 August 2013

**Guide to Effort Reporting**

**What is effort reporting?**

Effort reporting is the federally-mandated process by which the salary charged to a sponsored project is certified as being reasonable in relation to the effort expended on that project.

**What is ‘effort’?**

‘Effort’ is the proportion of time spent on any activity, expressed as the percentage of your ‘Total University Effort’.

**What is ‘Total University Effort?**

* ‘Total University Effort’ is all the sponsored and non-sponsored activities which you have to perform in fulfilling your contractual obligations to the University (e.g. sponsored project activities, departmental research, teaching, administrative duties, etc) regardless of when and where they take place.
* ‘Total University Effort’ is not based on a set number of hours or standard work week. It is always calculated in percentages.

**What is not included in ‘Total University Effort?**

Outside consulting, participation in peer review sessions, journal peer review, professional association activities and similar activities.

**Why do effort reporting?**

The federal government requires effort reporting.  Effort reports constitute one of the primary auditable documents to support salary costs on a sponsored project.

**Who is required to certify effort?**

* All Officers of Instruction and Officers of Research other than postdocs ("Faculty") who receive sponsored project funding or apply effort to any sponsored projects are required to certify their own effort.
* Principal investigators are required to certify the effort of postdocs, graduate students and staff funded by their grants.

**What happens if you don’t certify effort?**

* The University may hold proposals for new funding and /or transfer salary relating to uncertified effort from sponsored project accounts to departmental accounts.

**How do you certify effort?**

1. Online by logging on the Effort Certification and Reporting Technology (ECRT) website<http://www.effortreporting.columbia.edu/>
2. You are required to take a mandatory training course on RASCAL, if you haven’t done so before.<https://www.rascal.columbia.edu/login/tc0068/>. The training includes informational materials and review exercises. In order to help, we have developed an answer key to these exercises (see attached).

**How often do you certify effort?**

* You certify effort annually within a designated time period (usually October through December)
* However, you are expected to notify your Effort Coordinator of any changes in workload due to new or expiring grants and additional non sponsored responsibilities and review your effort card at least quarterly.

**How to certify your own effort in ECTR**

* Go to <http://www.effortreporting.columbia.edu/>
* Log in using your UNI and University level password
* You will be taken to the ECTR Welcome page
* At the bottom of the page, click on ‘continue’
* You will be taken to the Effort reporting home page. There click on ‘Certify/View my effort’
* Review ‘Payroll’, ‘Cost share’ and ‘Computed Effort’ columns
* If you agree, round the numbers on ‘Computed Effort’ in the ‘Certified’ column
* Click ‘Certify’ at the bottom
* Once you do this, the certification statement will appear. Click ‘I agree’ and then ‘OK’.

**How to certify your researchers’ effort in ECTR**

* Go to <http://www.effortreporting.columbia.edu/>
* Log in using your UNI and password
* You will be taken to the ECTR Welcome page
* At the bottom of the page, click on ‘Certify my Researchers-Group View’
* You will be taken to ‘Certify my Researchers-Group View’ page, which displays all the researchers that work on your projects
* Review ‘Payroll’, ‘Cost share’ and ‘Computed Effort’ columns for each researcher
* If you agree, round the numbers on ‘Computed Effort’ in the ‘Certified’ column
* Mark the ‘Certified’ checkbox
* Select ‘Certify All’
* You will see a confirmation pop up message. Select ‘OK’

**Who can help with effort reporting?**

* Anna Wojnarowska (aw2045@columbia.edu), Executive Director of Financial Planning and Columbia Business School Effort Coordinator
* Kerith Gardner (kg68@columbia.edu), Assistant Dean of Faculty Affairs