

Effort Reporting System Management Group
Meeting Notes
June 8, 2005
Accepted July 13, 2005

In attendance were: Sue Abeles, Mike Allred, John Ellis, Jorge Ohy, Pixie Ogren, Adam Cohen, Deb Nikkel, and Jon Good.

Discussion Topics:

Review and Acceptance of Meeting Notes: The notes for the meeting of May 11, 2005, were accepted without revision.

Project Status Update:

Adam distributed the project schedule and Jon noted that the first phase of modifications to PPS to implement the NIH Salary CAP had been issued as PPS Release 1647 on June 6. The service request document describing the edits issued in this release was sent to Management Group via email on June 7. The second phase of PPS modifications will address reporting “over cap” conditions detected in the Payroll Compute process and is planned for release later in the summer.

Adam reported that approximately 75% of the work on the web interface has been completed. Interfaces to load data are just about complete. Work on system administration functions will begin soon. 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.

Quality Assurance – Data Context

Sue asked for campuses to report on progress towards identifying testers.

UCLA (Sue) – some good candidates have been identified. Rick Valdivia is working on outreach to those candidates.

Berkeley (John) – no progress yet. John will follow-up.

DV (Mike) – a campus group of 30-35 people testing the campus cost sharing system will be leveraged for the merged cost sharing/ERS implementation and members of this group will test ERS when ready.

There was a brief discussion of whether it was okay to show the ERS prototype to academics. Pixie commented that the final base system configuration may differ in minor ways from the prototype, the key elements of the ERS already appear in the prototype and aren’t likely to change. **It was agreed that showing the prototype to academics would not pose any significant problems downstream.**

Federal Flow Through Code Definition Revisions

Jon introduced this topic by noting that the Requirements Committee had identified two common data elements in need of revision to allow campuses to clearly identify federal funds that don't require effort reporting and those non-federal funds where effort reporting is required. Jorge elaborated and handed out proposed revisions to the university-wide "Type of Award" and "Flow Through Code" data elements.

Sue reminded the group that the white paper had recommended that campuses not determine on their own whether effort reporting is relevant or not to a grant, relying instead on a systemwide determination by the UCOP Office of Research Administration

Pixie commented that Work Study funds need to be identified to ERS as not requiring effort reporting. After some discussion, it's clear we need more information to see whether this is something that can be distinguished in the Contracts and Grants context. Adam reported that Rick Valdivia had indicated that some federal funds don't need effort reporting: benefit offsets/control accounts, IPA's, and Interns and Residents. Some individuals could have pay from these funds.

Jon asked if this group is okay with endorsing revisions to the appropriate data elements as a corporate system change. **The group agreed.**

John Ellis indicated a preference to get rid of blank as a value for any data element. Jon responded that he would take this point up with the UCOP analysts involved.

Pilot Preparations

Jon mentioned that recent internal discussion of the communications/training project schedule highlighted the need to begin detailed discussions about expectations for, and the scope of, the pilot. These details are needed to help refine the schedule for communication/training deliverables. Sue mentioned that UCLA technical staff had expressed to her an interest in running the pilot. Sue commented that she did not want to undermine Davis being the pilot campus, since that had been on the table for so long. Adam commented that it might be possible to have more than one campus running the pilot, but since it is anticipated that the project team would be assisting with any pilot, multiple pilots would take more project resources away from the development effort at a time when issues related to the pilot will require action by the project team.

Mike remarked that planning for a pilot at Davis needed to take place to determine scope, but he wouldn't characterize this as a pilot if the whole campus were involved. He added that he wants to pilot the Summer reporting period so that Fall quarter can be rolled out to the entire campus with the certainty that the system works well. **Jon and Mike agreed to continue the pilot planning discussion outside the meeting.**

Functional Requirements Work Group

Jon reported that at the May 12 Requirements Group meeting work continued on 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. Reporting requirements were discussed and resolved. Also, there was some discussion of communications and much valuable input was received.

Technical Advisory Group

Adam reported that the last meeting of the Technical Advisory Group he had articulated the Management Group’s direction that cost sharing information be provided accurately by the campus without any further interpretation by the ERS.

White Paper -Finalize

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 has written a draft letter providing feedback that is out with the Budget and Planning Officers for review. It is expected that this letter will be made final and delivered to Sue next week.**

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.

Davis –Mike reported that campus has been wrestling with the policy issue of minimum level of effort commitment (one individual with 4 or five awards and reporting all effort under one or two of the awards, and none on the other awards). This is a policy and costing issue, but not an effort reporting issue.

Los Angeles – No report

Berkeley – No report

Development of Strategic Plan for Communications and Training

Work Plan

Deb Nikkel distributed an initial project schedule for the development of communications and core training materials, and an associated description of tasks, and reviewed with the Management Group. The group was comfortable with this initial schedule.

Sue suggested that Deb connect with the campus work groups to get input on the training materials.

Adam noted that Macromedia Breeze requires a server component that UCOP does not presently have, and inquired whether an existing campus server could be used to host materials during development. John offered that Berkeley could accommodate the hosting. Adam will coordinate on the technical aspects of using the Berkeley server.

Deb pointed out that dates in the communications/training schedule need to synchronize with ERS development milestones as well as pilot milestones. Pixie, noting that the Davis campus intent was understood, asked what the campuses were thinking for ERS rollout dates. UCLA (Sue) most likely Winter Quarter (in April); Berkeley (John) – looking at consolidating reporting schedules, but most likely not until start of FY 2006-07.

Jon suggested that the project team start talking with campuses about implementation planning activities, timing of deployment, etc., to help refine the project team schedules. The group agreed. Sue suggested that ERS Management Group members will need to do some internal coordination at the campuses before the UCOP team can get involved in discussions of rollout plans. John mentioned that Berkeley has already started talking about implementation plans.

Mike suggested that there was value to having an ERS FAQ now. Pixie commented that campus phrasing in any FAQ is going to be important to the campus audience. It was agreed that, with the understanding that FAQ phrasing would need to be customized by the campus, that getting a FAQ started would be worthwhile. Questions for the FAQ should be sent to Deb at dnikkel@earthlink.net.

Deb distributed two PowerPoint handouts, one an executive presentation and one the “master” presentation, covering all topics related to the ERS. Deb also handed out an index to the “master” presentation. John suggested that cases illustrating fines levied on institutions be more “personalized” to what certifiers should not be doing (e.g., handing over sign-off on effort reports to others) so it hits home. The group agreed that the executive presentation was good. Everyone should provide comments on the executive presentation to Deb by June 17. A revised version will follow.

Other Topics

Sue mentioned that Ken Orgill had left the University. Jon reported that he and Kris Hafner had discussed the possibility of arranging for a replacement Information Technology Leadership Council member on the Management Group, and concluded that it did not make sense to do so at this late stage in the ERS development process. Should any issue arise requiring input from the ITLC, Jon will work with Kris to get the put the item before the ITLC.

Next Meeting

The next meeting scheduled for July 13, 2005 from 1:00 to 3:00 will be a conference call. The following meeting scheduled for August 10, 2005 from 1:00 to 3:00 at UCOP (Conference Room 10325 Franklin) will be an in person meeting.