

**Research Computing Subcommittee  
Minutes – May 26, 2005**

**Meeting location:** Snake River Room, SUB, at 4:00pm

**Members Present:** Cyndy Kelchner (Chair), James Bigelow, Randy Gaines, Ben Nickell, Ralph Norton, Ken Trimmer.

**1. Minutes from previous meeting**

Approved. Trimmer cited news story about INL putting in a new research facility behind University Place in Idaho Falls. Discussion followed of changing administration at INL (i.e., new contractor Battelle) and at ISU (Pres. Bowen's announced retirement). Also discussed was the need to maintain awareness of such changes which may impact IT usage, and of the committee's role concerning ISU resources/funding (e.g., the library's recent acquisition of a database for research use: should the subcommittee consider moving such database management and/or funding elsewhere). Kelchner said the subcommittee's role should include the examination of such questions and making appropriate recommendations, but clarified the subcommittee itself had control of no funds at the present time.

**2. How this subcommittee fits into the replacement-for-TOC structure**

Kelchner reviewed (with assistance from Gaines) the new IT governance structure (previously distributed by e-mail), noting the graphical representation had changed during the last month. Discussion then turned to the e-mail (also previously distributed) from Keith Weber, Director, GIS Training and Research Center. The e-mail suggested creation of another subcommittee, as a peer to this body. Discussion reached no conclusion, but at this point had no objection to (while also being unclear as to the need for) a separate committee, vs. having such a group as a subcommittee of this body. Norton said he had discussed this issue with his colleagues in the Office of Research prior to the meeting, and since the research centers all report to the Chief Research Officer, the office's consensus was that the Research Office should work on the issue with the centers over the summer. All agreed the subcommittee needed additional information about its constituency before making a recommendation on this issue in any case. It was also suggested Kay Flowers should be invited to a future meeting at which this topic would be discussed.

**3. Progress on identifying user community and their needs**

Kelchner provided and with the subcommittee reviewed a draft "memorandum" to be sent (via e-mail and staff/faculty bulletin boards) to all faculty and staff, asking users of "research computing" to identify themselves, for later contact by subcommittee members to discuss their needs. Discussion followed on several points; Kelchner agreed to incorporate final recommendations and send it out the next week (**final version attached**). Nickell discussed his progress in developing a survey of needs, to be used as a follow-up to those identifying themselves in response to the memo. Bigelow and Kelchner offered their (accepted) assistance in reviewing/editing the draft survey.

Briefly returning to the earlier topic of Research Center representation, it was decided to invite a representative from each Research Center / Institute to the next future meeting, along with Kay

Flowers. The suggested invitees included Keith Weber, Mike Thomas, Doug Wells and/or Allen Hunt.

**4. Other Business:**

Gaines said his understanding was that Kay Flowers like to have all the subcommittees have their mission and membership resolved by Fall.

In a general discussion about representation of researchers on the subcommittee, the consensus reached was that representation should be by “type of use” or need, rather than by college.

**5. Action Items:**

Kelchner to get Gaines final version of memo within two weeks and Gaines to have it sent out, with Kelchner as the “reply to” person.

Nickell to complete draft survey, review with Bigelow and Kelchner before next meeting.

Kelchner and Nickell to contact Kay Flowers and Research Centers about attending a future meeting.

**6. Next Meeting:**

Scheduled for 3:00 pm, Thursday June 23.

Distributed on Tuesday May 31, 2005 via the ISU facultymemos and staffmemos listservs:

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A new Research Computing Subcommittee has recently been created as part of the revised IT governance structure at ISU. Our first major task is to identify the ISU research computing user community. We are defining “research computing” quite broadly (see examples below), but please note that it is distinct from standard desktop computer support.

If you identify yourself as requiring or supporting research computing, or are interested in getting into this area, please send a quick reply to [kelccynd@isu.edu](mailto:kelccynd@isu.edu). We will then contact you to learn about your specific needs, interests, and/or expertise.

Possible categories of research computing include the following:

- Computationally intensive calculations (number crunching)
- Managing large data sets
- Database creation and management, including online surveys and other data capture
- Computer-guided instrument control and data collection
- Data analysis
- Visualization
- Access grid, teleconferencing, other collaboration technologies
- Short courses on research computing topics
- Other computational tasks needed to support your research, beyond your desktop computer

Please pass this request on to graduate students and others as appropriate. We look forward to hearing from you!

Thanks,  
Cyndy Kelchner  
Chair, Research Computing Subcommittee  
[kelccynd@isu.edu](mailto:kelccynd@isu.edu)

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