

Research Computing Advisory Committee

Minutes Jan 6, 2014 (taken by Erik Deumens)

Present: Sophia Acord, Paul Avery, Reed Beaman, Mike Conlon, Erik Deumens, Bill Farmerie, Alberto Riva, Laurie Taylor

Discussion

As part of the development of an outreach plan to make sure all of UF knows about the new resources and infrastructure for research computing, we invited Bess de Farber to give a presentation to the committee.

She runs “Collaborating with Strangers Workshops at UF”, “colabs” for short. This workshop has a special dynamic: It brings people together allowing them to state briefly what resources they have that are relevant to the focus of the workshop and what they are interested in. After the workshop names are made available to the attendants so that they can follow up for further collaboration. The workshop itself is just to establish contacts. The principles of the workshops are

- Asset-based community development
- Multiple/simultaneous conversations
- Common geography
- Singular theme
- Self-selection (only people who want to be there)
- Quality questions
- Face-to-face vs. technology
- Appreciating ambiguity
- Art of creativity

She will be working with the College of Journalism over the next two years using this technique. She considered computing to be a good topic it is general and benefits from multiple resources being brought together; here resources are (mostly) not hardware, but people with skills and not only computer skills.

The committee had a lively discussion about the possibilities of using this technique to get people into collaborations for research. It was agreed that a “Colab on Big Data” on campus would be a good idea and would attract attention and also would fit in the outreach strategy that the RCAC is working on.

Updates

In the December the Steering committee for the Informatics Institute was given its task and it met two times already. Dr. Cole Smith, professor and chair of Industrial and Systems Engineering, has been appointed interim director. The next steering committee meeting will be January 27. One of the firsts tasks is to compose a vision statement for the Institute and to stand up a website.

Organization

The web site has been updated to show the meeting schedule through the Summer 2014 at <http://www.it.ufl.edu/governance/advisorycommittees/researchcomputing.html>.

Next meeting will be on Monday February 3, 2014 at the usual location in NPB 2205 from 1:30 – 2: 30 pm.