Effort Reporting System Management Group
Meeting Notes
November 9, 2005
Accepted December 7, 2005

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

Discussion Topics:

Communications and Training: Product Status, Review and Pilot Feedback

Deb Nikkel reported that training modules were made available on the project web site on October 31. Two modules, System Administration and Security Administration, are awaiting completion of system development. Availability of the training materials was announced to Davis and UCLA pilot teams.

Deb proceeded to walk through the "Orientation" module. Modules are automatically timed slide shows. The group questioned this approach and agreed that a self-paced approach requiring user action to move among screens was desired.

Deb pointed out the training materials currently contain live UCLA data in the example and that this will need to be cleaned up. Sue Abeles pointed out that several examples jump between different people and that the examples needed to show consistency from start to finish. Deb pointed out that a "training" data base does not exist from which static and sanitized examples can be drawn for the training materials. **Adam Cohen mentioned that a "training" database for this particular purpose will be set up soon.**

Jon Good asked about the outline of materials shown on the web page: is this outline being recommended? Deb responded in the affirmative and also pointed out that many of the "modules" can be packaged into a module targeted for a specific role (e.g., certifier, reviewer).

Mike Allred commented that he likes what he's seeing in the ERS training and communications materials for raising awareness on effort reporting.

Jon asked whether anyone had seen the sexual harassment training materials and, though that training is more about raising awareness and understanding of policies and practices than "how to" use a system, whether any of the features of the sexual harassment training were relevant to what was being developed for ERS. John Ellis commented that he liked the sexual harassment training and also liked its start/stop feature.

John mentioned an application system training module at Berkeley that gives the trainee three options –the trainee watches while pre-scripted training is played, the trainee enters a limited

amount of information, and the trainee enters all information in a full simulation of the application system.

John suggested that modules be expanded to take into account the variations of input to certain activities. For example, one module could show how to certify an effort report when no changes to the effort report are required before certification as well as when some changes to the effort report information are required.

Don Larson suggested that it might be helpful if the training modules incorporated some decision trees which would take users to various views depending on their roles or need to know various system features. He also suggested adding some indication of how much time each module is likely to take a person to complete.

Mike noted that the Davis campus is considering capturing a complete presentation (online interactions, audio, etc.) for playback as a method of training.

It was suggested that audio might be useful to incorporate in the training materials. It was agreed to wait on feedback on the current training materials from the pilot campuses. Deb suggested, as an alternative to recording a single audio track into the base training materials, that a script of the audio track could be put together and that campuses could then modify the script to accommodate campus-specific information such as details of local cost sharing systems and then record the audio from the script.

Don suggested that the varying depth of pre-existing knowledge should be considered and that it might be useful to have variations on a training module targeted to those new to effort reporting and those who already have experience with effort reporting. Don suggested developing a matrix of training modules for different roles and pre-existing knowledge.

John Ellis asked what campus plans are for certifying that individuals have completed training before they're allowed to use the ERS. He mentioned that Berkeley and UCLA often do this with administrative systems. Joyce pointed out that because effort reporting involves faculty, requiring certification before using the system is going to be very difficult to implement. **Sue suggested, and the group agreed, that discussion of certification prior to permitting access to ERS is an issue for campuses to address rather than the ERS Management Group.**

The general consensus of the group was that the current training materials were a good starting point for the final training materials.

Deb briefly outlined the next steps as:

- Incorporate feedback from Management Group.
- Revise training modules utilizing "training" data with scrambled names and IDs.
- Create "portals' of entry to the training and a menu of core content by function (i.e., Viewers, Reviewers, Certifier (self and PI), Coordinator and Security Administration.
- Modularize core content by audience and need.

- Enable users to move forward or backward from menu to modules and from screen to screen within modules.
- Add testing mechanism within pertinent modules.
- Add "cases" to modules that require users to make decisions and branch to different learning elements (e.g., when Effort Report is correct, when Effort Report needs to be adjusted, etc.)

Review and Acceptance of October 12, 2005, Meeting Notes:

The meeting notes of October 12, 2005, were accepted without revision.

Project Status Update:

Adam distributed the project schedule and commented on the following:
- Work on QA is underway with Davis, Los Angeles, and San Diego data
- Further QA is occurring in the work of setting up the Davis and UCLA pilots. (e.g., finding issues with setting up the ERS database in Oracle that never came up in the Sybase context)
- The list of unresolved "bugs" being tracked currently hovers around 50, much of which is pilot campus feedback, with half being "enhancements" that will be given further consideration after the pilots are completed. Pixie mentioned that she and Adam had gone through and identified "must haves" for the pilot and for the production release.

Adam mentioned that a discussion with the Davis pilot team occurred this morning on the topic of security and authorization. Davis has a need to delegate setup of authorizations to department level. Though identified in the requirements definition, this has not been built into ERS. Adam suggested that if this is indeed a show-stopper, every attempt would be made to put this in place for the pilot. Sue and Pixie both commented that UCLA has already decided that they will administer ERS centrally for the pilot.

Jon noted that the second phase of NIH Salary Cap modifications to PPS was released by October 27, 2005, as Payroll Release 1669. This release included corrections to "over cap" edits resulting from the first phase release.

Jon reported that there will be no corporate "sponsorship" of the "Effort Reporting Indicator" data element; the UCOP Research Administration Office (RAO) has no need for this data element and is not willing to be the corporate sponsor.

Jorge mentioned that ERS does require an interface from a local system to identify ER-required fund numbers, and suggested that there is an issue of whether there's value to the information that campuses use locally to decide which funds require effort reporting. Sue asked whether there had been discussion of having UCOP RAO inform campuses consistently about non-federal agreements requiring effort reporting. Jorge responded that UCOP RAO did not feel that they were in a position to do this. Jorge mentioned that earlier this year the Requirements Committee

and the Management Group had discussed modification of two existing corporate data elements (Flow Through Code and Type of Award Code) to include characteristics that could be used to identify funds requiring effort reporting. Jorge asked the Management Group whether it felt pursuing these data elements would be of value in helping campuses set up fund information for effort reporting purposes.

After some discussion, the Management Group concluded that there was value in modifying the corporate data elements for campus consistency. Jorge will circulate draft revisions to the Flow Through Code and Type of Award Code to the Management Group for discussion at the next meeting and will pursue the changes following this review.

Pilot Status

Mike reported that Davis is behind schedule by about two weeks because of data load issues. It is expected that the initial data load will be completed by November 18. Davis may need to consider re-examining their February rollout plans because pilot testing is likely to run into the holidays and, thus, not be completed until early January.

Sue mentioned that the UCLA pilot is a couple of weeks behind schedule because of issues with integration with UCLA's authorization mechanism (ISIS/DACSS) and other technical issues.

Mike raised a concern about proper security not being ready for the pilot. He is concerned about the lack of distributed authorization administration in ERS and the possibility of one department seeing another department's information. Jon responded that distributed authorization administration component won't necessarily be available for the pilot, but that the logic for preventing one department from seeing another department's information will be in place based on authorizations which can be centrally administered for the pilot.

Don asked whether we should put distributed authorization administration on the schedule as a critical path item to monitor closely. Jon responded that this was not necessary given the fact that distributed authorization administration is not truly necessary to conduct the pilots. **However, Jon did suggest that a review of the "bug" tracking mechanism be scheduled for the next ERS Management Group meeting so the group could see how bug reports and enhancements requests are being tracked and prioritized. Pixie mentioned that the ERS Project Team does plan to continue addressing bugs and certain enhancements during the pilot tests.**

Requirements Group Update

Jon reported that the Requirement Committee had met via conference call on 10/13. The Committee heard reports on the 10/12 Management Group meeting, including discussion of requiring Principal Investigators and professional staff to certify their own effort reports. (Topic discussed further in the next agenda item.) The Requirements Committee will meet tomorrow (11/10/2005) to review training materials and continue discussions.

Technical Advisory Group Update

Adam reported that no significant technical/design issues are currently being discussed. The Technical Advisory Group is continuing to meet to exchange implementation experiences and progress reports.

System Enforcement of Self-Certification Rules

Pixie introduced this topic by mentioning the decision from last Management Group meeting was that certification of effort reports by Principal Investigators and Professionals was not going to be enforced by the ERS. Discussion at the Requirements Committee meeting the next day generated a lot of discussion centered on the contention that not enforcing that requirement could put departmental administrators in a difficult position and add work. Pixie subsequently did some research and found that identifying the majority of the population of self-certifiers was possible using Class Title Outline and FLSA Indicator attributes of Title Code. Jon had suggested that the enforcement could be a campus ERS option that could be switched on or off. Sue remarked that exceptions will still need to be handled. **After some discussion, the Management Group re-affirmed the conclusion from the October meeting that no enforcement in the system is needed and that monitoring of certifications for Principal Investigators and Professionals would be best undertaken via reporting.**

Recognizing the Requirements Committee's strong concern over not enforcing the "self-certification" requirement, the Management Group agreed to revisit this topic six months after production implementation.

Policy Update: Contracts and Grants Manual, Accounting Manual

Jorge reported that he circulated draft revisions to these two manuals to the Management Group but hadn't had feedback before this meeting. **The Management Group concurred with these changes.**

Jorge also mentioned that Larry Coleman had shared the White Paper with the Council on Research and requested feedback from that group on the Accounting Manual and Contracts and Grants Manual changes by December 1, 2005. Formal publication of revisions to these manuals will wait until this feedback arrives. Jorge suggested that all feedback on the changes to these two manuals be compiled into a single informational document and include responses to specific suggestions and requests. This feedback document would then be vetted by the Management Group. **The Management Group agreed with this approach to responding to feedback.** Joyce suggested that the proposed changes to the manuals be forwarded to the Pre-Award staff as well. **Jorge will distribute the proposed changes to the Pre-Award staff.**

<u>Buy-in and Hosting Costs</u>

Jon introduced this topic by mentioning that one of the follow-ups to the September 20, 2005, ITLC meeting was to prepare a summary of Base ERS and UCOP Hosting costs. Jon handed out a worksheet showing two scenarios for non-sponsor campuses to buy into the Base ERS along with optional UCOP Hosting costs. Both scenarios are based on the assumptions that 1) all four non-sponsor campuses buy in during the same fiscal year, and that the one-time and ongoing UCOP hosting costs are constant at the "5-campus" rate. The first scenario shows costs through FY 2008-2009 for non-sponsor buy-in during FY 2005-2006. The second scenario shows costs through FY 2008-2009 for buy-in during FY 2006-2007. The cumulative Base ERS totals are the same between the two scenarios, consistent with past Management Group discussions about non-sponsor buy-in. **Jon asked whether the spreadsheet was reasonable to share with the entire ITLC. The group agreed.**

John asked about the current status of the UCOP Hosting discussion. Jon responded that the other key follow-up with the ITLC was to conduct briefing sessions with non-sponsor campuses to inform them about the ERS project and the business and technology aspects of the ERS. Jon is presently in the process of scheduling these briefings with the non-sponsor campuses and hopes that they will be done by the end of the first week in December. Following the briefings, the sense of the number of campuses wishing to pursue the UCOP Hosting option should be much clearer.

<u>Next Meeting</u>

The next meeting is scheduled for December 7, 2005 from 1:00 to 3:00. This meeting will be an in-person meeting (Conference Room 9115).