Effort - Now and the Future
Tips for today and an introduction to effort period 3
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Office of Sponsored Programs
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Agenda

1) Brief introduction to effort reporting
2) Common pitfalls
3) Tips
4) Frequently asked Effort questions
5) New effort period for faculty summer salary

A Brief Introduction to Effort
What is it?
Effort is how you spend your time
Work or the proportion of time spent on any activity and expressed as a percentage of University time. It does not equate to a 40 hour week or a fixed number of hours.
Total = all activities for which you earned payment as part of your primary contract with the University (IBS)
The Process of Effort Certification

1. **Commit/budget** effort
2. **Allocate** pay according to plans
3. **Report** pay allocations as percentages
4. **Revise** allocations as needed
5. **Certify** correctness of report

Commitments

Commitment = binding promise of effort which must be tracked and reported
Workload = approved work plan for faculty may be divided into instruction/teaching, service, or research

Each piece may include internal & external activities
Commitments to external sponsors fit within the workload
Effort Reporting

- Reported as percentages computed from actual pay allocations
- Revisions made by JV
- Certification
  - Confirms charges were appropriate in retrospect
  - Done 2 or 3 times/year
- Importance
  - Federal requirement per A-21
  - Auditable!

Effort Report – Employee View

- Effort Certification for 09/01/2010 - 09/30/2011
- Employee Name: [Name]
- Award No: [Award No]
- Effort Manager: [Effort Manager]
- Important date: [Date]

Certification

Certifies that all charges were appropriate in retrospect.

Effort Revisions

- Changes to effort reports after employee has certified
- Original, completed report is permanent
- Revision requests must be approved by Effort Manager
- Never a good thing, but some cases are worse than others
- Things that prompt revision requests:
  - Projects overspent or under-spent
  - Committed cost-share neglected
  - Late allocation of salary expenses
  - Corrections to purpose, account, class
Pitfalls

Negative effort values

- Reports with negative values always require a correction by JV.
- Indicates a credit was applied where it didn’t belong (ex: wrong purpose or period).
- Payroll refunds belonging to previous effort period must be JVd by Effort Manager.
Pitfalls

Pending funding sources

What to do if you don’t have a project code for work being performed now?
Examples: delayed contract negotiations, pending renewals.
Think about consequences of temporary funding allocations and stay in a safe zone.
Clearing accounts (ABCD123EXXXX) are a safety zone. You want to avoid transfers from one sponsored account to another.
Gray areas (i.e. swim at your own risk): Pending NCEs, renewals

Un-reported effort

- Report must include all the projects in which the employee provides effort
- Report must include both direct-charged salary and cost-shared salary.
- Cost-share can easily be forgotten and come back to bite you at closeout
- GMQ_EFFORT_CURRENT_BY_PI lists all of a PI’s effort commitments on active awards

Un-informed/careless users

“I guess I should have read it more carefully.”
“I didn’t think it looked right, but somebody asked me to sign it.”
Translation: “I don’t think this is important.”
System users are directed to a training video and required to confirm they understand.
Concerned employees = fewer effort revisions.
If employees were more conscientious about making sure their reports were accurate, it would cut down on the number of revisions needed later.
Your help is needed to impress upon your employees the seriousness of effort reporting. Careless users are your biggest liability.
Getting people to certify their reports

1) Send an email when you forward the report
2) Follow up with reminder email, copy their supervisor
3) Hunt them down, hold their hand
4) Request assistance of Effort Manager

Exceeding salary caps

- Some sponsors limit salary rates (ex. NIH)
- Effort commitment cannot be met solely with sponsor funding
- Amount over cap must be paid by another source

FAQs

- Award administrators should be given the opportunity to review reports prior to employee certification
- Forward report to interested parties, ask for confirmation that funding is appropriate. If you don’t do it now, you may get stuck doing a revision later.
- Find department contacts under Department Administrator Directory at http://www.udel.edu/research/about/directory.html
FAQs

What if the employee is gone?
And what is ‘suitable means of verification’?

- Effort reports ‘stuck’ with former employees can be rerouted by the Effort Manager.
- Effort Administrator ‘certifies for former employee’ with suitable means of verification after HR termination.
- Confirmation from someone who had first-hand knowledge of the employee’s distribution of work effort. (Ex: a supervisor or faculty advisor)
- This should be documented and retained in the department as backup in support of the action, or confirmation may be included in comments field of report.

FAQs

Why do I get these beastly dunning letters, and who else sees them?

- Result of audit recommendations
- 3 levels of escalation: reminder, overdue & very overdue
  - Reminder: 40 days past period end, to rpt holders, effort admin & dept. chair
  - Overdue: 60 days past period end, to all above + asst. deans
  - Very overdue: 80 days past period end, to all above + deans
- Note that effort revisions are overdue immediately if created after the period end date

Changes in Effort Periods for Faculty

- Change in reporting only affects faculty on academic contracts who can earn additional months for summer research
- Result of NSF Effort Audit
- Semester approach – Fall, Spring & Summer
### Effort Periods for Faculty on Academic Contracts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effort Periods</th>
<th>Period 1</th>
<th>Period 2</th>
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<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>Fall semester</td>
<td>Spring semester</td>
<td>Summer (research only)</td>
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<td>Performance Period</td>
<td>Sept– Jan, 15*</td>
<td>Jan 16*– May 31</td>
<td>June – August</td>
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<td>Payments made</td>
<td>Sept-Feb</td>
<td>March-Aug</td>
<td>June- Sept, (after pay requires report)</td>
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<td>Sept 10</td>
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* Denotes a change

For more information:
- UD Effort Policy (6-5)
  [http://www.udel.edu/ExecVP/policies/research/6-05.html](http://www.udel.edu/ExecVP/policies/research/6-05.html)
- Effort training
  [http://www.udel.edu/research/training/efforttraining.html](http://www.udel.edu/research/training/efforttraining.html)
- Effort FAQs
  [http://www.udel.edu/research/preparing/faq.html#effort](http://www.udel.edu/research/preparing/faq.html#effort)

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