### **Scientific Computing Survey**



## 1. How would you describe your level of scientific computing usage at JLab (i.e. other than email and webpages)?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Very demanding	14.4%	17
Demanding	33.9%	40
Average	40.7%	48
Low demanding	9.3%	11
Don't use scientific computing at JLab	1.7%	2
	answered question	118
	skipped question	O

#### 2. Are you an onsite or offsite user?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Onsite	45.7%	53
Offsite	54.3%	63
	answered question	116
	skipped question	2

## 3. Overall, are you satisfied with scientific computing at JLab, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with it, or dissatisfied with it?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Extremely satisfied	11.9%	14
Moderately satisfied	42.4%	50
Slightly satisfied	15.3%	18
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	6.8%	8
Slightly dissatisfied	9.3%	11
Moderately dissatisfied	11.0%	13
Extremely dissatisfied	3.4%	4
	answered question	118
	skipped question	0

## 4. Do you feel your scientific productivity is impacted by the cyber-security measures at JLab too much, too little, about the right amount, or not at all?

	Resp Perc		Response Count
Much too much		8.5%	10
Somewhat too much	5	2.5%	62
About the right amount	2	3.7%	28
Slightly too little	0	0.8%	1
Somewhat too little		3.4%	4
Much too little		0.8%	1
Not at all	1	0.2%	12
	answered que	stion	118
	skipped que	stion	0

# 5. Do you feel that the computer center does too much, too little or about the right amount to help the scientific productivity of users?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Much too much	0.9%	1
Somewhat too much	3.4%	4
About the right amount	48.7%	57
Slightly too little	29.1%	34
Somewhat too little	15.4%	18
Much too little	2.6%	3
	answered question	117
	skipped question	1

#### 6. Do you think that procedures are correctly documented?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Totally	3.5%	4
Mostly	73.0%	84
Hardly	20.9%	24
Not at all	2.6%	3
	answered question	115
	skipped question	3

## 7. Do you think that the variety of software offered by Computer Center is well documented?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Totally	0.9%	1
Mostly	58.4%	66
Hardly	38.1%	43
Not at all	2.7%	3
	answered question	113
	skipped question	5

### 8. Do you think that the documentation for procedures is current?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Totally	2.7%	3
Mostly	65.5%	74
Hardly	26.5%	30
Not at all	5.3%	6
	answered question	113
	skipped question	5

## 9. Do you think that Computer Center provides too many types of scientific software for your scientific needs, too little, or about the right amount?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Much too much	1.8%	2
Somewhat too much	1.8%	2
Slightly too much	0.0%	0
About the right amount	54.4%	62
Slightly too little	23.7%	27
Somewhat too little	14.0%	16
Much too little	4.4%	5
	answered question	114
	skipped question	4

## 10. Have you ever needed to contact the computer center because you could not find the appropriate documentation for your scientific computing needs?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Many times	7.8%	9
Sometimes	27.8%	32
Few times	36.5%	42
Never	27.8%	32
	answered question	115
	skipped question	3

### 11. Do you feel that changes in scientific computing procedures are properly announced to users?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Totally	10.4%	12
Mostly	55.7%	64
Hardly	27.8%	32
Not at all	6.1%	7
	answered question	115
	skipped question	3

# 12. Do you feel that the cybersecurity measures taken by the Computer Center are justified?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Totally	13.0%	15
Mostly	53.0%	61
Hardly	30.4%	35
Not at all	3.5%	4
	answered question	115
	skipped question	3

#### 13. Do you feel that cybersecurity measures are sufficiently explained to users?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Totally	9.6%	11
Mostly	43.9%	50
Hardly	28.1%	32
Not at all	18.4%	21
	answered question	114
	skipped question	4

## 14. How would you rate the computing power available at Jefferson Lab for your present needs?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Much too little	6.9%	8
Somewhat too little	31.9%	37
Adequate	50.9%	59
More than sufficient	8.6%	10
N/A	1.7%	2
	answered question	116
	skipped question	2

## 15. How would you rate the data storage capacity at Jefferson Lab with respect to your present needs?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Much too little	7.8%	9
Somewhat too little	27.0%	31
Aarely adequate	20.0%	23
Sufficient	38.3%	44
Generous	2.6%	3
N/A	4.3%	5
	answered question	115
	skipped question	3

### 16. How would you rate support for broadcasting and "virtual meetings"?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Much too little	16.5%	19
OK for now but will need to increase in the future	38.3%	44
Adequate	32.2%	37
More than sufficient	2.6%	3
Do not use - n/a	10.4%	12
	answered question	115
	skipped question	3

17. What do you like most about the scientific computing services provided by JLab?		
	Response Count	
	43	
answered question	43	
skipped question	75	
18. What changes would most improve the scientific computing services provided I Jefferson Lab?	ру	
	Response Count	
	55	
answered question	55	
skipped question	63	

Q17. W	hat do you like most about the scientific computing services provided by JLab?	
1	Do I have to like anything?	Aug 21, 2012 4:41 AM
2	Hardware and software improvements to keep systems state-of-the-art	Aug 21, 2012 3:43 AM
3	Very nice documetation on the cc.jlab.org webpage if you find the right link. Very good response time at CCPR (<24 hr).	Aug 20, 2012 7:46 PM
4	Great support by the scientific computing staff.	Aug 20, 2012 6:50 PM
5	It work when needed.	Aug 20, 2012 5:06 PM
6	the farm and tape silo	Aug 20, 2012 1:25 PM
7	Backup facilities and storage.	Aug 20, 2012 11:37 AM
8	Tape library (MSS)	Aug 20, 2012 11:26 AM
9	1) A lot of notes can be used for calculation 2) Huge disk space	Aug 20, 2012 11:12 AM
10	hardware and software environment to do data processing, usually quick response to helpdesk questions	Aug 20, 2012 11:01 AM
11	Friendly smart people	Aug 20, 2012 10:46 AM
12	Hard to say, perhaps that's a good endorsement. You mostly just do things and the Computer center is there in the background. The Helpdesk has proven useful.	Aug 17, 2012 8:44 AM
13	Security	Aug 17, 2012 8:34 AM
14	Software support, with special mention of Balint Joo.	Aug 13, 2012 2:10 PM
15	Generally, things work well and consistently, especially backups. Help desk handles simple issues very well, WiFi works well.	Aug 13, 2012 10:50 AM
16	Fast computing capabilities	Aug 9, 2012 8:16 AM
17	That they have webpages and can monitor what is going on.	Aug 9, 2012 8:01 AM
18	User-oriented service	Aug 9, 2012 6:48 AM
19	I find the services very good in general. Plenty of storage space. Very good farm capability and documentation. Friendly and helpful support staff.	Aug 9, 2012 1:34 AM
20	Online DAQ systems for experiments are finethats probably more a Hall by Hall responsibility	Aug 8, 2012 4:33 PM
21	Availability and friendliness of staff.	Aug 8, 2012 3:38 PM
22	CC does hard work.	Aug 8, 2012 2:27 PM
23	Lots of help desk hours	Aug 8, 2012 2:16 PM
24	good connection, I rarely get disconnected bbftp is wonderful!	Aug 8, 2012 1:22 PM

Q17. W	What do you like most about the scientific computing services provided by JLab?	
25	Decent documentation.	Aug 8, 2012 1:03 PM
26	Helpfulness of the staff in helping understand/solve my problems.	Aug 8, 2012 10:56 AM
27	professionalism, dedication and willingness to help	Aug 2, 2012 9:22 AM
28	The general working environment facilitates physics experiments, including storing raw data, calibrating experiments, analyzing data, conferring with other experimenters, sharing information with other scientists, publishing results, and keeping reliable electronic records of all stages of this process. One can simply trust that for Wikis, secure web pages, and individual accounts, information that is placed there is safe, secure, and relatively accessible.	Jul 26, 2012 5:27 PM
29	batch farm	Jul 26, 2012 8:20 AM
30	Ongoing upgrades, powerful capabilities	Jul 24, 2012 3:02 PM
31	User's webspace, but I wouldn't call that scientific computing.	Jul 24, 2012 12:07 PM
32	???	Jul 23, 2012 11:53 PM
33	farms	Jul 23, 2012 11:29 PM
34	Tape storage and the interfaces thereto.	Jul 23, 2012 12:57 PM
35	The basic computing infrastructure is easy to use.	Jul 23, 2012 12:42 PM
36	staff is helpful in effort to find solutions	Jul 23, 2012 9:35 AM
37	Nothing in particular,	Jul 23, 2012 9:25 AM
38	The computer group has generally been very supportive; the help desk person generally can answer all simple Windows-based questions.	Jul 23, 2012 9:24 AM
39	I'm not sure if "broadcasting and virtual meetings" is really in the SciComp domain, but it does need improvement. I realize it is a tricky problem with no simple solution, but it is increasingly important. The CCPR interface for setup is a bit awkward and response times can be disconcertingly slow.	Jul 23, 2012 8:58 AM
40	The helpdesk has become quite useful. It used to be the case that it was staffed with students who didn't have the proper background or training to answer even basic questions, but that has improved tremendously. Or my questions have become dumber	Jul 23, 2012 8:54 AM
41	Scientific computing is much too isolated to the Lab. Current policies do not allow for effective use of combined offsite-onsite resources.	Jul 23, 2012 8:15 AM
42	Ability to run jobs parallel and if properly used saves lot of time and effort on data analysis jobs.	Jul 23, 2012 7:59 AM
43	Good management. When an issue is brought forward, there is usually follow-up and action.	Jul 23, 2012 7:55 AM

Q18.	What changes would most improve the scientific computing services provided by Je	fferson Lab?
1	Better documentation. More flexible batch system. Centralized support for physics tools.	Aug 21, 2012 4:41 AM
2	Must have "man" pages for all commands: jstat, jsub, etc. Publicize exact algorithm for data deletion on /volatile for honest users, and then implement new amazing algorithm to punish those who abuse.	Aug 20, 2012 7:46 PM
3	Less wait time for batch farm.	Aug 20, 2012 6:50 PM
4	better updates to the CC wiki with current information (i.e. better documentation)	Aug 20, 2012 1:25 PM
5	up to date operating systems and compilers. much less restrictive policy in which ports to be open in particular for communication programs like voice over IP and the like.	Aug 20, 2012 11:37 AM
6	Fewer firewalls Easy VPN access from offsite (ssh tunnels and X forwarding don't cut it) A consistent videoconferencing solution	Aug 20, 2012 11:26 AM
7	1) Some of the notes are much slower than most of others, at least 50% slower. It will be good to replace them or organize them separately. For example, if one specify the time limit based on a fast note, the job will never finish by a smaller note. Sometimes one do not want to put a too large time limit to a job if that job will have 15% of probability will go into a dead loop.	Aug 20, 2012 11:12 AM
8	more homogeneous unix environment (not needing to check compatibility of provided software), better implementation of user-owned PCs (both level 1 and level 2: easier access to work, volatile, cache)	Aug 20, 2012 11:01 AM
9	Closer involvement with scientific staff who know a lot about the system, and help users to master the system (like Mark Jones, Doug Higgenbottem, Steve Wood) Better support for CERNLIB and FORTRAN.	Aug 20, 2012 10:46 AM
10	Would like to see stronger support of major packages such as ROOT and CERNLIB rather than relying on users for support. Would like increased support of collaborative tools, e.g. document databases, logbooks, wikis, git, etc.	Aug 20, 2012 10:35 AM
11	It can sometimes be difficult to determine how to implement ones computer codes to run on the JLab batch farm; better guidance with turning a code (for example, multiple simulations) from running sequentially on a desktop machine, to running in parallel over multiple nodes on the farm would be helpful.	Aug 17, 2012 9:26 AM
12	Well documentation should be a great part of the scientific computing.	Aug 17, 2012 8:34 AM
13	Change sharing of computing time. I always have to wait long times to get my jobs through auger. It is due to a few users with lots of jobs running/pending when I have only a small fraction of the jobs to run. Better documentation. Using a wiki is just OK but not easy to search. Also it gets out of date quick! It could be done much better.	Aug 15, 2012 12:09 PM
14	Keeping compilers such as gcc more up-to-date on the interactive farm machines	Aug 15, 2012 10:30 AM
15	Some more emphasis on reliability. The apparent policy of always going for the cheapest possible solution leads to an appreciable waste of researchers' time.	Aug 13, 2012 2:10 PM

Q18. W	hat changes would most improve the scientific computing services provided by Je	efferson Lab?
16	Insufficient disk space is a constant challenge; inability to share M: drive with user machines a challenge. More general purpose CPU for ~10min jobs would be handy. Standard LAPACK, BLAS, etc. libraries would be good. More standard tools (ghostview, etc.) would be good (evince is extremely slow). Control of printing from UNIX is sometimes problematic. jput & jget really need a "help" option, and the certificates are extremely problematic and usually give me problems (the workaround if using ifarml64 works OK).	Aug 13, 2012 10:50 AM
17	- The documentation should be made clear and better organized - The access to on-site printer for user MUST be dramatically improved	Aug 9, 2012 8:16 AM
18	Anytime something is updated, no one really knows about it. There seems to be a lack of communication. Also, the farm sometimes works at a reasonable pace, other times, it becomes a waste of my time because it is taking too long.	Aug 9, 2012 8:01 AM
19	Stop updates, unless they will provide substantial benefits for the users	Aug 9, 2012 6:48 AM
20	My mail problem is the difficulty of doing anything as an offsite user (UK). The bandwidth seems to be very restricted. I can no longer run a vnc session, and often just using a terminal is prohibitively slow. The reactions to cyber events have seemed to make life more difficult - problems communicating between machines in different places. Eg MCC <-> Counting house / experimental halls.	Aug 9, 2012 1:34 AM
21	I have found that several people run several hour long CPU intensive jobs on ifarml64, instead of submitting as batch jobs, which can make doing something simple like opening emacs run extremely slowly. Unless it's just my wireless connection.	Aug 8, 2012 6:22 PM
22	Better wifi	Aug 8, 2012 4:33 PM
23	Provide regular and documented training of and for scientific computing either by staff or through users able and willing to do so.	Aug 8, 2012 3:38 PM
24	certain programs are often outdated e.g. root and do not match the version than most of us have locally Certain thing are impossible to understand from the documentation for example once I had to call the help desk because the default python was ancient. After talking to them they told to use the command "use" which is completely undocumented	Aug 8, 2012 1:22 PM
25	More inside-the-fence help, especially in interfacing between the ACC and CUE networks.	Aug 8, 2012 1:03 PM
26	<ul> <li>My JLab username and password sit in plain text in many of my scripts because the perfectly safe ssh authentification is not allowed to login.</li> <li>Many of my CCPR never got a satisfactory answer, and nobody seems to care.</li> </ul>	Aug 8, 2012 12:57 PM
27	More CPUs for the scientific computing farm :)	Aug 8, 2012 10:56 AM
28	maintenance of software shared between halls	Aug 2, 2012 9:22 AM
29	Users who are off-site need to be able to use MIS as if they were on site. The double-login for offsite and wireless users is annoying and time-consuming. Changing a password every 6 months is too frequent to be secure, because we	Jul 26, 2012 5:27 PM

all end up having to write our new password down somewhere to remember it.  Interpret DOE cybersecurity requirements in the context of JLab needs and requirements and implement appropriately, rather than blind adherence to rules aimed at high-security DOE sites.  Provide more direct (faster speed) linux access from off-site computers.  Jul 26, 2012 8:20 AM  1) Clear communication and instructions to users 2) A heavier emphasis on enabling collaborative research 3) More attention to user needs 4) Fewer surprises  - Get input from what users really need. It's funny that this survey is not actually coming from the Computing Center Data transfer software is poorly supported. Not even a bittp client is available at JLab (what a shame!) Computing resources are poorly manage. Farm managing system does not allow for proper and efficient parametrization of jobs. Job priorities are badly designed and not functional Computer Center is under the impression that only Hall Bhas the need of big computing open. This is no longer true. We fill computing resources requests with our PAC proposals. These are never read (or ignored) by the Computing Center.  14	Q18. What changes would most improve the scientific computing services provided by Jefferson Lab?		
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40 It is extremely difficult to move large datasets in/out of JLab. There are Jul 23, 2012 12:42 PM	39	was incredibly useful that the old Auger page would display, at a glance, how many of a given user's jobs had been completed in the past 24 hours. When one submits a large batch of jobs, it's helpful to be able to see at a glance that, say, 150 of 300 have been completed. The new Auger status page does not provide	Jul 23, 2012 12:57 PM
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Q18. What changes would most improve the scientific computing services provided by Jefferson Lab?		
	extensive administrative roadblocks. All though a group of files can be transferred, it is not possible to automatically start the transfer of a new group after the previous group has completed. This means constant user intervention is required on a hourly or daily basis that stretches over weeks and even months. The LHC collaborations seem to have found solutions that maintain a high level of cybersecurity while transferring large data sets from a repository to a different site for computation/analysis. The JLab bottlenecks are severely hampering our physics productivity and make JLab unfriendly to foreign collaborations. 12 GeV will require a large increase in computing power for analysis	
41	Support for SRM access to the tape data store and disk caches; support for job submission through standard grid interfaces such as those in use by LHCG.	Jul 23, 2012 11:07 AM
42	Networking has been a problem for me. In part it is due to the Comcast network connections from my home in Chevy Chase. MD. I have experienced very slow response to gnuplot pop-ups. Perhaps it would be better if I switched to Verizon FIOS.	Jul 23, 2012 9:53 AM
43	keep more up to date with cern root, and have current version on all machines	Jul 23, 2012 9:35 AM
44	DIRECT (not trough intermediate login nodes) access to my computer and computing facilities from outside the lab. I am (was) a heavy user of the "fish" protocol (in KDE) and just cannot work the way I used to, have to transfer everything manually constantly and this takes a long time and is dangerous for the files (get corrupted sometimes). I deeply dislike the Farm system, the fact that you have to copy files into the farm to execute them etc. Everything should be done in our home directory, which should be mounted everywhere you can login, and backed up regularly, and have plenty of space. The current quota is ridiculous and prevents it for being used as the main working space. This means that we users are solely responsible for backup and spend a considerable amount of time just transfering files etc. By the way the network is extremely slow for that (when it works, usually is fast and stops at irregular intervals only to finally stop in the middle of a transfer, then one has to start again and cross the fingers, more frustrated than at the beginning; sometimes it just corrput the files!). In summary: one large location, mounted everywhere (including clusters, farms and all computing facilities), backed up, and accesible from outside. That is what exist in other places and I wish there was at JLab. The Red Hat enterprise versions of Linux that are used are out of date (with respect to other distributions), the support is not worth it, another distribution should be used.	Jul 23, 2012 9:25 AM
45	make the farm faster	Jul 23, 2012 9:25 AM
46	Very generally, the package support has fallen to various users rather the computer group itself; documentation on current CERNLIB, Geant4, ROOT, etc. tools is somewhat spotty and hard to find. The Jasmine system works, with odd limitations and some difficulties, but jget/jlab lacks even a simple "help" option to remind occasional users of its options and limitations. Disk space other than /scratch always seems to be in short supply. The help disk responds, but rarely does the one manning it know much about Unix and issues related to it. There are many tools on the disk, but little common guidance or support for them. For example, evince, that replaced Ghostview, is very slow and problematic - I'm sure individuals have setup Ghostview for themselves when it would be good if	Jul 23, 2012 9:24 AM

Q18. W	hat changes would most improve the scientific computing services provided by Jef	ferson Lab?
	there was a global user-driven repository of general software and software written specifically for Jlab-related work.	
47	Documentation is a mixed bag. It is usually present "somewhere", but finding it can be a bit of a struggle for new (and sometimes old) users. This ambiguity was difficult to reflect in the poll questions. If the documentation exists, but can't be found is it still adequate? Link-rot in bookmarks is a problem for old-timers this should be taken into account with redirects on any web redesign. Searching on the cc.jlab.org wiki was not integrated with the general search tools in the past (this might be fixed now). The stock scientific software (ROOT, GEANT4, etc) is often somewhat dated on the Farm. This has led to a proliferation of duplicate installs in /work and other user controlled directories. Some of this could be avoided if more recent builds were available through /site or /apps.	Jul 23, 2012 8:58 AM
48	A particular concern is the 'voluntary' power reduction. When the farm is turned off, it takes many days to recover. As I write this, the farm is still processing jobs submitted a week ago, one day before the farm went into low power mode. Normally these jobs run through in one day. How is the substantial productivity loss of users accounted for in the calculations of the savings on the power bill? Is it taken into account at all? If only 10 people are in a situation like mine and lose a week of productivity, that amounts to a very sizable chunk of money! Which, of course, conveniently doesn't need to be payed for by the lab Centralized scientific software is still (after many years of complaining) fragmented. How is it possible that there is no central (i.e. maintained and updated by the central computing group) installation of ROOT and geant4? There is a Hall A, Hall C, and a 12 GeV version that I know of, but that is just a waste of time for both the maintainers of those version, and for the users who have to hunt around for the version that is compiled for the right platforms and has the necessary features. If this isn't in the scope of the central computing group, then what are they doing? Given the current budgetary climate for individual research groups, travel to JLab is not always easy or cheap. The lack of any integrated video conferencing capabilities (i.e. that don't need a person to babysit it) leads to lost of lost opportunities for participation in meetings. Conversely, if also forces people stationed at JLab to attend remote meetings instead of attending a satellite meeting at JLab.	Jul 23, 2012 8:54 AM
49	Updating to a more user friendly OS. RedHat is sometimes hard to work with and customize for user needs.	Jul 23, 2012 8:15 AM
50	Effective offsite access for grid and global resources.	Jul 23, 2012 8:15 AM
51	Increase the number of ifarm nodes and provide some testing units for gpusoftware development.	Jul 23, 2012 7:55 AM
52	1. Increase the number of Physics/network Opera licenses by taking over lost dongle 915 from ME at a cost of \$5900 for conversion and perhaps that much annually in maintenance fees. Users have learned how to use the licenses remotely by putting a box they may log into remotely into CC, so there's a lot more demand than there was three years ago. 2. buy another Modeller network license at about \$8000 initially and \$1600/year maintenance. This is more important than (1) since there are four Opera licenses but only two Modeller licenses. OTOH, one can stack up many models and run them in parallel if one has enough RAM and licenses available. 3. provide an easy way	Jul 23, 2012 7:53 AM

Q18. What changes would most improve the scientific computing services provided by Jefferson Lab?		
	to back up people's FEM work to silo via gigabit ethernet on site. 500 GB on a shared drive doesn't cut it, which is why no one uses it regularly. Talk to Paul Letta. 4. install R (www.r-project.org) and get someone over from ODU to give a starting course in it.	
53	The security is like the TSA all about the image and nothing about actual security. The wireless is difficult to join, frequently drops connections, and has slow speeds. The video conferencing is haphazard, has little documentation on the web, and is often an afterthought for collaboration meetings. When a room is booked, it should be assumed that video conferencing is also needed. Systems such as Vidyo, EVO, Skype or even readytalk (which is the worst of the four) should also be booked. Printing from laptops is terrible. There is no support, the web pages are simply wrong, and it does not appear the CC cares.	Jul 23, 2012 7:51 AM
54	guest network computer are not accessible from outside. Will be nice to have a machine to bridge the access to these computer from outside through ssh (like login.jlab.org for the farm). This will help my work.	Jul 23, 2012 7:50 AM
55	Physics should approve large simulation production jobs. There are duplicates, and sometimes young outside users waste ressources because there is no oversight by JLab staff.	Jul 23, 2012 7:43 AM