Vision Statement
Implement a compliant, streamlined, electronic effort reporting process by June 2012 that reduces administrative burden on campuses.

Providing Outstanding Sponsored Programs Administration Services and Stewardship

Critical Project Success Factor: An Electronic Solution
Another critical success factor for the Operational Excellence in Effort Reporting project is an electronic effort reporting solution. Huron Education Consulting Group’s Effort Certification and Reporting Technology (ecrt) solution was selected because it offered a shared service implementation with the flexibility of campus-specific configurations.

ecrt Features
- Offers flexibility needed to accommodate the Research Foundation’s (RF) unique effort reporting requirements
- Facilitates institutional compliance, increases productivity and offers useful reporting tools
- Web-based tool designed to be simple for end users

Committed Effort
Committed effort is the amount or percentage of time a principal investigator (PI), co-PI and other key personnel agreed to work on a specific sponsored award. It is not necessarily the actual effort expended, but a projected amount to be achieved over a period of time. Committed effort is offered in a proposal and the actual commitment is identified in the award notice.

Most federally-funded research should have some level of committed faculty (senior researchers) effort, paid or unpaid by the federal government. This effort can be provided at any time (academic year, summer months or both) within the approved project period.

Under federal regulations, institutions are required to have a system to properly track and account for committed effort. To address the need for an automated, consistent process to record and monitor effort commitments the project team will develop a process to enter committed effort data into the Oracle business applications and upload that data to ecrt. New reports will capture detailed commitment information as well as any revisions during the period of project performance.

The new ecrt system will enhance compliance and provide:
- Comparison and reconciliation of actual salary to committed effort to identify if commitments are met or if appropriate adjustments are needed.
- Effort commitment data on effort reports to allow a more proactive approach to managing faculty effort commitments.
- A committed effort management system that takes full advantage of the ecrt features and functionality.
Quick Fact
Of the 7,374 fiscal year 2011 sponsored program awards there are 4,186 federal and federal flow through awards. The staff that work on these awards are subject to effort reporting requirements.

Core Campus Team
CNSE: Chris Waller
University at Albany: Paula Kaloyeros
Binghamton University: Paul Parker
University at Buffalo: Scott Shurtleff
Stony Brook University: Aaron Rosenblatt
SUNY Downstate Medical Center: Gary Leipzig
Upstate Medical University: Gina McMahon
SUNY ESF: Don Artz
SUNY New Paltz: Julie Majak
Buffalo State College: Linda Dubrawsky

September 14 Campus Implementation Kick-off Meeting
The Operational Excellence in Effort Reporting project team and the Huron consultants met in Albany on September 14 to kick-off the campus portion of the software implementation. The campus team engaged in an interactive discussion about ecr and identified ways in which its functionality would benefit the overall effort reporting process.

The team thought that ecr presented effort reporting information in a way that will make it easier for PIs to understand how effort is calculated and answer many of their questions.

After reviewing the project and communication plans, the campus team provided feedback on the following:
- Options for who should certify effort in ecr and the pros and cons for each
- Collecting and monitoring committed effort
- Gathering the PI e-mail addresses needed for electronic routing in ecr

Next Steps
- In October and November there will be meetings at each core campus team member’s location to discuss the ecr configuration needed to meet the requirements of that campus. These meetings will also provide the opportunity for other stakeholders, such as pre-award staff, to learn more about ecr and its benefits.
- At the joint Sponsored Programs Focus Group (SPFG) / University Colleges Research Council (UCRC) October meeting UCRC members will see an ecr demonstration.
- Continue discussions about committed effort, policies, and roles and responsibilities.

Technical Update
During September the RF and Huron technical teams installed the hardware and software needed to support ecr. As of Tuesday, September 13, ecr was installed and running in a development instance. This instance will be used to configure the final product that users will see once ecr is live. Two more instances will be set up to allow for user testing and the final production environment. The team also began to identify the needed Oracle data elements and how that data will be uploaded to ecr.

Key Project Milestones
- November 2011 System set up needed for implementation
- December 2011 Finalize training plan
- January 2012 Configure and review data
- June 2012 Launch of electronic effort reporting solution

More Information
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