COE Research Computing Committee

MINUTES OCTOBER 27, 2017

ATTENDEES

PRESENT: Sven Schmitz (Aero); John Messner (AE); Xiao Liu (BME); Scott Milner (ChE); Paul Medvedev(CSE); Adri vanDuin (MNE); Jerry Ciolkosz (IT); Dan Haworth (ex officio); George Lesieutre (ADR)

ABSENT: Cibin Raj (ABE); Mike Hillman (CEE); Sumeet Gupta (EE); Christian Peco (ESM); Hui Yang (IME); Conrad Tucker (SEDTAPP); Greg Madden (Sr. Advisor)

Discussion topics:

1. INTRODUCTIONS

   Introductions around the table since this is still the first committee meeting for some new departmental representatives. By-laws call for reassessing committee membership at the end of the academic year, and department heads replace members who wish to complete their service on the committee. By-laws also call for a new committee chair at the beginning of each academic year.

   CONCLUSIONS

   A separate email will be sent to current committee members asking for a volunteer to chair the committee.

2. UPDATES FROM ADRI VAN DUIN

   Adri is a member of the HPC working group and a co-chair of the RCCI. He provided the following updates, in lieu of Greg Madden not able to attend:

   Michael Kubit, Chief Information Officer, appears to be refocusing working group, separating out IT related groups from faculty related groups.
   - Michael’s vision: what he sees currently is that the number of IT staff working directly with faculty is small while the number of IT staff working directly with infrastructure is large. He would like to reverse that trend.
   - A new working group was formed, ARCS (Advanced Research Computing Support) with the intent to liberate IT staff time to work with faculty across the board, not just on high performance computing. The goal is to assess what the faculty need and how to address those needs. See last month’s minutes for further discussion.
   - The working groups are experiencing a slowdown in faculty participation. Initial participation was high, now faculty are rotating off the committees and there are not new volunteers to replace them.

   Further discussion followed on ACI performance and the Data Center temperature issue.

CONCLUSIONS

3. UPDATES FROM JERRY CIOLKOSZ

   IT issues:
   - Office 365: Jerry spoke in depth on the need for a consistent and unified email and calendar system across the university and the planned transition to Office 365. The
CIO has called for this transition by the end of July, 2018. Jerry spoke about the capabilities of Office 365 going far beyond email and calendar. Several collaboration and productivity tools will be included and Microsoft cloud storage will also be available. Jerry is involved in the decision-making and implementation of this transition, and has as a priority the continuation of support of the engr.psu.edu email domain along with unified voicemail messaging.

- Committee members pointed out to Jerry the pervasiveness of large collaborative efforts and asked that he make sure that the current tools are not changed (i.e. BOX) to minimize potential disruption of existing collaborations.
- Jerry assured everyone that there will be a major information campaign prior to the transition to Office 365

- **University Firewall Project:** Jerry spoke about a project to create a true border firewall university-wide to provide an extra layer of projection to things like PSU Wireless, as well as the ability to establish high security enclaves to protect sensitive data. Jerry believes the COE may still need to maintain its firewall presence in addition to this university-wide firewall.
  - The intent is to improve overall University data security through a consistent approach, and to minimize replication of effort.
  - Jerry questions what the college can actually let go of in terms of firewall protection.

Committee member asked if there has been any benchmarking in terms of a university-wide firewall.

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**CONCLUSIONS**

Minutes submitted by Susie Sherlock, Asst. to the Assoc. Dean for Research

**ACTION:** Susie will be scheduling the next meeting for early December; a doodle poll will follow in November.