

Effort Reporting System Management Group
Meeting Notes
July 13, 2005
Revised August 10, 2005 Accepted September 7, 2005

In attendance were: Sue Abeles, Mike Allred, John Ellis, Eric Vermillion, Joyce Freedman, Dan Gilbreath (for Don Larson), 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 June 8, 2005, were accepted without revision.

Project Status Update:

Jon Good noted that there were no significant issues coming up in development. Adam Cohen noted that the project is on track for the October pilot. Adam reported that Larry Johnson and Dan Lemus from Davis came to UCOP on 7/12 for orientation to begin programming work on the system administration component of the ERS. A candidate has been identified for a contract employee to work on the development of the system and subsequent support during the maintenance phase of the project and an offer is expected to be made shortly.

Quality Assurance – Data Context

Adam noted that this quality assurance testing is still planned for September. A quality assurance tester on the project team is a prerequisite to this activity and that a contractor will be sought very soon. Sue Abeles asked whether the test would operate at the campus or at UCOP. Adam responded that the test environment would be at UCOP and that testers would access the test environment remotely. Pixie asked whether all of the system functionality would need to be tested for usability. Adam responded that the intent of the test is to check data, and testers would need to validate that the data looks good. Mike Allred asked whether we could discuss having the pilot campus install the system locally for the QA test, so the pilot campus could get a jump on installation of the system prior to the pilot phase. Jon suggested that this could be accomplished but that there may be an issue of the development team having to go to two different system environments to diagnose issues. **Mike, Jon, and Adam will discuss in a week or two.** Sue commented that the schedule is fairly aggressive and that we shouldn't do anything to shortchange the Quality Assurance phase.

Federal Flow Through Code Definition Revisions

Jon reported that an internal discussion took place at UCOP with the primary users of, and analysts responsible for, Corporate Systems on the topic of proposed data element revisions in support of ERS. The key issue to come out of the discussion was that rather than tack on

additional values to existing data elements, that a new data element indicating whether effort reporting is required be created as an attribute of Fund. Sue asked when these changes would be published. Jon responded that protocol requires 6 months notice to campuses, so to coincide with the February 2006 rollout, the Corporate System requirements needs to be published soon. It is likely that campus feeds to UCOP of Corporate Financial System data would allow campuses to supply the information earlier.

Pilot Preparations

Adam reported that an initial discussion had taken place with the Davis campus team to answer questions about the pilot and to help the Davis team prepare their project plan. Details of the pilot plan are needed to help refine the schedule for the project's communication/training deliverables. Mike added that the pilot project plan is expected to be completed by early August.

Sue mentioned that UCLA technical staff had expressed to her an interest in participating in the pilot. Sue commented that there was no intent to undermine Davis being the pilot campus, since that had been on the table for so long, but to allow UCLA technical staff an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the ERS sooner rather than later. Adam commented that it was possible to have UCLA pilot the system as well.

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 of the entire campus population involved in effort reporting. 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.**

Project Finances Review

Jon reviewed the project "cash flow" worksheet and pointed out that for FY 2004-2005, actual development costs were well under the original January 2004 projections. From the \$960,000 contributed in FY 2004-2005 by the six sponsors, there is a surplus of approximately \$443,000 that will be carried over into FY 2005-2006. Expense projections for the remainder of the development phase have been revised downward and projections for FY 2005-2006 have been revised accordingly. Combining the maintenance phase projections that have not been revised since January 2004, pending further discussion by the Management Group, with the revised FY 2005-2006 development phase projections, and offsetting this amount with the carryover from FY 2004-2005, yields a sponsor share of approximately \$80,000 for FY 2005-2006. This amount is half of the January 2004 projection for FY 2005-2006. Jon asked if the group was comfortable with requesting this amount from each of the sponsors for FY 2005-2006 and carrying over any surplus into FY 2006-2007 since the question of the level of maintenance support remains open. **The group agreed.** Eric asked that requests for the transfer of funds not occur until after fiscal close occurred in August. Jon responded that the request for transfer of funds would not go out until after fiscal close and, in the case of the San Francisco campus, probably not until much later since San Francisco is currently covering costs associated with Deb Nikkel and will receive an offset to the sponsor share to cover these costs.

Functional Requirements Work Group

Jon reported that the June 9 Requirements Group meeting covered two key topics: data element revisions and communications and training.

Technical Advisory Group

Adam reported that the Technical Advisory Group had met on June 21st and discussed detailed issues regarding the cost sharing and financial system interfaces. Development had progressed to the point where new effort reports could be created and viewed on the web application pages. UC Davis programmers, coordinated by Larry Johnson, were beginning to look at contributing work to the development of a system administration module. The next TAG meeting will include a review of the design of the authorization component of the application and issue surrounding integrating with campus authorization and role systems.

Sue mentioned that implementation planning at UCLA is somewhat hampered by the fact that technical staff can't estimate/plan without seeing the ERS code to get a sense of what campus-specific programming needed to be done. Sue suggested sharing the code with all campuses at the pilot stage so the planning can proceed. Sue mentioned that the UCLA team will be contacting the UCOP team to get some clarification for planning purposes.

White Paper -Finalize

Sue introduced the topic by mentioning the letter from the Budget and Planning Officers that she had distributed to the group via email.

Sue, Mike, and Joyce, registered surprise at the letter proposing broader consultation as there had already been fairly broad consultation already.

Sue recapped the policy recommendations from the White Paper, pointing out that the recommendations were not intended to introduce new policies per se, but to document the basic premises of effort reporting that are not otherwise documented elsewhere:

- 1) Principal Investigators and select others must certify their own effort reports (some campuses are already doing this)
- 2) revisions to effort reports – need for business justifications for audit purposes
- 3) effort reports be certified in a timely manner, which is a requirement of the regulations
- 4) tolerance level (+/-5%) is current practice and just needs to be documented.

Sue questioned what would be gained by a having another group conduct another review given the nature of these recommendations. She also noted that at the point that actual policy manuals are redrafted that there would be opportunity for additional consultation and comment. Eric

commented that this was the strong view from the Budget and Planning Officers. Eric also pointed out that a broad review at UCSF hadn't yet taken place.

Joyce commented that from the start of the project the Management Group was tasked with looking at policy issues. Sue commented that at UCLA the White Paper had been shared widely, including research departments, campus workgroups, etc. John Ellis stated that at Berkeley review has occurred around campus, including council of deans, financial control unit, VC for Research and was not sure that another committee would be more inclusive beyond participation from the Academic Senate. Mike Allred noted that complete coordination has taken place at the Davis campus. Dan Gilbreath reported that coordination with Academic Administration had taken place at San Diego, but that coordination with faculty had not yet taken place. Eric suggested that the Budget and Planning Officers may have jumped to the last page in their review of the White Paper and, without complete context, may have reached an unintended conclusion.

Sue will respond to Eric's email by forwarding a memo to the Budget and Planning Officers highlighting the four items where university-wide policy recommendations are indicated and the work group's recommendation that the Contracts and Grants Manual and the Accounting Manual be updated accordingly. Eric will take this back to 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 had been no activity since the last Management Group meeting.

San Diego – Dan Gilbreath mentioned that the first campus workgroup meeting is scheduled for 7/25. San Diego is combining activities related to Cost Sharing and Effort Reporting systems.

Davis –Mike reported that there was no ERS activity to report as the campus has been focusing effort on cost sharing system rollout.

San Francisco Eric reported that a campus work group has been identified and meetings have been scheduled.

Berkeley – No report

Communications and Training Strategy

Deb Nikkel reviewed the proposed ERS Communications and Training Strategy. Five communications phases were identified and discussed – commitment, orientation, planning, preparation and implementation. Communications objectives, audiences and deliverables were

described for each communication phase (on page 6 of the strategy document). Six training modules were identified and discussed – Project Oversight, Policy/Compliance, Administration, Coordinator, System Usage and System Security Administration. Proposed topics and content for each module were reviewed.

There was consensus among the group that the proposed communications and training strategy reflected a proper analysis of needs; and that the products associated with each communications phase and training module would meet campus needs for a generic package; and that the delivery schedule was in line with campus implementation plans.

John Ellis suggested that many of the materials prepared for the initial implementation of the system could be reworked later on for the purpose of training new employees after the system is implemented. With that in mind, content should not include references such as “old system”.

UCOP ERS Hosting

Jon remarked that discussions with San Diego about having UCOP host their ERS implementation had precipitated two alternative cost models showing economies of scale for 5 campuses hosted at UCOP and 9 campuses hosted at UCOP. Among the reasons for sharing these models: lower hosting costs for each participating campuses and the Regents’ desire to find efficiencies in information technologies. With respect to the latter, the host for a cluster of hosted ERS installations didn’t have to be at UCOP. Jon asked the group to give consideration to whether the models for multiple campus hosting were attractive to each of the sponsoring campuses in preparation for further discussion at the next meeting. Eric suggested that, in the interest of transparency, Kris Hafner and Jon make a presentation about UCOP ERS Hosting to the Budget and Planning Officers at their September or November.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for August 10, 2005 from 1:00 to 3:00 at UCOP (Conference Room 10325 Franklin). This will be an in-person meeting.