MU Informatics Institute
University of Missouri

Informatics Updates   December 2, 2016

This Fall semester has flown by and finals week is right around the corner!

However, this past week I was able to attend the NIH BD2K All Hands Meeting and the Open Data Symposium in Bethesda as a grantee of the BD2K T32 training program. I had the opportunity to meet other T32 and U54 directors to discuss Big Data research and training activities taking place at other prominent institutions. There are many new initiatives from NCI, NLM, and the NIH to encourage data science for biomedical research. Dr. Fancies Collins, the NIH Director, shared his view of open science and stressed the importance of the community to share data, informatics tools, and knowledge obtained from the research community. While we are improving local accessibilities for healthcare data at MU, both de-identified and identifiable information, there are opportunities to utilize open-source data to answer biomedical questions. MUII is in the process of creating a secured environment for the informatics community to mine genomic and clinical data for extramural grant proposals and publications without unnecessary barriers. There is much to be done at MU to align our future effort with the Big Data analytics trends set by the funding agencies.

Chi-Ren Shyu, MUII Director

Making Sensitive Data Crunchable with Secure4

The campus Research Computing group, led by Dr. Tim Middelkoop, has implemented a Secure4 environment to accept sensitive biomedical data. According to the DoIT site "The Secure4 environment is a high-performance computing (HPC) cluster for researchers who need to store/use Data Classification Level 4 (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act or HIPAA) data and who also need sizable disk space, considerable memory, large compute capabilities, or access to the more than 200 applications available in the environment." Beth Chancellor and Dr. Jerry Parker are working with campus IRB, UM Healthcare system, and MUII to set a policy for informatics researchers to have a friendly environment for de-identified data access.

Task Force on Interdisciplinary Studies

Did you know that after the former chancellor reorganized the Graduate School, MUII was moved to the Interdisciplinary Degrees Program Office under the Provost Office? Now The Institute is currently participating in the special Taskforce on Interdisciplinary Studies to bring our successes and challenges to the attention of the university. We truly believe that high quality interdisciplinary research and education programs are vital for MU's AAU status, competitiveness for NIH/NSF training grants, and reputation in the nation. The Taskforce will send recommendations to the provost early next year.

Share Your Thoughts

There are two Requests for Information (RFIs) recently released by the NIH related to data sharing and direction of informatics research. Please respond to these RFIs so that your voices will be heard and our participations will be recognized. This is particularly important for our pending NLM T15 proposal. We will discuss at the December 8 core faculty meeting about MU's actions on these RFIs.

1. Strategies for NIH Data Management, Sharing, and Citation: This RFI seeks public comments on data management and sharing strategies and priorities in order to consider: (1) how digital scientific data generated from NIH-funded research should be managed, and to the fullest extent possible, made publicly available; and, (2) how to set standards for citing shared data and software. – response date: 12/29/2016

2. Strategic Plan for the National Library of Medicine: This RFI seeks for inputs in the following four themes: (1) Role of NLM in advancing data science, open science, and biomedical informatics; (2) Role of NLM in advancing biomedical discovery and translational science; (3) Role of NLM in supporting the public's health: clinical systems, public health systems and services, and personal health (4) Role of NLM in building collections to support discovery and health in the 21st century. – response date: 1/9/2017

MUII Represents at AMIA 2016

The MU Informatics Institute had a strong showing at this year's American Medical Informatics Association's (AMIA) annual conference held in Chicago. MUII students Lincoln Sheets, Pericles Giannaris, Zainab Al-Taie, Tim Green, Matt Spencer, Anjana Ramnath, and Qing Ye presented their research in podium and poster presentations.

To view the full slideshow, please click on the collage to the left.

Student Milestones

Congratulations to **Awatef Ben Ramadan** and **Lynsey Whitacre** for passing their comprehensive exams in November. Way to go, candidates!

Good Luck to Dr. Conant and Dr. Becchi!

It is always sad to see key players of MUII leave for another institution. Join us for light refreshments from 5:00-6:00 pm in N206 Memorial Union (Walt Disney Room) as we wish Dr. Gavin Conant and Dr. Michela Becchi all the best in their upcoming move to North Carolina State University. Please RSVP below.

Dr. Conant has done a fabulous job as ADE and DGS during the past three years. We are now taking nominations for Associate Director of Education (ADE) and Director for Graduate

Studies (DGS).

Click to R.S.V.P.

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