

Delaware INBRE has developed a wealth of resources across the partnership for supporting biomedical research and education, and our six institutions boast many excellent researchers, educators, clinicians, and trainees with a wide array of expertise and interests. A constant challenge in developing and sustaining such a distributed network is how to foster connections among people and enable cross-institutional access to resources. Social Network Analysis (SNA) is a process often used by informaticians to simplify and visualize complex relationships. It is a toolset commonly employed by our Bioinformatics Core in organizing and displaying complex biological data, such as gene regulation and protein interactions, to assist researchers in effectively interpreting their results. Realizing the parallels between these biological networks and the array of interconnected metrics and interpersonal connections which underpin our INBRE network, we have adapted these techniques. Application of this technique to a wide range of interactions in our network, from research collaborations and faculty program engagement to mentor-mentee relationships and student outcomes, has improved our ability to measure impact and sustainability within Delaware INBRE. The promise of these tools extends beyond simple evaluation and measurement, but lies in effectively utilizing the data they present to drive improvements that can further enhance our network. In the area of core facilities our partnership is actively pursuing implementation of unified core management software and other systems that will simplify the process of collecting data regarding usage, revenue, and scientific impact of our core facilities. With such data in hand, SNA can be employed in a myriad of applications such as aiding in connection of new customers with core services; driving development of cross-core and cross-institutional services; and enabling core directors and administrators to make informed decisions about the sustainability and evolution of core services.