Research Computing Advisory Committee
Minutes Mar. 10, 2014 (taken by Erik Deumens)

Present: Paul Avery, Mike Conlon, Erik Deumens, Rob Ferl, Lauren McIntyre, David Nessl, Alberto Riva, Laurie Taylor.

Reports

Deumens reports on the installation of the new storage system for long-term research data that will support world-wide and SSERCA-wide collaboration. This project is announced by the CIO as GatorBox. The installation, validation and testing, takes place the week of March 24.

The research activities of Prof. McIntyre are being supported by this type of storage: She shares data with collaborators at FSU and keeps a replica of data on FSU systems. Her project is supported by existing systems, but this new storage system will make this process very easy and simple to provision for any project that needs it.

The linked project of GatorVault for storing restricted data that is subject to the HIPAA law is being designed and its deployment will follow quickly after that of GatorBox. There is no certification for HIPAA compliance, like there is for FISMA. FISMA is too detailed and too expensive to implement. Erik will send information about how Indiana University has addressed this problem.

McIntrye advocates using de-identified data for research. Conlon explains that the CTSI has worked to create the EPIC system, which holds the patient data for the hospital, and an honest broker system to extract de-identified data that can be handed to researchers for their projects. Mike also points out that some research needs the full data to make proper correlation. Hence there is a need for a secure system where research analytics can be done on the restricted data. Avery points out that we will build valuable experience first with public data by using GatorBox.

Discussion on the outreach plan

The committee continued the ongoing discussion on developing an outreach action plan. David Nessl provided a table with metrics that can be used to measure the outcome to the outreach activities.

The draft of the outreach plan received some feedback, one of them being that the different funding programs should be listed together to avoid overlap and clearly show how they work together and are complementary.

The issue of setting up displays in strategic locations showing visuals from research using simulations and big data analytics is in some way easy and cheap, but the maintenance is not clear (UFIT or Physical Plant) and is known as the issue of digital signage.

The most urgent issue is to hire a general program assistant to do the work needed to implement the ideas. This includes maintaining the website, keeping track of proposal that use research computing resources, which get funded, etc.

The plan is almost in good form to present to the CIO. Then the issue of funding the program assistant can be discussed.

McIntyre suggests submitting the track-record RCAC has with, e.g. the training program, as part of the outreach plan. The Campus Cyberinfrastructure Plan 2011-2015 has kept track of how the strategic plans of the RCAC have been implemented so far. The matching program is also a measure of success.

Next meeting: The next meeting will be on Monday, April 7 at the usual location in NPB 2205 from 1:30 – 2: 30 pm.