Research Computing Advisory Committee
Minutes Nov 4, 2013 (taken by Hanna Norton)

Present: Sophia Acord, Reed Beaman, Erik Deumens, Bill Farmerie, David Nessl, Hannah Norton, Sanjay Ranka, Alberto Riva

Discussion

The committee continued the discussion started during the previous meeting on developing an outreach action plan.

- Paul Avery sent a first draft of the document with some initial suggestions and structure.
- Sanjay Ranka presented an outline of 3 courses they are planning to offer for a data science curriculum (targeted towards upper level undergrads):
    - **Elements of Data Science** (with a pre-requisite of a single programming course, but designed to be accessible to non-computer science majors) – that will be not on developing tools for data science but on using them and will cover topics such as file-based data management, relational databases, basic data mining, parallel computing, and ethics/privacy/confidentiality. Expected to be taught Spring 2014.
    - **Advanced Topics in Data Science** (requires more computer science/programming knowledge) – that will cover topics such as cloud systems, parallel processing, advanced data mining/machine learning, unstructured data processing, and visual analytics. Expected to be taught Fall 2014.
    - **Projects in Data Science** (with either of the two previous courses as a pre-requisite) – that will give a prescribed structure for the types of projects, but allow application in a variety of disciplines, with interdisciplinary faculty serving as mentors/evaluators. Expected to be taught Spring 2015.
- Sophia Acord and Laurie Taylor prepared the conceptual outline of a course called **Introductory Concepts in Research Computing**, which is designed to be an introduction to data science for those who do not plan to learn any programming. Essentially, this is meant for those who will be working with computer scientists in their research (and need to have the common language to talk to them about their needs) but won't need to do the computer science themselves.
- There was also discussion about how big data requires collaboration, and collaboration in interdisciplinary teams is something that needs to be learned.
- Bill Farmerie and Erik Deumens reported on the nascent initiative on campus focused on big data that started this summer from Dr. Norton's office and is now deeply interconnected with the preeminence initiative at UF enabled by the $15M funding by the Florida Legislature. The merged activity is called the Informatics Institute. There was discussion on how the Informatics Institute would interact with the Research Computing Advisory Committee and the campus community it has been serving.

Organization

The web site has been updated and now shows the meeting schedule through the fall 2013 at http://www.it.ufl.edu/governance/advisorycommittees/researchcomputing.html.

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