IT Governance Program – Research & Innovative Technologies Committee

Meeting Minutes

September 24, 2018
11:30a.m.-1:00p.m.
Computing Services Center, Conference Room 04

Attendance:

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<th>RITC Members</th>
<th>ITG Program Support</th>
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<td>X Dr. Narasimha</td>
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<td>Annapareddy</td>
<td>Dr. Hye-Chung Kum</td>
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<td>X Dr. Michael</td>
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<td>Bishop</td>
<td>Sean Michaelson</td>
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<td>X Dr. Susan</td>
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<td>Bloomfield</td>
<td>Dr. Honggao Liu</td>
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<td>Aaron Brender</td>
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<td>Dr. Ramalingam</td>
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<td>Saravanan</td>
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<td>X Dr. Pierce</td>
<td>Dr. Venky Shankar</td>
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<td>Cantrell</td>
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<td>X Cheryl Cato</td>
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<td>Paula Sullenger</td>
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<td>X M. Dee Childs</td>
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<td>Chris Seabury</td>
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Minutes: Scheduled Business

Item 1: Welcome and Introductions
Description: General welcome and an opportunity for announcements or items on interest relevant to the RITC

Welcome by M. Dee Childs, Vice President for IT and CIO.

One new member introduced by Cheryl Cato. William Deigaard from Rice University has joined Texas A&M Division of IT and is a new official member of this committee.

Committe introductions followed.

Item 2: Review of Research University CIO Survey
Description: Review the results of the Research University CIO survey data from M. Dee Childs and the analysis of data by Dr. Chris Seabury.

Chris Seabury discussed the review of the research study, which included a handout with three questions and their recurrent themes in answers.
1. What are the top 3 infrastructure/systems/skillsets/pieces of research IT (e.g., fast networks, Science DMZ, HPC, storage, visualization services, cloud services, programming and code optimization skills) that constitute strategic differentiators for your current research environment?

Recurrence Themes:
- (More People) Support Personnel/Computational Scientists/People that can interface and directly aid researchers in translating needs, code installation/help with optimization, and perhaps some level of programming support.
- Also received recurrent comments about data storage/post processing management (via appropriate staff/personnel) with appropriate compliance(s).

2. Looking to the future, what are the top 3 pieces on your wish list as strategic differentiators? Or stated differently, if we only had x, y and z in our IT environment...we would be better at satisfying our researcher’s IT needs? (Again, could be skillsets, not just infrastructure).

Recurrence Themes:
- (More People) Support Personnel/Computational Scientists/People that can interface and directly aid researchers in translating needs, meeting their needs, including code installation/help with optimization/perhaps programming.
- Additional secure/compliant storage and easy, user friendly (generalized) integration of support services from the initiation of research projects to post processing data storage/archiving; with inherent flexibility to achieve broad impact across a variety of research disciplines.

3. What are the top 3 IT needs or conditions you see in the near future that hold potential to:
   a. Accelerate research (e.g., data lake, PHI/DoD enclaves, automated data classification and provenance, shared core facilities that are IT-enabled, national research platform, etc.)

Recurrence Themes:
- (Multi-institutional/Regional Infrastructures) The idea of science gateways and/or data portals was thematic; including data movement/sharing locally and nationally, with multiple mentions of a cloud/data lake approach.
- Support/training and workforce development (specifically, graduate students and support personnel) was thematic, and recognized as critical.
- Shared (regional/multi-institutional) cluster/storage resources as also mentioned.

Discussion on data included:
- The peer benchmarking comments will overlap.
- Data storage is overwhelmingly at the forefront here
- A need for pre and post processing support.

The next meeting will pursue further discussion for more exact recommendations.

**Item 3: Review of the RITC Survey Data**

**Description:** Review the results of the RITC survey data, outline ideas for additional survey views, and begin data analysis to interpret the results.
This survey went out to all faculty. In the end approximately 400 responses were received. That is a 10-12% response rate.

Three handouts were distributed:
1. Qualtrics survey instrument
2. RITC survey summary of comments
3. Visual graphs depicting tally of responses on each question as well as a list of departments that were included in the survey

During discussion the group talked about specialized training cannot happen without support personnel. This overlaps with the CIO survey results.

Discussion focused on what the appropriate next steps would be on this data and how to move forward.
- Dee Childs recommended that given the amount of responses received, Sue should compose a message to faculty informing them that we have received the results of the survey, thanking them for responding, and informing them that recommendations will be communicated once we have had a chance to process the data received.
- Dee suggested that maybe a list of the top five things identified in the feedback on and note that those items will require additional review.
- Further discussion may be needed on this at a later date.

The longevity of research computing was not identified in this data. The committee determined that this needs to be addressed as it is a concern.

Meeting adjourned at 1:00pm.