

Minutes for the ITC-Research Computing Management Meeting
February 26, 2007 at 10:30AM
2015 Ivy Road, 2nd Floor Conference Room

Members: Alice, Hamp, Jim, Joe S., Mark, Mike, Robin, Terry, Tim S., Tom S., Tim T.
Attending: Alice, Hamp, Jim, Joe S., Mark, Mike, Robin, Terry, Tim S., Tim T.

Chair: [Tim T.](#)

Recorder: [Alice Howard](#)

I. Connection: In the last month, share one thing you did related to research computing support at UVa?

II. Corrections to [minutes from last meeting on January 22, 2007](#)? None.
(Click to review the [agenda from this meeting](#))

III. Old Business:

- *Proposed research computing hardware expenditures.* The group reviewed the feedback from the forum. There was no consensus from the forum, but some opinions included :
 - Do not need another small cluster – i.e. not buy new nodes to make "new birch" cluster; more interest in enhancing dogwood: e.g. add Infiniband to some nodes of dogwood – or just add more nodes to dogwood. There was some discussion on who needs Infiniband.
 - There was interest in storage – so we could purchase additional disk space and make it a priority to add lots more in the future.
 - There was some dissatisfaction with existing queuing policies – so we could/should review and modify queuing policies that discourage rapid turnaround over long running jobs.
 - Notes from the forum are on this web site "[ResComp-Forum-Notes2007Jan30.txt](#)" Special thanks to Joe Simard for his organized note taking.
 - One attendee noted that “something for everyone” is not a strategy for success – so what could we offer that people cannot get somewhere else (i.e. a unique resource)?
 - Big memory; a short-run cluster and a long-run cluster.
 - Some discussion about adequacy of our existing temp storage.
 - We do have test queues for code/application development – but we need some stats on the test queues to see how they are being used.
 - More discussion on how easy (or not) is it for researchers to go back and forth – move data in advance? Stage in their data? Get results back and moved off? And we do not have a good handle on how much data people are moving – or where the bottlenecks might be.
 - If we knew where their data is now, it might turn out to be faster to leave it and access it where it is.
 - We can get more information/stats out of process accounting – and could snapshot the disks for usage.
 - So: we could add more storage – add more nodes to dogwood – add a small cluster

with big memory (e.g. 4-8 16GB nodes) – look at queuing no matter what – and do forums more often.

- **Decided to get estimates for the large memory/small-number-of-nodes option – and then see what might be left.** (And look at the costs of Infiniband just so we'll know.)
 - We will again have the “buy-in” offer – with the option to have exclusive use of 80%.
 - We will also ask users about queuing practices and policies – what choices do they have? Want? Need?
 - We could also see if there is anything we could do to make it easier for folks here to use resources outside UVa.
- *Two Proposals for "buy-in" to the cluster, both new one and existing dogwood. One gives priority to running jobs anytime you want by dedicating X purchased nodes to exclusive use of the researcher. The other gives priority queue access to the entire cluster. Draft proposal of these two is detailed at: <http://holmes.itc.virginia.edu/ResNotes/cluster-purchase.html>*
 - *Jim & Hamp will come up with rate for buying "priority" time on dogwood cluster.*
 - *Should we put cost of "disposal" into cost of buying into nodes? Could be as much as \$30/node to surplus.*
 - *Tom S.: Genomics might want to buy in to cluster – but infiniband type cluster not appropriate for them. They need large memory computers – check with them.*
 - *Linux Clusters: Birch, Cedar, Dogwood - any issues, concerns or upcoming updates/changes?*
 - *Status of cedar test cluster switching to 64-bit OS? DONE.*
 - *All Nortel switches installed on dogwood now.*
 - *Any update on conversion to authenticate to Eservices via Kerberos for Unix logins/connections for Blue.unix? (AKA Phase 2 of Netbadge CDP and "unified password" web site).*
 - *This transition will involve a major user education issue – especially for blue.unix users.*
 - *Infrastructure Supporting Research Task Force (<https://www1.seas.virginia.edu/itr/f/>). (Maillist is itr/f@virginia.edu)*
 - *UVa's participation in ORNL's response to NSF RFP for next generation/iteration of Supercomputing Center. The full proposal was due on 2/2/07 - Mike to check with Mitch on status/update tomorrow (2/27).*
 - *SURA survey request- TimT. will contact Phil about pulling together group, possibly by email. Deadline for this has long past, so letting it drop.*

IV. New Business:

- *Any other Items?*

V. Adjourn by 12:00 and next meeting

- Next Scheduled Meeting of ITC ResComp Standing Committee: Monday, March 26th, 10:30 AM in ITC-2015 Ivy Road, Room #220.

Please send suggestions, additions, corrections to: [Tim Tolson](#) or [Alice Howard](#)



Go to: [ITC Research Computing Committee Home Page](#)