

**Effort Reporting System**  
Requirements Group  
**Notes from the 11-17 ERS Requirements Group Meeting**  
**Revised December 8, 2004 - Accepted January 13, 2005**

Requirements Group Notes

The meeting notes from the November 3 Requirements Group meeting were approved with the following modifications. Under the heading "Alternative Report Format"

- the first sentence of the first bullet was changed to add the word "committed" so that the sentence now reads: *Certifiers would not be permitted to make changes to the percents of effort charged to the sponsored projects nor to the percent of **committed** cost sharing effort.*
- The penultimate paragraph begins with the statement: *Because the Actual Certified Effort makes no distinction between charged effort and cost sharing effort, the system would not be able to perform the edits defined in the Requirements Document which would alert departments if the certified charged effort did not agree with actual charges, and so departments would not be made aware of when transfers of payroll expense were required.* Jorge Ohy suggested that the system could perform the edit if an assumption was made that certified effort always applied first to charged effort, and if the certified effort was at least equal to the charged effort there would be no need for a transfer of payroll expense or a message to alert the user. This approach also assumes that if a certified amount exceeds the charged amount there is no requirement to process a transfer of payroll expense.

This approach is not in agreement with several edit requirements stated in the Requirements Document and is also not consistent with earlier Management Group discussions which concluded that certified effort which exceeds the sum of charged effort and committed cost sharing should result in an edit message and transfers of payroll expense. Pixie will take this question to the Management Group for their decision.

Review of Report Formats

A discussion was held concerning report formats. Several report formats, some of which are strictly presentation considerations and others which have underlying policy issues, were discussed. Presentation considerations included number and placement of columns and whether or not the columns which could be modified by the users would be filled by the system when the reports were originally issued or left blank until changes were entered or the report was certified. Discussions of report formats having policy implications focused on three main areas. The first was the addition of the "Actual Certified Effort" column, and the second was the changing of the "Actual Cost Sharing Effort" column to "Adjusted Cost Sharing Commitment" as proposed by Jorge Ohy and Mike Anthony at the November 3 meeting. These two format suggestions would change the way a user would complete and certify effort as well as the way the system would perform edits and report on compliance. A more detailed description of these differences is contained in the notes from 11-3 meeting. The third format issue with policy implications concerned the categorization of below the line effort and cost sharing offsets. The group discussed whether all non-sponsored funds could be grouped into one category with all cost sharing offsets assigned by the system to that group, or whether a finer breakdown with more categories was required. More categories would mean that users would be required to distribute the cost sharing offset among the categories. The additional categories were originally suggested because it was felt that the categorization

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of cost sharing offsets would be helpful to campuses in doing their F&A calculations. A minimum of two categories would be needed below the line. One for all non-sponsored funds (if that is the ultimate decision) and one for other sponsored projects (sponsored projects which do not require certification). The separate "other sponsored projects" category is needed to ensure that cost sharing offsets are not inadvertently made against other sponsored projects. If the other sponsored projects were combined with non-sponsored projects there would be no way to ensure that that doesn't happen. Since other sponsored projects can, with specific approval, be used to offset cost sharing the system should allow the user to enter a cost sharing offset in this category but should issue an edit message to alert the user that specific approval is required. A decision was also made that in the below the line group Other Sponsored Projects should be listed first followed by the Non-Sponsored category.

The group concluded that the simple presentation questions would probably be best resolved by doing some mockups and giving users a chance to use the different formats and perhaps get some feedback from additional department representatives. It is also likely that the order of columns and similar minor presentation alternatives could be campus optional.

The discussion on the format issues with policy implications was more involved and it was suggested that a vote be taken to get campus positions on the two main questions. The results of the votes follow:

Question #1 - Are multiple categories needed for non-sponsored funds?

Berkeley - No

San Francisco - No

Davis - No

Los Angeles - No

San Diego - No

Campuses were unanimous that they would not need this information in their F&A calculation and so there was no purpose for multiple categories.

Question #2 - The alternative report format proposed at the 11-3 meeting would allow users to enter and certify a percent of effort without making a distinction between charged effort or cost sharing effort and without requiring that the charged effort and the cost sharing commitment total the certified effort. Should this format be recommended to the Management Group?

Berkeley - No (All 3 members)

San Francisco - Mixed Vote (Only one member present, voted No. Assumption is that of the two remaining members, one would vote No and one would vote Yes)

Davis - Mixed Vote (Two members voted No, one member voted Yes)

Los Angeles - No (Both voted No)

San Diego - No (Both voted No)

### **Case Scenarios**

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Unfortunately, time limitations did not allow for review of many case scenarios and the group was able to review only one. We will continue to review case scenarios at future meetings.

#### **By Agreement Payments**

San Diego reported that although their policies prohibit payment of by agreement amounts from sponsored projects, there are cases of those payments being made. Dan said we should assume that San Diego departments are complying with that policy for purposes of defining payments to be included in ERS calculations.

#### **Design Issues**

Several issues were discussed which will affect the design of ERS system.

- **Biweekly Pay** - Pixie distributed a pay schedule which showed that biweekly payments were included in expense distribution and general ledgers based on the pay period ending dates without regard to pay period beginning dates, and proposed that ERS include biweekly payments in the same way. (Biweekly which can span two calendar months is different from monthly and semi-monthly payments whose pay period begin and end dates are always in the same month.) The group agreed that this was an appropriate way to assign biweekly payment cycles to an effort reporting period.
- **Life of Fund Numbers** - The discussion focused on the need to keep historical information and translations for fund numbers which were no longer active. The group agreed that historical information was required. Pixie asked the group to think about whether the system should have any time limit or edit messages when reissuance of effort reports is requested for reports which include fund numbers which have been inactive for some time.
- **Mixed Mode Reporting Periods** - This discussion focused on the fact that there are some employees who have concurrent 9 and 11 month titles and which are currently calculated incorrectly on the PAR because of the differences in the number of months included in effort report for a given quarter. There was no agreement among the group on how the system currently handles reporting for 9 month employees and so no conclusion could be reached on how to handle combination appointments. Pixie will investigate further to see how each campus is handling reporting for 9 month employees and will put together some examples of combination appointments. A similar problem could exist if a campus were to use one reporting period, e.g. quarter for non-professional employees and another reporting period, e.g. semester for professional and academic employees. The problem would occur if the employee were transitioning from one type of appointment (and reporting period) to another type of appointment. In that case, the system would require rules for special handling during the transition period.
- **Assumptions Concerning Access Rights for Multiple Reporting Periods** - Pixie confirmed that once an employee was given access to effort reports for a particular department or other designation, that person would have access to past as well as current reports, even though they may not have had access at the time those past

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reports were issued. The group agreed that access rights applied to past reports as well as current.

#### Detail Behind the Calculations

The group reiterated the importance of users being able to easily access "drill down" data to back up calculations appearing on effort reports.

#### Reporting for Part Time Employees

A question was raised concerning assumptions to date that all effort must total 100%. Group members wanted to know if A21 specifically stated that as a requirement. Jorge indicated that A21 did not require that all effort total 100% but instead said that all compensated effort needed to be certified as a reasonable estimate. Group members asked that this issue be taken to the Management Group to determine if we could use the actual percents charged to particular funds rather than converting all payments to 100%. Several people felt that it would be much easier for users to review and certify reports for part time employee if only the part time percent was displayed on the reports.

The Requirements Group will meet again on December 8 from 10:00 to 2:00.