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October 15, 2012

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University Librarian MacKenzie Smith, University Library  
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Professor Bart Weimer, Population Health & Reproduction, SVM  
Assistant Professor Huaijun Zhou, Animal Science, CA&ES

RE: Charge for the "Big Data" Implementation Committee

Dear Colleagues:

We as a campus and society are increasingly faced with unprecedented volumes of data in many different scientific and non-scientific fields. We therefore need to prepare our teaching and research programs as well as develop our infrastructure to accommodate this impending reality. There have been several whitepapers that address this issue and there are some on-going efforts on campus in this area; however, there is no overall coordination and little communication between these efforts and some major areas are not being addressed. In addition, there is an increasing awareness of the issue at the Federal level, including the President Obama's "Big Data" Initiative<sup>1</sup>. We need to position ourselves quickly to take advantage of opportunities for funding through this and other impending initiatives. To address this need, I propose the establishment of the "Big Data" Implementation Committee to review the issue and make substantive recommendations for action. I write to request your service on this *ad hoc* committee.

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/big\\_data\\_press\\_release\\_final\\_2.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/big_data_press_release_final_2.pdf)

The specific charges to this committee are:

- To review and update the recommendations from previous whitepapers, as well as materials from other campuses and agencies, relating to the handling and analysis of large datasets.
- To propose the path for developing strong, potentially disruptive academic research and teaching programs that address the opportunities and challenges presented by the Big Data revolution. In particular, the committee should identify both the fundamental elements of academic programs that are required as well as unique attributes that will distinguish efforts at UC Davis from those elsewhere.
- To consult with the campus at the levels of the Deans and departments as well as the faculty at large to coordinate activities related to Big Data so that the proposed plan addresses the diverse needs of the campus.
- To work with campus leadership to develop a comprehensive blueprint for the required intellectual resources (faculty and staff), along with the broad computational infrastructure requirements needed to support Big Data research and teaching needs at UC Davis. Recognizing the heterogeneity across the disciplines, we emphasize the need for advice on the key requirements and use cases for big data at UC Davis, not necessarily selecting particular technical architectures. For planning purposes, the committee might assume that an immediate follow-on implementation planning process, led by IET, will design or acquire the required services and architectures, based on the specific and broad requirements articulated.
- To identify imminent funding and recruitment opportunities that the campus should address.

The need for this implementation plan is acute. Therefore, I ask that you complete your report to me by February 15, 2013.

Please accept my sincere thanks for your willingness to serve on this committee.

Sincerely yours,



Ralph J. Héxter  
Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor

/mbm

c: Faculty Advisor Burtis  
AEVC Mohr