Dear Colleagues,

Earlier this spring, the Iowa Office of the Provost transitioned seven faculty clusters to independence after ten years of direct oversight and financial support which ends June 30, 2019.

The informatics cluster is a key element of the Iowa Informatics Initiative (UI3). Through the informatics cluster we were able to recruit 24 new data science faculty to campus. UI3 was established in 2014 as a campus-wide effort to foster interdisciplinary research collaborations, scholarship opportunities and data-intensive discovery in all domains. UI3 helps research faculty, students and staff hone the advanced data and computational skills needed to remain globally-competitive, and regionally-responsive; an Iowa vision that will never change. All research is becoming increasingly data intensive and this is accelerating with the increased usage of new methods such as those in the realm of artificial intelligence.

The UI3 Cluster Faculty program, Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Informatics (IGPI), UI3 Affiliates initiative, UI3 support services, and focused communities of practice—all fostered with the UI3 funding—have been successful and we are proud of the accomplishments of participating faculty, staff and students. IGPI commitments will be honored; students will continue to benefit from the stellar support they receive and will continue enjoying the collaborative spaces in the College of Public Health building until alternative space for the IGPI program is identified. Faculty hired under the initiative will remain in their home departments where they will continue supporting our institutional mission through their stellar teaching, research and service. UI3 and its leadership will continue to foster their professional development.

Office of the Provost funds to support UI3 are committed through December 2019. What happens after that time period is uncertain. What is clear is that the trends, challenges and demands that originally motivated the creation of UI3 remain an institutional priority; and discussions are ongoing about the next chapter of institutional efforts in supporting data intensive research and teaching. Iterations of UI3 programs—strengthened by the UI3 experience — will likely continue once campus leadership has time to evaluate these needs and how they align with broader institutional priorities, strategy and objectives for the future.

I look forward to engaging with everyone as we shape the future together! We have assembled a list of frequently-asked questions and answers on the Informatics website, and surveys to collect fresh queries and insights.

Thank you for your past collaborations, and continued support through this transition!

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Gregory R. Carmichael
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