Effort Reporting System Management Group
Meeting Notes
May 11, 2005

Accepted June 8, 2005

In attendance were: Sue Abeles, Mike Allred, Don Larson, John Ellis, Jorge Ohy, Joyce Freedman, Pixie Ogren, Adam Cohen, Deb Nikkel, and Jon Good. Eric Vermillion participated by phone.

Introductions

Jon Good introduced Deb Nikkel who is joining the project team to fill the communications/training specialist role.

Discussion Topics:

Review and Acceptance of Meeting Notes: The notes for the meeting of April 13, 2005 meeting were accepted without revision.

Project Status Update:

Jon reported that there has been very good progress on programming. Substantial work on the web interface has been done and, excluding system administration functions, is expected to be complete by the end of June. Recruiting is underway for a contract employee to work on the development of the system and subsequent support during the maintenance phase of the project.

Adam Cohen reported that several pages of the web application have been completed and are currently being tested using data from three campuses. Adam mentioned that the contract employee is slated to work on the bulk of the system administration functions. Mike Allred noted that a lot of system administration functions have been built by Davis staff and asked whether these people might be able to add to the project in some way. Jon commented that it may well be valuable to draw on Davis staff experience, and perhaps some of the functionality that's been built for Davis purposes might be of use to the ERS project team.

Adam distributed the project schedule and Jon noted that modifications to PPS to implement the NIH Salary CAP will be released to campuses in two phases. The first phase encompasses edits on salary at the time salary changes are made to the EDB. This first phase release is scheduled to be released in mid-June. The second phase will address reporting "over cap" conditions detected in the Payroll Compute process and is planned for release later in the summer.

Pixie mentioned that there may be situations at the campuses where salary is not being set up properly such that PPS edits will not detect when an individual has exceeded the NIH cap. One possible example is when an employee's salary rate is off or above scale and the salary for that individual is set up as two components with the scale rate paid with a percentage of time and any amount above the scale amount set up as a separate "by agreement" pay line. If both are paid from Federal research funds subject to the salary cap, modifications to PPS will not catch the “over cap” condition since the system does not reflect the total pay rate. Campuses will need to review how pay is set up for individuals who must certify effort and, if any anomalies are found, clean up PPS data accordingly.

Sue requested a description of the functionality to be contained in the two PPS releases (e.g., how the edits will work, what will happen when the cap is exceeded) to be able to communicate with campus constituents about what to expect. **Jon will arrange for that description.** Mike suggested getting a description of the employee record cases where the PPS salary cap changes will not be effective.

Jon suggested that issues like this will keep coming up and that expertise needs to be in place at the campuses to help resolve these issues, and clean up PPS data as appropriate. Such expertise will also be needed to work through issues in the system development and testing context as well. Mike asked if there was a list of the things that folks are doing improperly, or better still, a set of guidelines as to how pay detail needs to be set up in PPS to be consistent with the assumptions of the Effort Reporting System. Pixie responded that the ERS Requirements, for the most part, covered these assumptions.

“Quality Assurance – Data Context

Continuing on the preceding discussion, Jon introduced the need for campus-based expertise to participate in a “pre-quality assurance” testing phase to address a multitude of cases and to help identify whether issues that come up with campus-specific data are related to actual ERS requirements or the way the campus has set up the data in, say, PPS. Sue asked whether members of the Requirements Group would be the right people to file this role. Jon responded that it will vary by campus. Pixie commented that this is important and that each campus needs to have a person or people who know the policy perspective and how things are done in PPS as well as understanding the cases from a department perspective. Adam commented that the development team doesn’t have the expertise to say whether all situations in a campus are being handled correctly in PPS. Jon emphasized the need to do this “pre-quality assurance” before usability testing begins. Sue suggested that campuses could draw from campus work groups for participants in this testing. Adam suggested these skill sets would be most valuable to “pre-quality assurance”) activities: an understanding of effort reporting, knowledge of PPS and how appointments are set up in departments. Pixie suggested that an overview session could be arranged for these campus folks to give them an overview of the system, some idea of the policy and mechanical issues they’d need to be keeping in mind, and how to report issues. It was suggested that such sessions could be arranged to meet campus needs with either individual sessions on each campus or on a North/South basis to minimize the number of people who would be required to travel just to participate.

Functional Requirements Work Group

Jon reported that the Requirements Group continues to work through the issues of 9/11 combination appointments to validate the “factor” method of calculating effort under combination appointment conditions and the issue of consistent use of Title Codes in identifying 9/12 and 11/12 appointments. At the April 14 meeting, the group began work on notification requirements, and made good progress. At the next meeting, May 12, the group will begin discussion of reporting requirements.

Technical Advisory Group

Adam reported that the next meeting of the Technical Advisory Group will focus on gathering information on existing and planned campus cost sharing/commitment systems to figure out how cost sharing commitment information will be factored in ERS and matched up to effort reports. A key issue is how commitments are stored in local systems (by dollars or percent) and how commitments will be normalized to percents for use by the ERS. **After a brief discussion, the group agreed that the ERS should accept from campus cost sharing systems only commitments expressed in percent time.**

White Paper

Sue reported that she has not received any further comments since the April 13 meeting. She asked Eric Vermillion about the status of the letter from the Budget and Planning Officers with their combined comments, which had been mentioned at the last meeting. **Eric responded that he has asked for feedback by end of this week and will forward the comments to Sue shortly thereafter.**

Sue mentioned that at the April 14 Requirements Group meeting the 5% tolerance in effort reporting was questioned as truly being supported by the Federal Government. Jorge Ohy responded that a HHS IG review of the design of the A21/PAR system had resulted in tacit approval of the tolerance. Further, there's agreement from the Fed that effort reporting involves estimates anyway, so this should be a non-issue. **The group concurred.**

Sue commented that she'll finalize the White Paper as soon as Eric sends the feedback from the Budget and Planning Officers.

Feedback on Campus Work Group Meetings

Sue asked for reports on campus meetings about ERS.

Los Angeles – Sue reported that there have been no campus work group meetings since last the ERS Management Group meeting.

Berkeley – John Ellis reported that there have been no campus work group meetings since the last ERS Management Group meeting.

Davis –Mike reported that meetings continue to occur monthly – recent agendas have focused on the local cost sharing system rather than ERS.

San Francisco – Joyce Freedman reported that SF doesn't yet have a group but will have one soon.

San Diego – Don Larson reported that the campus work group had been expanded and scheduling the group for a meeting has been difficult as a result. However, it looks like a meeting will be set up in June and suggested that participation from the project team may be requested for this meeting.

<u>Development of Strategic Plan for Communications and Training</u>

Deb Nikkel, who has been hired as the communications and training specialist, was introduced to the Management Group.

A discussion to frame and size the communications and training aspect of the project ensued.

It will be important to prepare campus faculty, administrators and end-users to receive the system. Therefore communications must motivate buy-in and compliance and state specific expectations regarding responsibility. Key points to communicate: benefits to campus administrators are reduction of risk; benefits to end users are improvements to process.

It was decided that mechanisms that will be employed for communicating content to audiences will be: Macromedia Breeze, PowerPoint slide shows, Memos, hand-outs and accompanying meeting guides for change managers to use to conduct meetings.

There are two major categories of communications that are required:

- Informational communications that speak to policy, change management, benefits/ROI.
- How To communications that tell all audiences specifically what they need to know to use the effort reporting system.

Deb and the group discussed, in broad terms, target audiences that must be reached prior to and during the implementation of the effort reporting system. That discussion, along with the audience list developed by the Management Group at their March 9 meeting, will inform her development efforts.

For the next meeting, Deb will prepare a preliminary plan for development of training and communication deliverables and draft a PowerPoint slide presentation with an accompanying handout that the members of the ERS management group can use to kick-off ERS communications at their respective campuses.

<u>Marketing ERS to Other Institutions</u>

Sue remarked that she had put this topic on the agenda because of two events: 1) discussions with Indiana about the effort reporting in the Kuali project context; and, 2) interest in the ERS expressed by other institutions following a presentation Sue and Pixie made at a regional

NCURA conference. Mike commented that interest in the Kuali context is probably something for the future. After some discussion of different economic models, it was concluded that an opportunity may exist, but that the University has to be sensitive to a lot of different interests and concerns. Still, an opportunity exists to make the system available to other higher education institutions. **Jon will talk with folks in UC Technology Transfer about the relevant intellectual property and licensing considerations and report back to the Management Group.** It was agreed that not too much concern be placed on this topic until the project is further along and agreed that sometime in the fall would be a good time to return attention to marketing opportunities. Jon suggested that it's not a bad idea to keep talking about possible marketing as there will be continued interest in the UC ERS solution as discussion of the project continues to take place in various higher education forums.

Meeting Schedules

Meetings have been scheduled through the end of 2005 as follows:

July 13 (Wednesday) 1-3pm 10325 Franklin
August 10 (Wednesday) 1-3pm 10325 Franklin
September 7 (Wednesday) 1-3pm 9115 Franklin
October 12 (Wednesday) 1-3pm 10325 Franklin
November 9 (Wednesday) 1-3pm 10325 Franklin
December 7 (Wednesday) 1-3pm 9115 Franklin

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for June 8, 2005 from 1:00 to 3:00 at UCOP (Conference Room 10325 Franklin). This will be an in-person meeting.