Using and Installing Python

Versions

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- ElGato
- Puma

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You can always check the current python modules available on either cluster with the command `module avail python`

Ocelote

There are four versions of Python available on Ocelote. The naming convention is different from the older clusters to support version 3. Python version 3 requires the `python3` command or `pip3 list` to differentiate. It is very different from Python version 2, so do not assume that Python 3 will work for you or that all older modules will work with version 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Accessibility</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Python 2.6.6</td>
<td>system version (no module)</td>
<td>Accessible as <code>python</code> when no python 2.7.14 is not loaded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Python 2.7.14</td>
<td>module load python:2 or module load python:2.7</td>
<td>Overrides system python 2.6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Python 3.5.5</td>
<td>module load python:3 or module load python:3.5</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Python 3.6.5  | module load python:3.6        | Loaded by default with `module load python`. This version contains many of the machine learning packages like Tensorflow that can be utilized on the Centos 7 / GPU nodes.

ElGato

There are three versions of Python available on ElGato.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
Python

2.7.5
system version (no module)
Accessible as python

Python
3.5.5
module load python/3.5
Python 3.5 has the basic packages installed. "pip3 list" will display the packages along with the version installed.
You are encouraged to use virtualenv to customize Python (below).

Python3. 8.0
module load python/3.8/3.8.2
Requires a slightly different

Puma

Four versions of Python are available on Puma. Only available on compute nodes accessible either in a batch submission or interactive session.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Python 3.5.5</td>
<td>module load python/3.5</td>
<td>Python 3.5 has the basic packages installed. &quot;pip3 list&quot; will display the packages along with the version installed. You are encouraged to use virtualenv to customize Python (below).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Python 3.6.8</td>
<td>module load python/3.6/3.6.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Python 3.8.2</td>
<td>module load python/3.8/3.8.2</td>
<td></td>
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Python Packages

Installation & Package Policy

We maintain a two tiered approach to Python packages

- **Tier 1:** We install the basic Python packages that are required by most users (these are mostly libraries rather than packages, such as numpy and scipy). This is done for the versions of Python that we install as modules. Adding some packages might force an upgrade of numpy for example, which might break a user's environment that was dependent on the prior version.

- **Tier 2:** For packages that we do not provide we STRONGLY recommend the use of virtualenv, which is detailed below and provides a custom and easy to use personal Python environment.

Installing Python Packages Using virtualenv

Useful overview of virtualenv and venv: InfoWorld Article: Python virtualenv and venv do's and don'ts

One of the best things about Python is the number of packages provided by the user community. On a personal machine, the most popular method today for managing these packages is the use of a package manager, like pip. Unfortunately, these require root access and are not a viable solution on the clusters.

There is an easy solution. You can use virtualenv to create a personal python environment that will persist each time you log in. There is no risk of packages being updated under you for another user.

On Ocelote, virtualenv is set up for Python 3.5 and Python 3.6, and for Python 2. On Elgato, virtualenv is set up for Python 3.

To find packages you might want to start with python.org.

Virtual Environment Instructions
1. Set up your virtual environment in your account. This step is done one time only and will be good for all future uses of your Python environment.

Note: In the commands below, `/path/to/virtual/env` is the path to the directory where all of your environment’s executables and packages will be saved. For example, if you use the path `~/mypyenv`, this will create a directory in your home called mypyenv. Inside will be directories `bin`, `lib`, `lib64`, and `include`.

**Commands**

**Python Version < 3.8**

```bash
$ module load python/<version>
$ virtualenv --system-site-packages /path/to/virtual/env
```

**Python Version 3.8**

```bash
$ module load python/<version>
$ python3 -m venv /path/to/virtual/env
```

2. To use your new environment, you’ll need to activate it. Inside your virtual environment, there’s a directory called bin that has a file called `activate`. Sourcing this will add all of the paths needed to your working environment. To activate, run the following, replacing `/path/to/virtual/env` with the path specific to your account:

```bash
$ source /path/to/virtual/env/bin/activate
```

3. Once your environment is active, you can pip install your package. For example:

```bash
$ pip install pycurl
```

4. If you would like your virtual environment to always be active, you can add the activate command to your `~/.bashrc`. This is a hidden file in your home directory that sets up your environment each time you log in. To edit it, open the file using your favorite text editor. Then, add the following to a blank line:

```bash
module load python/<version>
source /path/to/virtual/env/bin/activate
```

### Accessing Custom Packages from a Jupyter Session

An OOD Jupyter session is a different environment from working directly on the command line. This means to access and install custom packages, you will need a slightly different approach. To execute system commands, precede them with a `!`

Note that

**Creating a virtual environment**

If you need to create a new virtual environment, you may do so with the following (substituting in your own name and path). **This step does not need to be performed if you already have a virtual environment in your account.** For more information on creating a virtual environment, see above under Virtual Environment Instructions.

```bash
!virtualenv --system-site-packages /path/to/virtualenv
```

Next, to install your custom package you'll need to activate your environment and perform the install. This must be done on the same line because system commands do not carry over from one line to the next.

```bash
!source /path/to/virtualenv/bin/activate && pip install pycurl && pip show pycurl
```

The `pip show` command is used to get the location of where the package was installed. You'll need this because the install will not automatically allow access to the package, meaning if you try to import it in the next step you'll get an import/module not found error. The next step will allow you to add the location to your python system path.
import sys
sys.path.append("/path/to/virtualenv/lib/python3.5/site-packages") # where pycurl is located in this example
import pycurl # success!

You can always use pip show with any virtual environments in your account allowing you to find and import anything you’ve previously installed. Just start with the source command above and exclude the pip install (you may want to double-check that the python virtual environment and the Jupyter version match before using/importing packages).

Another option to get a path automatically added to your environment is to include an export PYTHONPATH statement in your ~/.bashrc. Be aware, though, that this adds the path to your environment every time you log in, so you may want to proceed with caution if you’re switching between python versions:

export PYTHONPATH=/path/to/virtualenv/lib/python3.5/site-packages:$PYTHONPATH