

Friday, February 22, 2013

TO: RALPH J. HEXTER  
PROVOST AND EXECUTIVE VICE CHANCELLOR

Re: Final Report of the Big Data Implementation Committee

On behalf of the Big Data Implementation Committee, we are delighted to submit for your review and consideration our final report in which we examine the challenges and opportunities Big Data presents, and describe our vision for UC Davis to rise to these challenges. Key to our plan is the creation of a Data Science Institute whose foundational components are outlined.

UC Davis has already been impacted by the Big Data wave: several research efforts on campus are already generating huge amounts of data. The question our committee addressed is how to ensure that UC Davis is prepared to take full advantage of this phenomenon so our researchers have what they need to access, generate, store, aggregate, combine, share, and analyze these data -- leading to new discoveries and understanding.

Our report makes the case that the current efforts on campus to tackle Big Data, while meritorious, are not as comprehensive and at the scale they need to be to remain competitive. UC Davis needs to implement a long-term vision to support, enable, and amplify Big Data research on campus. We align this vision with the creation of a Data Science Institute to bring together researchers from the core disciplines of Big Data and from domain disciplines in a structure that will foster collaboration and cross-fertilization.

It is our belief that the creation of the Institute is a necessity for UC Davis to be truly competitive as a research institution and to fulfill its obligation to adequately prepare the next generation of students for the digital world they will face.

In the implementation timeline, we propose specific actions to ensure that the right talent, expertise, and infrastructure are in place in both the short and longer term, and that interdisciplinary academic programs are developed to encourage continued understanding, progress and innovation in Big Data.

The report reflects input from all members of the committee and from the numerous colleagues we consulted on campus and at other institutions throughout our deliberations.

We would appreciate an opportunity to discuss this report with you, and in coordination with Dean Ko and VP Siegel, we look forward to presenting our plan to the deans, department chairs, Academic Senate and other campus constituencies.

Sincerely,



Patrice Koehl  
Professor, Computer Science  
Co-chairs, Big Data Implementation Committee



Tony Tyson  
Professor, Physics

Cc: Big Data Implementation Committee