

Effort Reporting System Requirements Group
Meeting Notes
September 22, 2004 - Revised , 2004 - Accepted , 2004

In attendance were: Sandra Brierly; Gregg Carr; Dan Gilbreath; Jon Good; Bruce Irvine; Cynthia Kane; Amy Kimball; Buck Marcussen; Jorge Ohy; Anne Robinson; and Erica Webber;

Discussion Topics:

Review and Acceptance of Meeting Notes:

Review of the notes of the September 9, 2004, meeting generated discussion on the topics of cost sharing and Multiple Certifications, which is described below. The notes for the Meeting of September 9, 2004 were accepted.

Update of Management Group Meeting:

Two items were reported from the last Management Group Meeting:

The question raised in the September 9 Requirements Group meeting about the distribution of cost-sharing offsets to non-federal fund sources was deferred to the Management Group's next meeting on October 7.

The Management Group had agreed that not all campuses need to use Academic Reporting Period as the basis for effort reporting.

Cost Sharing

Throughout the various discussion topics, cost-sharing was a common thread. Key points about cost-sharing were:

- 1) Management Group needs to be reminded that without a cost-sharing system of some kind, campus staff will have plenty of work keeping cost-sharing arrangements straight.
- 2) The cost-sharing information most useful in the ERS context is a "table" of cost sharing commitments. Though a cost sharing system has been excluded from the development effort by the Management Group, it was agreed that if the ERS was going to be able to take in cost sharing information from campus cost-sharing systems (where they exist), that providing a facility in ERS for campuses without cost sharing systems to create and maintain a "table" of cost-sharing commitments would go far in making the ERS more usable for everyone. The group asked that this be raised with the Management Group for scope review.
- 3) While all agreed that every "above the line" (requiring certification) item needed to be certified, there is still enough uncertainty as to whether any and/or all items "below the line" should be certified as well. The key question is whether 100% effort is being certified by the individual or whether just that portion of effort requiring certification. It was suggested that to further the discussion, mock-up of more examples along with flow charts illustrating the different cases would be useful.
- 4) Related to the mock-ups, blank rows for manual entry of cost-sharing information will be necessary.

Exceptional Inclusion of Employees in ERS – The group reviewed the conditions in which an employee would need to be included in the ERS for certification purposes when, given all other factors, the employee would not necessarily be included in ERS. The conditions discussed are:

- The employee's time is part of a cost share but there is no direct charge to a sponsored project and the employee is not otherwise designated as part of a project requiring actual effort reporting.
- The employee must certify effort "off cycle", such as when the employee is preparing to leave the University before the next regular effort reporting cycle. Since the cycle has not yet been run, no effort report has been issued for the employee for this reporting period.
- When a Payroll Expense Transfer occurs relative to a prior PAR reporting period which, in effect, for the first time includes an employee in a project requiring effort certification. [Additional Note: The requirements state that a Payroll Transfer of Expense should cause the ERS to automatically generate an effort report for the affected individual. So, this condition should not be considered an exceptional inclusion.]
- [An additional case which came to light after the meeting is documented here: When an effort report is issued and certified in error. This could happen in a situation where an employee actually had cost sharing effort but the effort report did not include that information. Since no transfer of expense would be required, the system would not automatically issue an effort report even though the original effort report was certified incorrectly.]
- A prior paper PAR is lost and the employee information about the employee is not in the ERS.

A question was raised as to whether fellows on stipend (not true UC employees) are required to certify effort. It was agreed that it would be simpler if fellows on stipend did not have to certify effort, since there would be no Payroll trigger. However, a check of A-21 needs to be made to confirm one way or another that fellows on stipend need not be included in ERS.

Role Definitions – The group discussed the different roles and associated activities within the ERS. Though the requirements spell out separate "Department Coordinator" and (department) "Reviewer" roles, the group agreed that the only distinction between the two was something that the system could not/should not handle: the "Department Coordinator" must communicate with other departments, while a "Reviewer" does not, and that is not a distinction of relevance to the ERS. [Note: the requirements do spell out separate roles for "Department Coordinator" and "Reviewer", with the key distinction being that the "Department Coordinator" receives notifications from ERS when effort reports are ready for initial review, while reviewers do not. This particular distinction will need to be discussed further.] The roles that were agreed to are as follows:

- "System Administrator" – Administers what is assigned to departments; Runs/monitor exception reporting.
- "Tracker" (formerly "Department Coordinator" and "Reviewer" roles) – has ability to enter adjusted percentages of time and cost-sharing information; reviews effort reports for overall accuracy prior to certification actions
- "Certifier" – has ability to enter adjusted percentages of time and cost-sharing information; certifies effort report

- “Post-Certification Reviewer” – reviews any effort report after certification and where effort has been altered by the “Certifier”.

The next meeting will be October 13.