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Computation and Research in Data Science (CARD) Board Meeting Minutes

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2019 January 25 - Computation and Research in Data Science (CaRD) Minutes

Computation and Research in Data Science, East Tennessee State University

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CaRDS Board Meeting

Minutes

January 25, 2019

403 Ross Hall

Present: Brian Bennett (Computing), Frank Hagelberg (Physics), Michele Joyner (Mathematics and Statistics), Mohammad Khan (Computing), Matt McBee (Psychology), Phil Pfeiffer (Computing).

1. e-day 2019

Date: March 27 was set as tentative date.

Program: e-day 2019 will be used as a forum to inform students and faculty about the ETSU partnerships with AWS (Amazon Web Services) and ACF (Advanced Computing Facilities at Oak Ridge National Laboratories), which provide computational platforms for ETSU. It was suggested to invite Robert Whitten, who is a member of the ACF staff and specifically concerned with education, outreach, training, and user assistance. We will contact AWS and ask for a speaker who would promote the use of AWS services by ETSU students and faculty, advising ETSU audiences about the full range of the present AWS offer.

A further program item will consist of a session with brief student presentation (ten minutes each). Several candidates and potential topics for these talks were named.

2. Designing an interdisciplinary Master's Program in Data Science, to be considered by the Colleges of Arts and Science, Business and Technology and Public Health

In a recent exchange on the future of Data Science at ETSU, Dr. Duncan and Dr. Anderson suggested that the CaRDS board drafts a plan for developing an interdisciplinary Master's Program in Data Science. It was agreed that any concrete outline of such a program must be based on a detailed inventory of data-relevant courses currently offered at ETSU. A course list provided previously by the Office of Institutional Research turned out to require major editing and was deemed not sufficiently accurate for providing a practical tool.¹

Several issues related to the requested proposal by CaRDS were discussed:

Should the proposal involve only a Master's degree program or also a new data-related undergraduate degree? A Master's degree supported by an undergraduate degree in data analytics was considered as a viable combination.

The importance of internships for the Master's program was emphasized, as they provide real world experience and can often lead to career opportunities.

Various critical questions were posed:

What are the budgetary constraints on establishing the new degree(s) at our campus?

What should be the prerequisites for embarking into the Master's program?

¹ Following the meeting, Phil compiled an extensive list of ETSU courses of potential relevance for the envisaged Master's program. The planned course inventory will be based on this list.

Where should the program be housed? The Graduate School was mentioned, also the Math Department and the School of Continuing Education.

In the near future, these questions (besides those dealing with the Data Science curriculum) will need to be addressed in greater detail. In this process, involvement of the administration will be of crucial importance.

3. CaRDS seminar

Dr. Edmon Begoli, Chief Data Architect with the Computational Sciences and Engineering Division at ORNL, agreed to present a seminar talk on April 3 in the ACM student seminar of the Department of Computing, and to meet with the CaRDS board. This will give us a chance to inquire about membership in the South Big Data Innovation Hub and related opportunities, for instance teaming up with other members of the Hub to write joint proposals on research and educational projects, or being granted access to the Renaissance Computing Institute (RENCI), a major computing resource associated with the Hub.

4. CaRDS board members

Nicole Lewis left the CaRDS board, due to other obligations and personal issues. Following her suggestion, it was agreed to invite Dr. JeanMarie Hendrickson to join the CaRDS board. JeanMarie teaches Statistical Machine Learning, Applied Multivariate Analysis, and Survival Analysis in the Math Department.

The meeting adjourned at 1.00 pm.

No date has yet been set for the next meeting. It was proposed to invite Dr. Duncan for this meeting, and possibly at least one of the three deans involved in the planned interdisciplinary Master's program.