

Research Computing Resources in the Department of Statistics at BYU

August 25, 2016

Computing Committee Members: David B. Dahl, C. Shane Reese, Del T. Scott, Pete Dotson

In consultation with the faculty at large, the Computing Committee in the Department of Statistics proposes this policy to facilitate increased usage of the computing resources and to set priorities. The Department has several computing servers to support the research of faculty and students working on research projects directed by faculty. Some computing resources are intended primarily for faculty usage, while others are designated for both faculty research and students working on faculty-directed research. We feel that an open policy on the usage of the computing equipment will best optimize utilization.

We wish to make it as easy as possible to use these resources. The Department Computing Support Team has added a “Computing Resources” tab to the Department’s website which will provide information on the compute servers that are available, how to log in, and how to run jobs in the background. This tab is only available to users that log onto the Department website. The address is:

<http://statistics.byu.edu/content/computing-resources>

For simplicity, we are avoiding batch processing and load balancing systems; we encourage users to simply run jobs directly on the servers. If users anticipate that a computing task will take more than 24 hours, they are encouraged to run at a lower priority (specifically, a higher `nice` value of 10). Resource utilization will be monitored by Pete, who may `renice` long running jobs. Jobs are also subject to being killed if necessary and, as such, we encourage jobs to periodically write intermediate results. We encourage faculty and (especially) students to discuss with Pete any computing projects taking more than a few days, particularly those utilizing many cores. Pete can make proper arrangements to meet the computing requirements. These include, but are not limited to, the use of `nice`, assessment of competing computing tasks by other faculty members, and urgency of the computing task.

Technical questions can be addressed by Pete Dotson or David Dahl, but all members of the committee are eager to ensure that faculty and student computing needs are met.