

**UCF Faculty Senate**  
Information Technology Committee

Minutes of **April 27, 2020**  
Via Zoom

Melanie Guldi, chair, called the meeting to order at 2:01 pm. The roll was called orally.

**In Attendance:** Thad Anderson, Anya Andrews, Lee Dotson, Steffen Guenzel, Melanie Guldi (Senate Liaison), Joseph Harrington (Steering Liaison), Athena Hoepfner, Pieter Kik, Viatcheslav Kokoouline, Robert Macy, Matthew Nobles, Sumanta Pattanaik, and Francisca Yonekura (ex officio).

**Minutes:** Motion and second made to approve the minutes of the *April 13, 2020*, meeting. The motion passed.

**Chair Announcements:**

- The chair announced invited guests Elizabeth Klonoff (Vice President for Research and Dean, College of Graduate Studies); Ozlem Garibay (Director, Graduate Research and Information Technology); Shafaq Chaudhry (Assistant Director, Graduate Research and Information Technology, Systems & Operations); Paul Wiegand (Institute for Simulation and Training).

• **Old Business**

- Our topic of the day was support for research computing (cloud CPU services, cloud document services, continuity of research computing over funding gaps, STOKES financial model, research group system support).
- We began the meeting with a presentation by Shafaq Chaudhry (GRIT) on the state of research IT, within UCF and beyond. (An updated version of this presentation is appended to the minutes. Changes, some requested by the committee, include updated data, added slide #7 for resources at top institutions, removal of a slide with information from different years).
  - The committee suggested that some workshops be held so that the research communities at UCF are aware of the cloud resources available to them. It was further suggested that the workshops might be tailored to each college's specific needs.
  - Shafaq Chaudhry further showed that there are also resources available on their webpage (<https://rci.research.ucf.edu>) and that these are augmented with new material as it becomes available.
  - Last, it was suggested that part of the "research newsletter" include some information about these cloud resources.
- This led to several points raised by Joseph Harrington (now Senate Chair and member, Board of Trustees; still a committee member):
  - The University has not historically focused on research IT, but rather enterprise IT. He suggested that this committee would be asked to suggest changes to research IT going forward that would be helpful for faculty research objectives.

These would likely overlap substantially, and may be developed in concert with ideas brought forth by the Research Council and/or the ad hoc faculty committee working in this area in addition to each college's Technology Committee. When coming up with ideas, it will be useful to benchmark them to what is currently seen at the set of aspirational universities to which UCF is often compared as well as what is happening in the Florida State University System. The end product should be a list of trouble areas, a list of goals, and whether IT should be reorganized into two arms (Research IT, Admin IT), if the current superstructure can work to meet our goals, or if IT should be outsourced.

- Paul Wiegand provided an overview of STOKES.
  - STOKES has a new solid-state-drive-based storage array with over 70 TB, to feed data rapidly into their GPU cluster.
  - Some of the key issues mentioned are that they are working with the Office of Research on outreach; they have a number of data visualization tools; and are involved in CIRCA (Florida Consortium).
  - He mentioned that one of the key issues is resources. The limited resources constrains what they can do, due to the need for additional staff to support activities.
- Lee Dotson (Library) mentioned STARS (Showcase of Text, Archives, Research, and Scholarship; <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/> ) and noted that archival need are related, but different from some of the other cloud-related issues discussed during the meeting.
- Joe Harrington stated that cloud computing is not the only area of research computing that needs improvement. He mentioned:
  - IT support for Linux desktop and research systems
  - Backup of local computers
  - Long-term archiving and indexing of 1-10TB research products
  - System management support for local research computers
  - Reasonable processes for external network access, research collaborator access to campus computing, access to IT staff, etc.
  - Responsive, high-quality support
  - Provision of all products and services at a creditable quality level and cost
- **New Business**
  - None

#### **Other Business**

- None

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 3:17 pm.