The University of Delaware Effort System and Certification Process

Research Administration Conference

June 2019

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Objectives

1. What is the purpose of certifying effort?

2. Certifying for individuals in various employment statuses

3. Journal Vouchers and Payroll Adjustments

4. Recent Effort Policy changes

5. Reducing Your Effort on Effort

6. Questions

Part 1

What is the Purpose of Certifying Effort?

Why Certify?

- A federal requirement for all entities receiving federal awards

  - All salary, both direct and cost share, attributed to an award must be verified as accurate, allowable, and properly allocated

- Certification provides reassurance to both regulators and UD personnel that award commitments are being met

- Uniform Guidance Subpart E § 200.430: "Charges to Federal awards for salaries wages must be based on records that accurately reflect the work performed. These records must: Be supported by **a system of internal control**…Be incorporated into the official records of the non-Federal entity…**Reasonably reflect the total activity for which the employee is compensated** by the non-Federal entity"

Part 2

Certifying for Individuals in Various Employment Statuses

Path to Certification: Employment Statuses

- There are five primary employment statuses that the effort system recognizes
  - Active
  - Leave with Pay
  - Leave of Absence
  - Terminated
  - Retired
- These statuses feed from the HR system and determine how a report may be certified

Path to Certification: "Active" A Employees

There are two paths to completion for reports belonging to "Active" employees

Path 1:

| Report Owner "Reviews and Certifies" | → | Effort Administrator "Reviews and Certifies" | → | Report is Complete |

Path 2:

| Effort Manager "Certifies as Exception" | → | Effort Administrator "Reviews and Certifies" | → | Report is Complete |

Note: Path 2 is only acceptable after every possible attempt has been made to have the report owner certify themselves

Path to Certification: "Leave with Pay" P Employees

There are two paths to completion for reports belonging to "Leave with Pay" employees

Path 1:

| Report Owner "Reviews and Certifies" | → | Effort Administrator "Reviews and Certifies" | → | Report is Complete |

Path 2:

| Designee "Certifies as Designee with Suitable Verification" | → | Effort Administrator "Reviews and Certifies" | → | Report is Complete |

Path to Certification: "Leave of Absence," L "Retired," R and "Terminated" T Employees

There is one path to completion for reports belonging to "Leave of Absence," "Retired," and "Terminated" employees

Designee "Certifies as Designee with Suitable Verification" → Effort Administrator "Reviews and Certifies" → Report is Complete

Certification Verbiage

- **Review and Certify**: "I am certifying for myself. I either performed the work myself or am an administrator of the individual named on the report."

- **Certify as Designee**: "I am certifying *in place* of the individual named on the report. I either have first-hand knowledge of the work performed, or access to records that indicate the effort is accurate, to the best of my knowledge."

Uniform Guidance Subpart E § 200.430: It is recognized that teaching, research, service, and administration are often inextricably intermingled in an academic setting. When recording salaries and wages charged to Federal awards for IHEs, a precise assessment of factors that contribute to costs is therefore not always feasible, nor is it expected.

Part 3

Journal Vouchers and Payroll Adjustments

Salary Journal Vouchers

- Salary Journal Vouchers for a specific effort period can be submitted via Web Forms until 10 days after the period ends.
    - For the effort period from September 1st through February 28th, JVs can be submitted until March 10th
    - For the effort periods from March 1st through August 31st and June 1st through August 31st, JVs can be submitted until September 10th

- After the March 10th/September 10th cutoff, the only way for departments to submit JVs for a specific effort period is via the "Process Journal" button on individual effort reports for the period the adjustment needs to be made in

Process journal

Salary Journal Vouchers

- When the effort system generates reports and scans the general ledger for transaction lines, it will only recognize salary JVs that involve sponsored funding or cost share, identifiable by the presence of a project ID

Speed Type:		Purpose:	
PHYT322231		PHYT322231	

Account:		Class:	Dept ID:
121100 - FACULTY FULL-TIME (BARGAINING		112 - CLASS 112	

Fund:	Program:	Source:
OPBAL - OPERATING BALANCE	RSCH1 - FEDERAL RESEARCH	3300000000

Project ID/Grant:
PHYT32223115000 - NIH NEUROMUSCULAR TRAIN 15-16

Contract:	Project End Date:
R01AR048212B - NIH NEUROMUSCULAR TRAIN 11-16	12/31/2017

Salary Journal Vouchers

- JVs that do not involve sponsored funding or cost share are ignored during report generation because they do not have an effect on sponsored effort percentages

- JVs do not change the Institutional Base Salary (the denominator in our effort percentage calculation) and non-sponsored salary JVs do not change the distributions of sponsored salary categories, so there is no need for the effort system to pick them up

- JVs that are indicative of effort distribution changes going forward should immediately be followed up with an update to the employee's LAM. **Proactive LAM adjustments are always preferential to retroactive JV corrections**

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Payroll Adjustments

- When HR makes retroactive payroll adjustments that involve sponsored salary after March 10th/September 10th, this creates an issue in both the previous and current effort periods
- The effort system will recognize the adjustment as part of the period it's submitted during, not the period for which it is intended to affect
- For example, Payroll determines on March 15th (during Period 192) that an October 15th (during Period 191) payment was made on the wrong account. Payroll credits the incorrect code and debits the correct code. Processing this on March 15th means that there is a negative amount on the 192 effort report for the incorrect code.

Period 191 Report

➕ Incorrect account payment

Period 192 Report

➕ Correct account payment

➖ Incorrect account payment

Payroll Adjustments

- If a negative number or incorrect effort percentage appears on an effort report due to a payroll adjustment, the Effort Manager within the Research Office has the ability to submit a cross-period JV to properly allocate the payroll adjustment

Period 191 Report

Incorrect account payment

Period 192 Report

Correct account payment

Incorrect account payment

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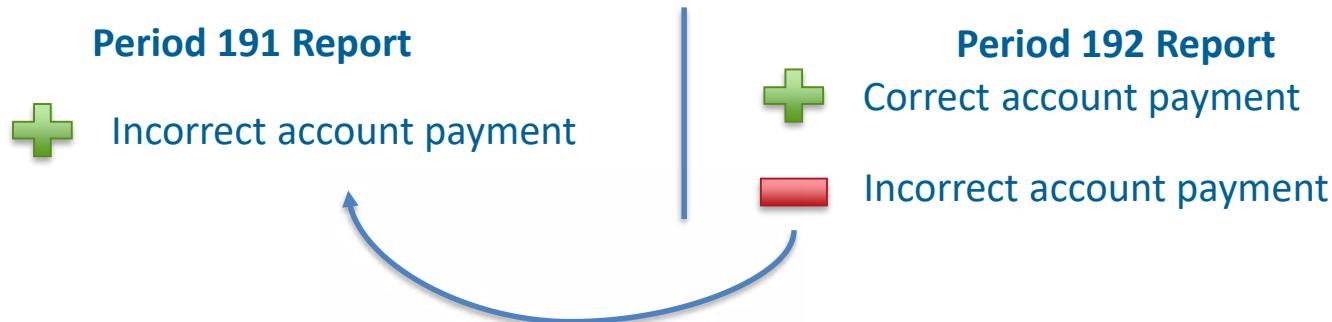
Part 4

Recent Effort Policy Changes

Effort Policy Changes – Effort Percentages

- It is no longer an official University policy requirement for "actual" effort percentages to be within 5% of "committed" effort percentages
  - Actual effort percentages should reflect the amount of time an individual spent working on the project, regardless of the original committed amount
  - This policy update **is not a valid reason** for an employee not to meet commitments
    - Recall from Uniform Guidance Subpart E § 200.430 that records must "**Reasonably reflect** the total activity for which the employee is compensated"
    - Large changes (>25% variance) in actual vs. committed effort typically require sponsor prior approval, and should be brought to immediate attention of the C&G
  - Commitments for senior personnel should be recorded and updated on the Project Team Detail Page in UD Financials:

Schedule	Project Role	Project Manager	Start Date	End Date	Percentage	Acad
1	PI		08/01/2017	07/31/2019		
2	EFFORT_CS		08/01/2017	07/31/2019	8.33	1.00

Effort Policy Changes – Certification Deadline

- In order to stay in-line with other large public research institutions, the University has shortened the certification period from 90 to 60 days
- This change ensures reports are reviewed and certified in a timely manner and as close as possible to the period of performance

Effort Period	Certification Due Date
Period 1 (9/1 – 2/28)	April 30th
Period 2 (3/1 – 8/31)	October 31st
Period 3 (6/1 – 8/31)	October 31st

Part 5

Reducing Your Effort on Effort

Reducing Administrative Burden

- Communicate with the PI and other employees/graduate students you oversee
    - Regularly review the LAM. The LAM is the origin of what you eventually see on an effort report. Adjusting the LAM in a timely manner significantly cuts down on JVs
    - Talk with the PI and other senior personnel about their commitments
    - Note any extended leaves of absence and ensure the report owner knows how to use VPN when off-campus.
- Communicate with your department's C&G about any project changes or issues that arise so that they can identify potential effort impacts
- Communicate with the Research Office's Financial Compliance Manager
    - Let them know of any JV delays or pending purpose codes that might affect certification
    - The Financial Compliance Manager is a resource for every single effort and sponsored-salary JV question

Part 6

Questions

Thank You

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