

Effort Reporting System Management Group
Meeting Notes
February 9, 2006
Accepted March 8, 2006

Meeting was held as a conference call. Participants included: Sue Abeles, Mike Allred, John Ellis, Don Larson, Jorge Ohy, Pixie Ogren, Eric Vermillion, Adam Cohen, and Jon Good.

Discussion Topics:

Review and Acceptance of January 11, 2006, Meeting Notes:

The meeting notes of January 11, 2006, were accepted without revision.

Project Status Update:

Schedule

Jon Good mentioned that Base ERS Release #1 was posted to the project web site on February 6th.

Adam Cohen commented on the following items on the schedule:

- (92) Campus Customization Guide is almost done
- (105) pilot bug fixes are almost complete
- (112) installation support (also related to hosting)
- (114) release 2 is new (planned for March – to do technical cleanup and move into functional enhancements)

Mike Allred questioned whether Release #1 was truly ready for production, since a problem with late payroll had been reported by the Davis Pilot Team and did not seem to have been addressed. Adam commented that the resolution of this and several other late-arriving problem reports had been tested by the Project Team and included in Base Release #1, but had not yet gone through campus testing.

Sue asked whether the ERS in Release #1 had all the functionality that had been required of the system. Adam responded in the affirmative, but noted that whether the functionality meets the expectations of campuses won't be known until ERS has been run at the campuses and there's agreement that the system meets expectations.

In response to an item raised on the January conference call, Jon provided a summary of related Base Payroll Releases to date:

- Release 1591 – implemented Derived Percent Time necessary to ERS
(<http://www.ucop.edu/ppsmaint/REL2004/R1591/letter.pdf>)

- Release 1647 – implemented EDB Salary Cap Edits (<http://www.ucop.edu/ppsmaint/REL2005/R1647/letter.pdf>)
- Release 1669 – implemented PAR Salary Cap Reporting (<http://www.ucop.edu/ppsmaint/REL2005/R1669/letter.pdf>)

Sue commented that there was a problem with Release 1669 which had not yet been resolved and is preventing implementation of Salary Cap monitoring. Jon added that he had checked and there were no outstanding Base Payroll Maintenance error reports on the problem. He would follow the trail to get this issue elevated for attention.

In response to a question from Sue, Adam described that the ERS Extract in PPS (line 124) was the payroll data extract program which feeds data to ERS in a standard format. The program is currently in the process of being packaged for release in the Base Payroll System.

Requirements Committee Update

Pixie Ogren reported that the Requirements Committee had met via conference call on January 12th. The Committee heard reports on the January 11 Management Group meeting. Important discussions from the Requirements Committee conference call included:

- An issue raised by Riverside concerning the reporting of effort for work study employees working on federal contracts and grants: work study payments are split between work study funds and the matching funds (in this case a federal contract or grant) and because the work study fund is included in the Other Sponsored Projects category, the full amount of effort does not show on the federal contract or grant. The Requirements Group discussed the matter and agreed that the effort charged to the work study funds should be recorded as cost sharing on the federal project and that the user could enter the information on the Effort Report.
- Dan Gilbreath (UCSD) had raised a question about whether ERS would reissue Effort Reports when retroactive Cost Sharing data was provided to ERS. The response was that ERS does not recognize cost sharing data by reporting period as it does for pay and that any imported cost sharing data is assumed to apply to the current reporting period. At UCSD reissuing Effort Reports based on retroactive cost sharing information is an issue because it was common to wait until the end of the project period to record cost sharing data in the cost sharing system. **Pixie will talk with Dan offline.**
- An issue from the Project Team was discussed on whether or not ERS should allow a user to save an Out-of-Balance Effort Report. After some discussion it was decided that allowing users to save an out-of-balance report would only delay the problem or in the case of an Effort Report requiring multiple certifications could actually pass the problem on to another user. The decision was made not to allow an out-of-balance report to be saved.

Technical Advisory Group Update

Adam reported that the Technical Advisory Group met via conference call on January 17th and reviewed the Installation and Operations Guide for consistency with campus standards for operations documentation. Good feedback was received. The next TAG meeting is on February 21st and will focus on review of the Customization Guide. The Customization Guide documents all system options and parameters, interfaces, and skins that can be tailored by individual campuses.

Non-sponsor Campus Status Update

Jon reported that he had talked to Santa Barbara and Santa Cruz IT representatives about scheduling an ERS Overview for these campuses and will be scheduling in the near future.

Eric Vermillion reported that the Budget and Planning Officers had discussed non-sponsor campus buy-in options at their January 25th meeting. The Budget and Planning Officers quickly proposed and agreed to the following:

- Base ERS Development Costs - The six sponsors, Berkeley, Davis, Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, and Office of the President will absorb the development costs of the ERS (requirements and development phases).
- Base ERS Maintenance - Campuses that use the ERS will contribute to the Base ERS maintenance costs. Campus contributions to Base ERS maintenance costs will be factored by the campus federal Total Direct Cost (TDC) for the prior FY divided by the sum of the federal TDC for the participating campuses
- UCOP ERS Hosting - Participating campus costs will be determined based on taking the actual hosting costs and pro-rating them by each campus Federal Total Direct Costs (TDC) share for the prior FY.

Sue asked what the impact on the initial sponsors' rollout of the system might be if the non-sponsors now decide to become early adopters since they have no upfront investment cost. It was agreed that the initial sponsors should have priority for rollout support. There was also a discussion regarding implementation costs that might be incurred by OP IR&C and agreement that those needed to be shared by all participating campuses. Sue speculated about whether in the future (as participants turn over) there might not be some feeling from the original sponsors that they should have a greater say regarding enhancements to the Base ERS than the non-investing campuses given their financial stake. Sue suggested that requiring some initial fee to buy in might ensure all campuses an equal voice. Mike commented that this is what needs to be done.

Eric said that the Budget and Planning Officers assume that all campuses will have an equal voice if they choose to join the project. Sue asked whether all the Budget and Planning Officers had agreed conceptually to these arrangements. Eric responded in the affirmative. Eric will

write up his understanding of the agreement, add a clarification about implementation costs being shared by all participating campuses, and send it to the Budget and Planning Officers for confirmation.

Mike-suggested, and the Management Group agreed, that any income derived from marketing ERS go to the original sponsors to pay off development costs. **Eric will inform the Budget and Planning Officers of this point.**

Jon mentioned that UCOP does not have a significant portion of federal TDC (about 1%) and asked how the UCOP contribution to the Base ERS should be factored. Eric suggested one possibility might be to have UCOP contribute a portion of staff time to the project to reduce the overall cost to participating campuses. **Jon will discuss further with Kris Hafner.**

Jon commented that the pro-rated method of UCOP ERS Hosting for participating campuses represented a significant change from the per-campus rate arrangement that had been part of discussions to make the service available. It was agreed that discussions with campuses would move forward citing the per-campus rate until the implications for one-time and ongoing costs can be sorted out and discussed further.

UCOP Hosting Update

Jon reported that discussions had begun with both San Diego and Berkeley campuses. A draft service level agreement has been prepared and is being shared. UCOP planning for implementation of the hosting service is underway. Mainframe DB2 is being added to the list of database management systems supported by the Base ERS. Adam and team will be setting up a test of this database environment.

Project Finances Update

Jon briefly reviewed the “cash flow” document, pointing out that project finances are in good shape based on projections from October. Finer projections for FY 2006-2007 will be made in the April/May timeframe and then reviewed with the Management Group at that time.

Mike expressed concern that activities in support of non-sponsor campuses not detract from Base ERS activities. He asked that a breakout of costs be developed showing Project Team activities related to non-sponsor campus implementations of the ERS: initial development (planning and customizations), implementation, operations, and UCOP hosting-related. Jon will work out the details of this tracking.

Campus Status Reports

Davis - Mike Allred reported that the pilot team is working on getting cost sharing and payroll data in place in ERS and, hopefully, the latest ERS build will allow this to happen so the ERS can be shown to faculty and researchers.

Los Angeles - Sue Abeles reported that training of pilot testers took place in January. As soon as the most recent ERS changes are in place, the pilot team will check to make sure data looks good and then open up the pilot to users.

Berkeley – John Ellis reported that another campus work group meeting will occur in a couple of weeks.

San Diego – Don Larson reported that UCSD is meeting every week now. UCSD wants to have all employees certify effort report annually, which will require approval from DHHS. Don and Jorge are discussing the possibility of petitioning DHHS about moving forward with annual effort reporting at San Diego. Mike asked if the analysis has been completed and can be shared. Don responded that after Jorge and he have looked at the risk scenarios and cleared those up, they should be able to share the analysis.

San Francisco – Eric Vermillion indicated that there was no campus activity to report

Policy Update: Contracts and Grants Manual, Accounting Manual

Jorge reported comments on the proposed changes to the Accounting Manual and Contracts and Grants Manual had recently been received from Academic Senate and Vice Chancellors for Research. On January 8th, Jorge distributed to the Management Group a draft FAQ document which was put together to respond to this feedback. Some of the comments suggested changes to statements in the White Paper. The Management Group agreed to leave the White Paper as is, but to make changes to policies and procedures, as appropriate, based on the comments received. Further clarification of policy issues will be provided in training and communications.

Jorge also pointed out the request for elaboration on penalties for non-compliance with effort reporting by individuals. Don suggested that discussion of penalties reference local policies rather than coming up with a University-wide policy that cannot be fulfilled. The Management Group agreed.

The group agreed to provide feedback on the FAQ to Jorge by Friday, February 17th.

It was also agreed that once the FAQ had been reviewed and finalized by the Management Group, it would be sent to Larry Coleman for distribution.

Maintenance Mode Activities

Adam described a proposed contact protocol for ERS maintenance which parallels the structure used for the Payroll/Personnel System.

Each ERS installation would identify a technical contact that would receive release notifications and would have access to the problem reporting system at IR&C. The person or persons in this technical contact role would be responsible for receiving problem reports from their campus and performing first-level problem determination.

Once a problem has been isolated and researched, it would be reported to the ERS development team by the technical contact via the IR&C problem reporting system. For the time being, the existing Bugzilla database will be used as the problem tracking application but this database will be migrated to Teamtrack once that system is implemented at IR&C. Technical contacts can track the status of their reported issues via this application.

The ERS development team will respond to each problem report. Responses may include a workaround, emergency fix, scheduled fix, or reclassification of the report as an enhancement. Each release will include a release letter which describes the changes being made to the system, as well as installation instructions for the release.

The role of the Requirements Group in the maintenance process will be to review, approve and prioritize enhancement requests. Sue asked whether the requirements group may need to add campus functional owner representatives. After brief discussion, it was agreed that campus functional owner representatives are already on the Requirements Committee: Mark Cooper (UCSD), Cynthia Kane (UCB), Erica Webber (UCSF), James Ringo (UCD), Rick Validivia (UCLA).

Adam reported that currently, there are twenty-five items on the Bugzilla database that are classified as enhancements. The Requirements Group will begin reviewing this list at its next meeting in March. Additional items may arrive from the pilot campuses as their testing progresses. There are another ten items that are technical enhancements that the development team will be addressing in the March maintenance release and in subsequent releases.

Sue suggested that all bug reports and enhancements could be reported through the same mechanism. Adam agreed.

Other Topics

Training Materials Follow-up– Pixie reported feedback from pilot campus review of the training text has been received and that the training modules have been revised appropriately in response to comments. The content for all modules has been sent to NIIT, along with audio scripts, for packaging into the polished training program. Screen samples are currently under review and will be finalized shortly. A voice artist from NIIT has been identified. On February 6th and 7th, Deb, Pixie, and a representative from NIIT worked together in Oakland to capture screen shots for incorporation in the training program. 193 of 200 screen shots were completed, and the balance will be completed by the end of the week, after which NIIT has about 2 weeks schedule to complete its deliverables. Approximately 75% of the screen shots include some kind of animation (e.g., cursor movement).

Fund attributes follow-up – Jon asked whether there had been any follow-up from the last meeting regarding feedback from campus technical staff on the addition of values to existing financial systems' fund table data elements that will help campuses classify funds for effort reporting purposes. There were no responses indicating that the loop on follow-up had been completed. **Jon will send an email to the Management Group with the particulars of this item as a tickler to get responses from campus technical staffs.**

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday March 8, 2006, from 1:00pm to 3:00pm.** Confirmation of an in-person meeting or conference call will be sent by end of day on Tuesday, February 28, 2006.