

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

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

Discussion Topics:

Review and Acceptance of Meeting Notes:

Mike Allred pointed out two typos (missing words, shown in bold below):

- page 1, last paragraph, "...an internal discussion took place at UCOP with the primary users of, **and** analysts responsible for, ..."
- page 2, first sentence, "...that a new data **element** indicating..."

With these revisions the notes from the meeting of July 13, 2005, were accepted.

Project Status Update:

Jon Good noted that development was proceeding fairly smoothly with no changes in planned milestone dates.

Adam Cohen reported that a contract employee, Steve Hunter, was hired in late July to work on the development of the system and subsequent support during the maintenance phase of the project. Steve is already contributing significantly to the project. A contractor has also been hired as a QA tester who will be working on a pilot test plan as well as on campus test cases.

Adam mentioned that some group will be needed to triage changes requested by the campuses, whether from feedback in the pilot or, later on, when the system is in production. It was agreed that from now through the rollout of ERS, the Requirements Committee would review change requests and pass to the Management Group those items on which resolution could not be reached. The Management Group declared the Extramural Funds Managers as functional owners of ERS and, once the system is in production, will be the group that decides which change requests will be pursued and the priority for each request to be pursued. Pixie added that the Requirements Committee should be asked to continue to review change requests for at least the first 6-12 months after the production release, as the committee is the most informed about the background of ERS and will be best prepared to quickly assess change requests. Issues that the Extramural Funds Managers cannot resolve should be escalated to the Controllers for resolution.

Adam distributed the project schedule and commented on the following:

- The schedule now incorporates high-level Communications and Training tasks taken from the more detailed schedule that Deb Nikkel has prepared for those activities. In the overall project schedule, the Communications and Training tasks appear in the corresponding groupings of design, development and deployment.
- Data Element Definition – Jon reported that the definition of a new Effort Reporting Indicator, to be associated with a Fund Number, is underway. Jorge commented that it had been suggested in past meetings that an electronic file be provided by UCOP to identify fund numbers that need to have this indicator set. Upon analysis of this request, it became apparent that it is not possible for UCOP to provide campuses with such a file, because of the local financial systems constructs and the fact that campuses set up the fund definitions locally. It was also mentioned that there is a question of whether there is a need for this new data element in Corporate Systems and whether this data element would be collected from campuses. A Corporate “owner” of the new data element has yet to come forward. Sue Abeles asked whether campuses need to move forward on identifying funds that require effort reporting. Jon responded in the affirmative. Don suggested that it might be short-sighted if there’s no collection of this data element in Corporate Systems. Sue asked whether corporate data might not be requested in a federal A-133 audit or during a specific agency review. Jorge said that it wasn’t likely that a federal A-133 audit would look at data outside of the campus context. Joyce Freedman reminded the group that the recommendation in the white paper is that determination of effort reporting requirements on non-federal funds be made centrally by UCOP Office of Research Administration (RAO) similar to the waiver process for F&A rates. The group agreed that this is still desirable. Joyce proposed that Sue send a letter to David Mears regarding this recommendation and requesting feedback on whether RAO could play this role.

Pilot Preparations

Adam reported that Davis has identified a project manager for the pilot, Radhika Prabhu, and prepared a plan of action. Adam and Radhika have reviewed the plan together and made some adjustments that will move the pilot along and allow some pre-pilot QA work to be done at UCOP before the Davis pilot actually starts.

Adam noted that he has not talked with UCLA technical staff about the pilot plans lately. As the UCLA pilot team comes together, he’s available to discuss plans.

Sue and Mike both commented that identification of candidate departments to be included in their respective pilots is underway.

Functional Requirements Work Group

Jon reported that the July 14 Requirements Group conference call covered two key topics: data element revisions and review of the Communications and Training Strategy document. Next

meeting of the group will be August 11 where the Communications and Training Design document will be reviewed and a demo of the ERS, in its as-developed state, will be given.

Technical Advisory Group

Adam reported that the Technical Advisory Group had met on July 19th and had a detailed discussion of authorization features of the system, including how ERS will interface to local systems. A centrally-developed authorization system will be developed and deployed for those campuses that don't already have authorization systems.

White Paper - Finalize

Sue reminded the group that she had responded to Eric Vermillion's letter on behalf of the Budget and Planning Officers, with copies to the Management Group in both electronic and hardcopy form. Eric reported that the B& PO's were okay with the White Paper. The revised White Paper had been distributed to the group for one last review. Sue invited comments. Mike pointed out a typo on p.9. Jorge also provided some small edits for consideration. Sue will make these revisions and then will send the white paper to Anne Broome and Larry Coleman with a recommendation that changes be made in the Accounting and Contracts and Grants manuals. With the changes identified in the meeting, **the Management Group approved the final draft of the White Paper.**

Communications and Training Design

Deb Nikkel reviewed the draft ERS Communications and Training Design document.

Sue asked about the distinction between "knowledge acquisition" and "skills development" and how web-based self-service training fits into the "lecture/presentation" model. Deb responded that training is intended to be stand-alone for web-based self-service. Deb explained that it was important to make note that stand-alone web-based self-service training would and could be greatly enhanced if campuses chose to utilize that tool in "lecture/presentation" environments.

Sue, referencing page 23 of the design document, asked whether there would be "help" information imbedded in the ERS as the design document seemed to suggest no help would be present. Deb clarified that help information will be available with the production release, but not with the pilot release.

Eric made a comment that the "ERS Communications – Audiences and Messages Grid" was a useful table and asked that this grid also be included as an attachment to the ERS Communications and Training Design Document. Others agreed. Deb affirmed that she would add this document as an attachment.

There was general consensus that the design document was good.

Deb asked if it would be possible to talk with a faculty member to get a better sense of the faculty perspective to aid in the development of communications and training materials. It was suggested that Deb contact Larry Coleman. In addition, Mike Allred offered to arrange for Deb to talk with one or two Davis faculty members. Mike requested that Deb follow-up by sending him an email requesting a meeting and stating the meeting purpose.

Demonstration of ERS

Jon introduced this agenda item with the comment that it was time for the Management Group to see what progress there has been on the system development activities with a demo of a live system as opposed to a mock-up/prototype. Adam demonstrated the ERS in its current in-development state. The demonstration was received favorably.

UCOP ERS Hosting

At the July 13 Management Group meeting, Jon discussed alternative cost models for UCOP hosting of ERS that showed economies of scale for 5 campuses hosted at UCOP and 9 campuses hosted at UCOP. This was in response to the San Diego campus which is interested in UCOP hosting as a way of achieving efficiencies, but only if the cost can be driven down below the “single campus” hosting cost. Jon asked whether any of these models were attractive enough for any of the other campuses to seriously consider this option. Los Angeles: No, the campus was already moving down the path to run ERS locally; Davis: No;. Berkeley: Yes, there is interest.

Other Business

Jon commented that Pixie has an “Implementation Planning Guide” which identifies numerous considerations to given in the planning of the implementation of ERS. This document draws on Pixie’s experience rolling out major systems to the UCLA campus over the years. The document will be shared with the Management Group in about two weeks, after it has been polished up.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for September 7, 2005 from 1:00 to 3:00. This meeting will be conducted via conference call.