Establish university policies valuing IAPs; create clearer guidelines/processes for approvals and funding; provide centralized support/liaison.
- **Improved Funding and Resource Allocation:** Advocate for dedicated/endowed funding; implement transparent allocation guidelines.
- **Incentive and Reward Structures for Faculty:** Develop financial/non-financial incentives; explicitly recognize interdisciplinary work in RPT policies.
- **Increased Collaboration/Communication:** Facilitate regular inter-departmental forums and shared platforms.
- **Targeted Student Support and Orientation:** Implement tailored orientation events and support services for interdisciplinary students.

Conclusion

The survey results highlight the need for a strategic, diversified approach to support interdisciplinary academic programs effectively. By addressing funding sustainability, faculty incentives, administrative support and clear recognition within the institutional framework, the university can enhance the impact and growth of its interdisciplinary initiatives, ensuring long-term viability and integration.