Programming Massively Parallel Multiprocessors and Heterogeneous Systems (Understanding and programming the devices powering AI)

Lecture 0: Class overview and Introductions

Jonathan Appavoo email: jappavoo @ b u . e d u office: CDS 706

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CUDA Programming on GPU's

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Course Synopsis
(See Syllabus on Piazza for details)

Course Prerequisites and Structure

- **Prerequisites**
  - Basic understanding of the C programming language (especially its use of pointers)
  - Undergrad level knowledge of computer architecture
- **Structure**
  - Lectures twice a week for ~7-8 weeks
  - Seminars and Guest Lectures remaining weeks
  - Discussions once a week as needed
  - Office hours

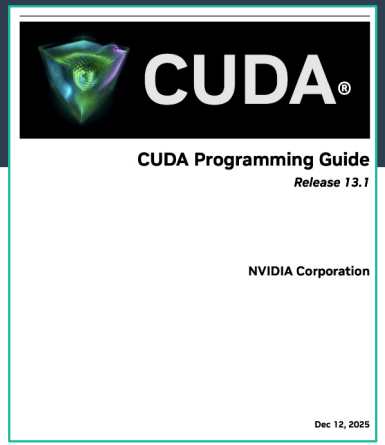
Course Components

- **Lectures 12 -16**
- **Programming Assignments: 5**
- **Seminars: student led paper discussion**
- **Guest Lectures: 5-6 : NVIDIA, IBM, Red Hat, Meta, BU**
- **Midterm: Lecture Material**
- **Final: Predominately based on assignments and programming**
- ***Attendance and Participation in lectures and seminars***

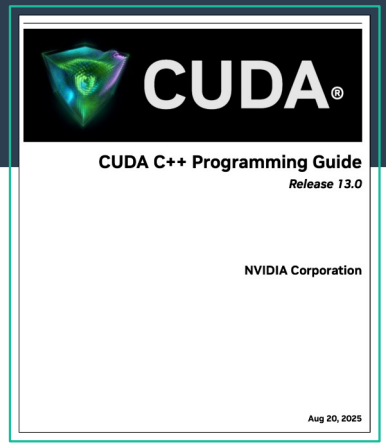
Course Resources

https://docs.nvidia.com/cuda/#programming-guides

- **Primary source of information (besides slides): NVIDIA Inc, "CUDA C++ Programming Guide" (and friends: best practices, API references, white papers, etc)**
  - 13.1 vs 13.0 vs 12.6
- **Textbook: none**
  - but if you need one Kirk and Hwu: "Programming Massively Parallel Processors: A Hands-on Approach (4th edition)" is reasonable.
- **Piazza**
- **Github Classroom**
- **Gradescope**
- **MOC/NERC/Red Hat Open AI**
  - GPUS: V100, A100 and H100
  - CUDA: 12.6.3
- **DGX Sparks**
  - GB10's
  - CUDA: 13.1



13.1



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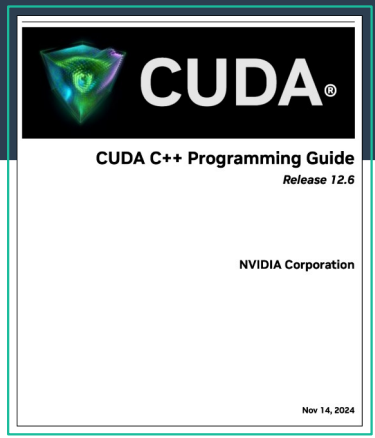

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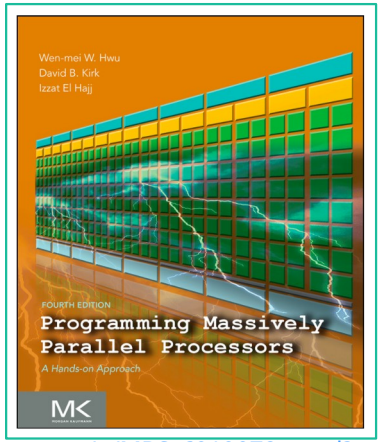

https://bu.bncollege.com/c/Programming-Massively-Parallel-Processors/p/MBS_6919078_used?currentCampus=8529&rental=true

Grade Beakdown

- **Participation, Seminars & Attendance**
  - 30%
- **Programming Assignments:**
  - 40%
- **Midterm:**
  - March 19th: 15%
- **Final:**
  - 15%
-

Syllabus

The details, including a tentative weekly calendar

Please read and ask any questions you have on Piazza

syllabus

CAS CS 391 - Spring 2026: Programming Massively Parallel Multiprocessors and Heterogeneous Systems
(Understanding and programming the devices powering AI)

Piazza: https://piazza.com/bu/spring2026/cs391/home
Programming/GPU environment:
apps.edu.nerc.mghpcc.org/
Gradescope: https://www.gradescope
Lectures: Tuesday and Thursday 11:00
Staff: Professor Appavoo BU email: ja
Office hours: **Location:** CDS 706 **Ti**
Midterms: 75 minute in-class midterm

Course Description: After decades, we
MultiProcessors (MPP) has become com
(GPUs), access to MPPs is no longer res
Computing on Super-Computers.

Today, most computer systems are hete
Central Processing Units (CPUs) and G
gabytes of high-bandwidth memory. Para
100x speedup over similar single-core CP
tions, signal processing, financial modeli
widespread access and availability of hete
AI revolution.

While the CPU's familiar von Neumma
general-purpose computing, adding the I
GPU has proven critical in providing the
tion. Understanding the heterogeneous co
is the focus of this class.

The course covers "general purpose" —
in a heterogeneous system. The course in
including its programming model and syn
computing on GPUs, parallel algorithms,

The focus of the course will be on per
programs, GPUs are often used as accele
than they would on a multi-core CPU. Sp
will require you to evaluate the various n
course is not about getting applications
but rather about gaining a fundamental u
concerning performance.

Acknowledgments: This class borrows
Toronto offering of ECE1782H "Programm
Systems. Thank you, Dr Stumm.

8 Detailed Syllabus Calendar

The following is the tentative calendar changes and updates will be posted on Piazza.

Date	Activity/Topics	Readings	Assignments
Tue 01/20/26	Class Overview and Introductions		
Thu 01/22/26	Motivation and Challenges (lec1:1-32)		

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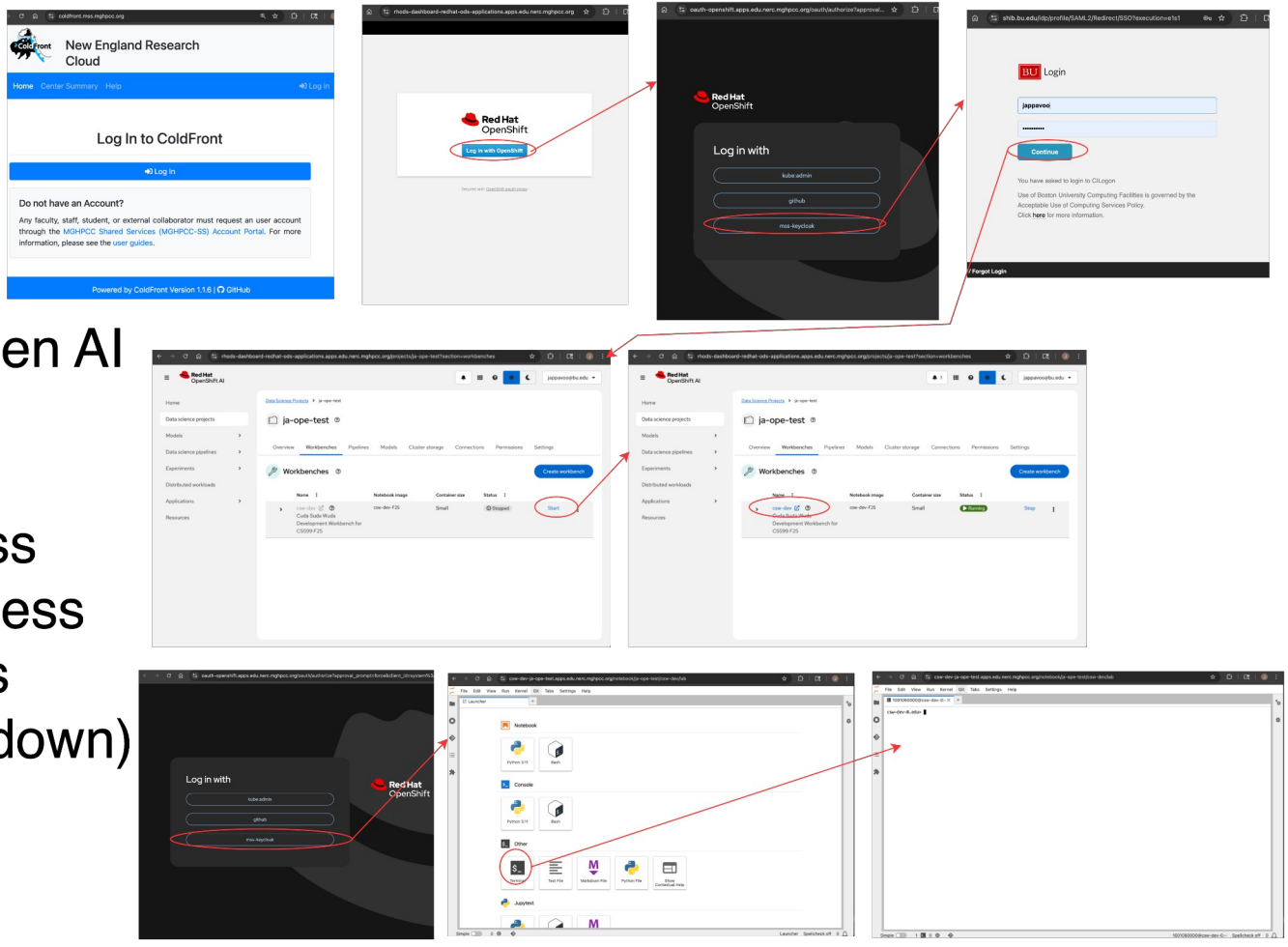
Fri 01/23/26	Login & Pthread create	https://hpc-tutorials.llnl.gov/posix/ (Sections 1-5 inclusive)	Assignment 1 out
Tue 01/27/26	Multiprocessors		
Thu 01/29/26	GPU architecture		
Fri 01/30/26	[Optional] C and pthread help session		
Tue 02/03/26	Introduction to CUDA programming I		
Thu 02/05/26	Introduction to CUDA programming II		
Fri 02/06/26	batchtools, CUDA Hello World and Error Handling		
Tue 02/10/26	Introduction to CUDA programming III		**DUE:** Assignment 1 Assignment 2 out

GPU Lab Infrastructure

Containerized CUDA + Batch GPUs

- Getting Started
  - ColdFront
  - OpenShift and Red Hat Open AI
- Dev Container
  - RHEL 9 + CUDA 12.6.3
  - Browser Jupyter Lab Access
  - Terminal Remote Shell Access
  - Persistent home directories
  - Idle culler (but please shutdown)
- Batch Queues
  - bqstat, bjobs, brun,



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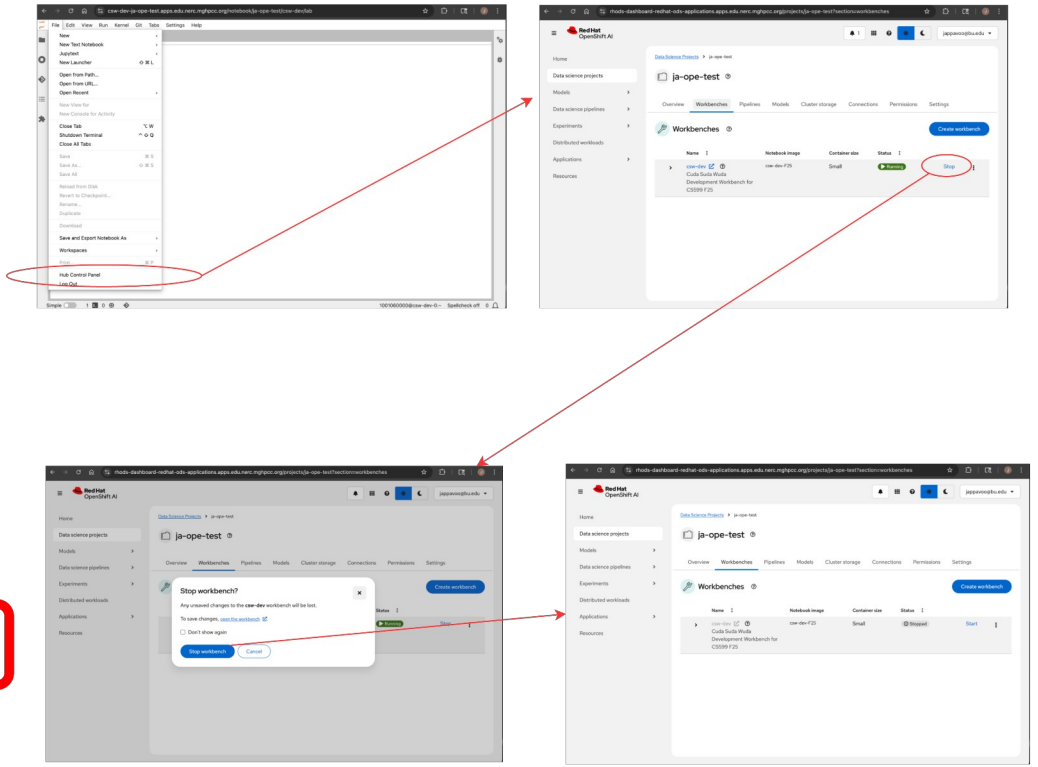
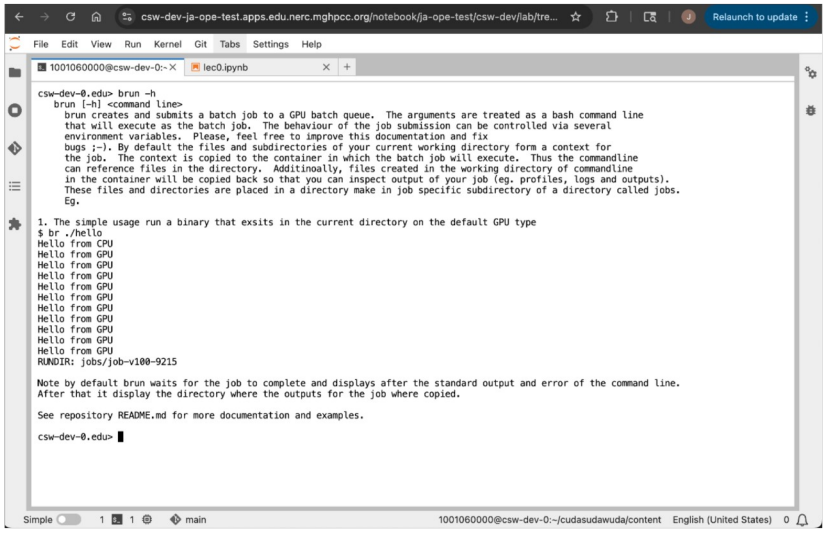
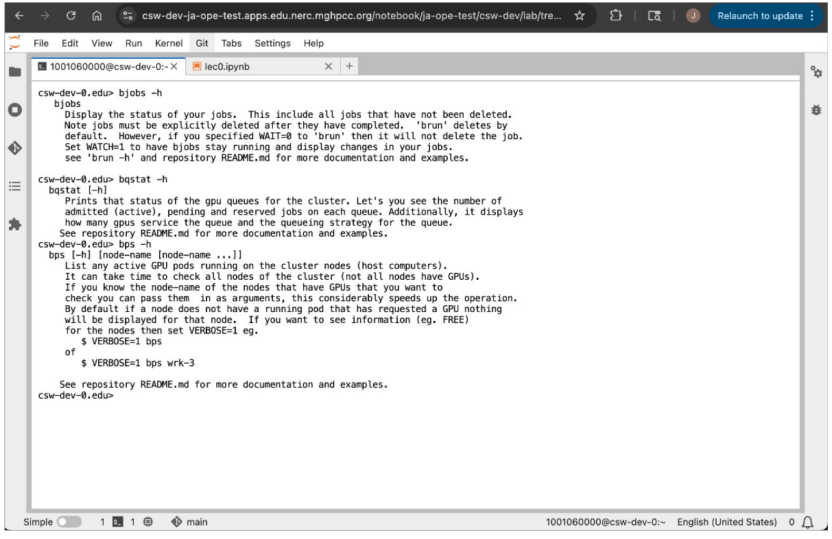


Batch Queues

https://github.com/jappavoo/batchtools

- **`brun`**: run a binary on a GPU "node"
- **`./jobs`**: outputs from run/job
- **`bjobs`**: current jobs
- **`bqstat`**: status of queues
- **`bps`**: list activity on GPU nodes (broken)
- misc: **`blog`**, **`bpods`**, **`bwait`**





Please help me fix bugs

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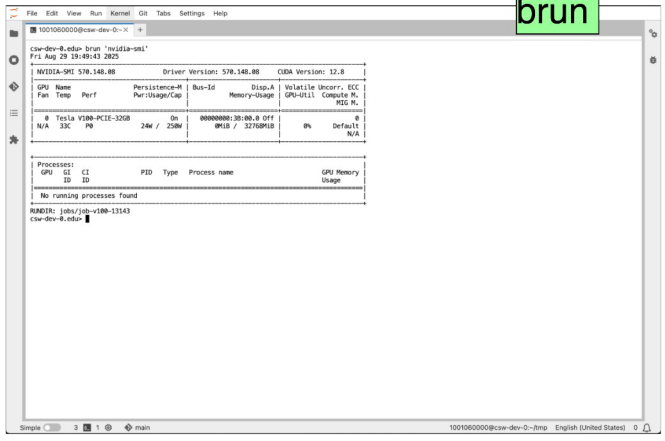
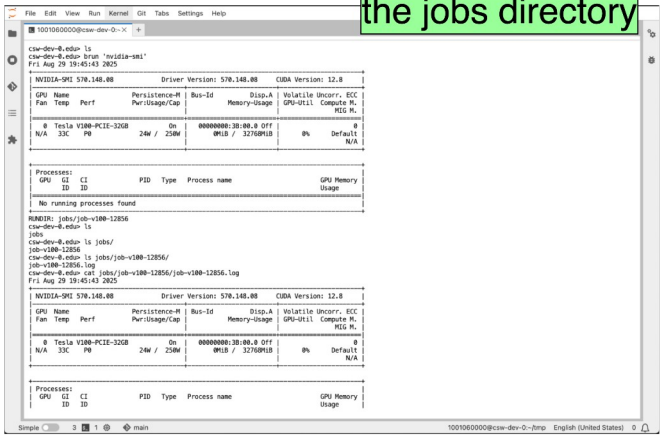
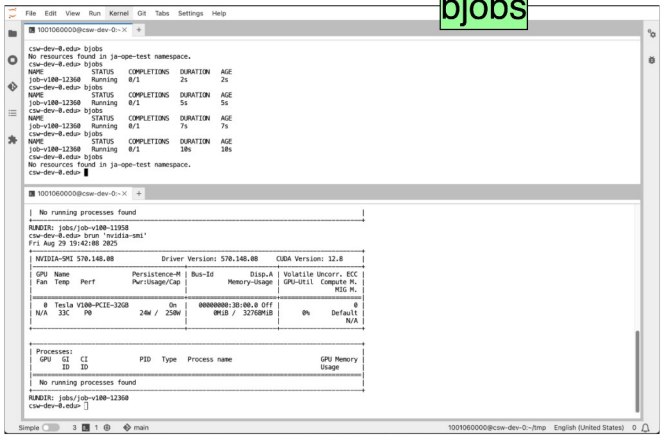


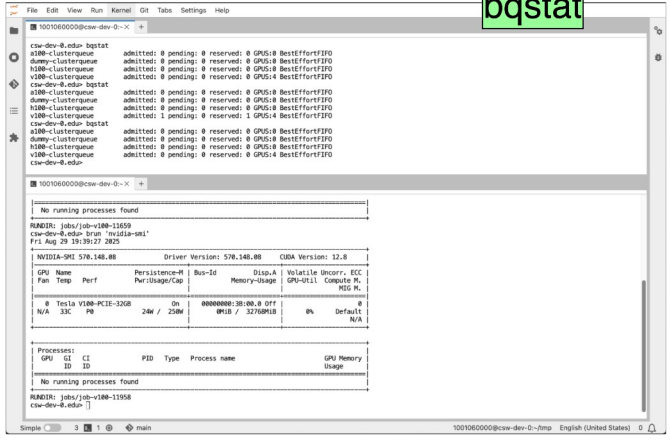
the jobs directory



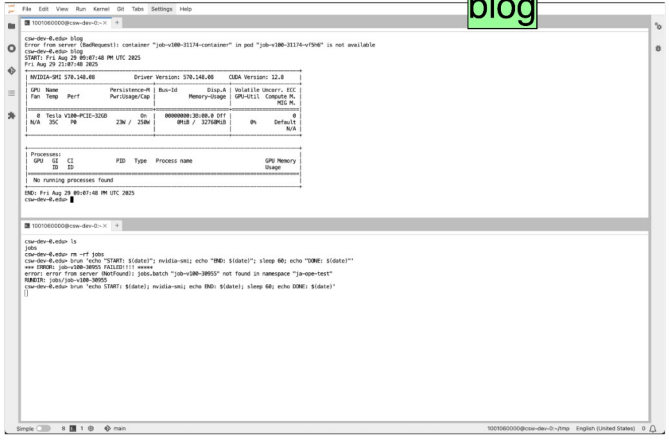
bjobs



bqstat



blog



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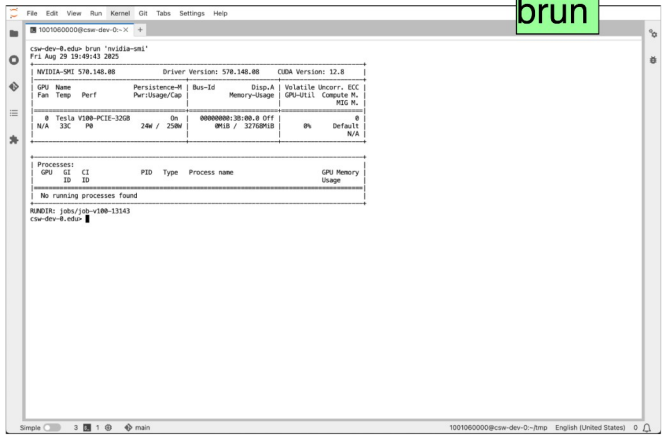

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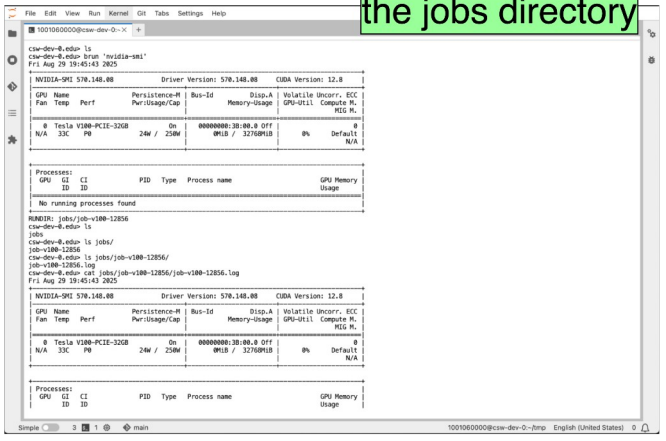

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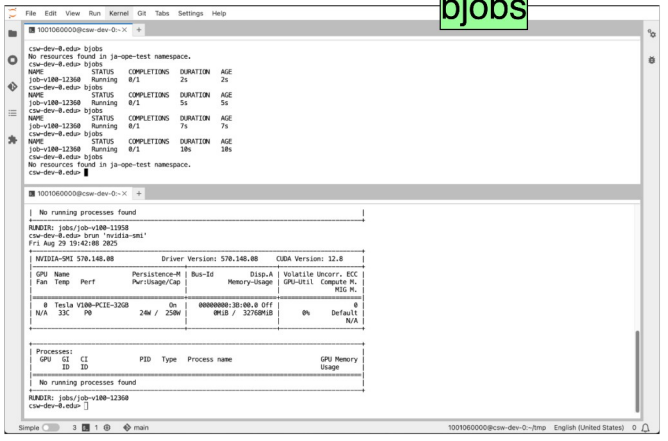

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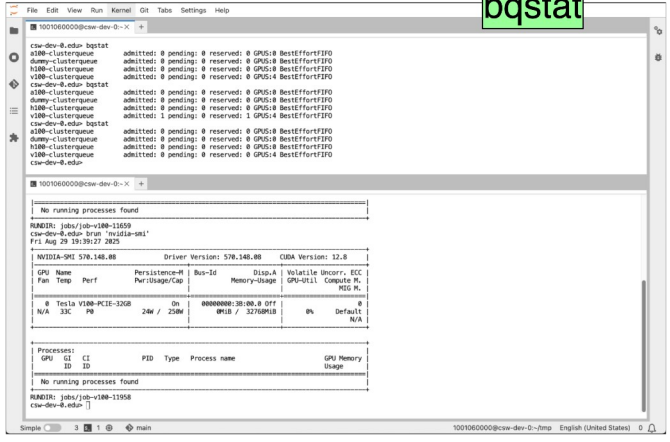

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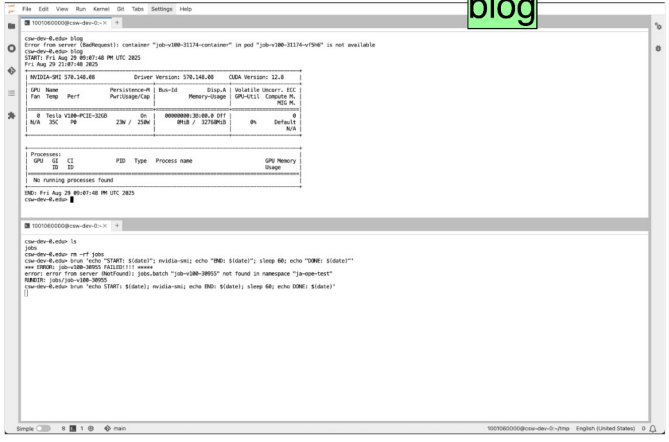
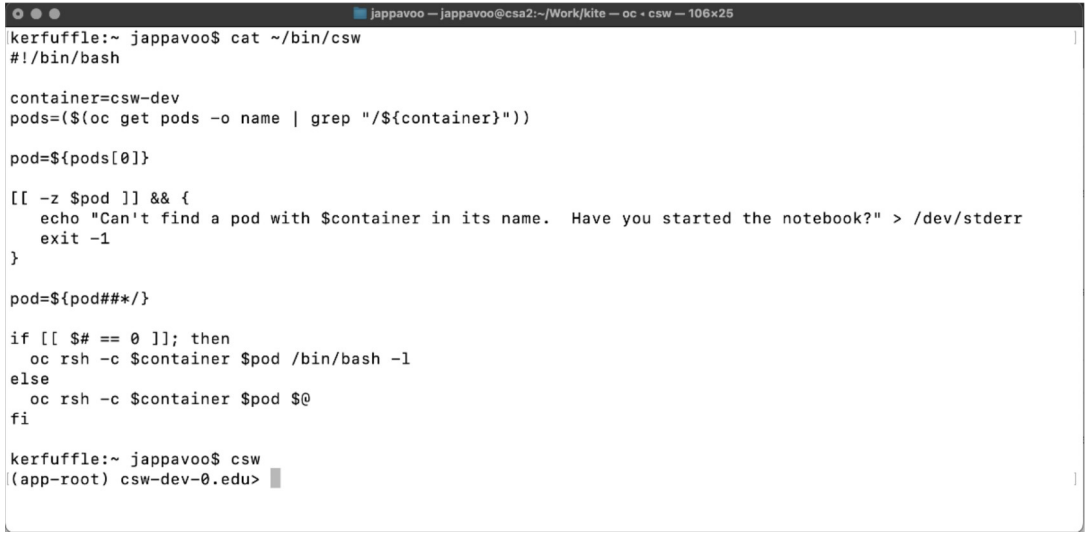


bps

Terminal Interface

Alternative to using browser

- Install OpenShift CLI client (oc)
  - https://console.apps.edu.nerc.mghpcc.org/command-line-tools
- Get and execute login command
  - https://oauth-openshift.apps.edu.nerc.mghpcc.org/oauth/token/display
- Start csw-dev workbench via Red Hat OpenShift AI
- Use 'oc rsh' and friends
  - see my csw script for an example of how I start shells sessions



Concurrency, parallelism, scalability, me and you

Our backgrounds, our understanding and why we are here

Some Ice Breakers

Well for geeks anyway

- What does "Parallel Computing" make you think/feel?
- How many cores does your laptop have?
- What is the largest number of cores that a system you have worked on has had?
- What is the largest number of threads you have explicitly created in a program?
- Have you written a pthreaded application? How long did you debug it?
- What are your CS interests?
- Why brings you to this class?