

Research Computing Advisory Committee

Minutes Apr 6, 2020 (taken by Erik Deumens)

Present: Paul Avery, Nikolay Bliznyuk, Ana Conesa, Erik Deumens, Jorge Frias-Lopez, Richard Hennig, Damon Lamb, Lauren McIntyre, George Michailidis, Melissa Rethlefsen, Alberto Riva, Plato Smith, Laurie Taylor, Bruce Vogel

Updates

- RC has converted to fully remote support: All staff are reachable by email, phone, and have zoom office hours.
- Systems are running as normal. A kernel parameter in the login nodes was adjusted after the increased number of users revealed a problem.
- The HiPerGator 3.0 ITN was published March 30 and a number of vendors have been alerted to that. Now vendors can ask questions which will be answered in public. By May 5, all vendors must submit their proposals. Then the committee will review these and negotiate with selected vendors with interesting proposals. By end of June we expect to select a vendor and configuration. A PO will be issued in July. Delivery is expected in October, because both Intel Ice lake and AMD Milan processors, which are of interest, will only become available at that time.

Update on AI cluster

- The Provost sent an announcement to all faculty about the new university-wide AI initiative that will include workforce development and research. The activity will start with a planning retreat on April 29.
- The NVIDIA training originally scheduled for April 3 will now be online in early May. It is open to all. More similar trainings will be held throughout the summer and fall. One training will be to create a cohort of trainers.
- The town hall workshop originally planned for April 7 will also become virtual and will be held around May 15.

Discussion

- The new cluster will require special code (CUDA) to run application, but many applications are already available. Tools like Python and Matlab can be used to access the powerful computing on GPU cards.
- The process for getting access to the new AI cluster has not been defined yet. Because of the cost of the machine, the allocation now used on HiPerGator, namely investments, does not work without some modification. This will be an active discussion over the rest of the year 2020.

Next meeting will be in May 11, 2020 from 1:30 – 2:30 pm. The meeting will be Zoom only.