# Effort Reporting and Sponsored Projects

What is effort reporting and why do we do it?

Effort reports are verification that the salary and wage expenses charged to a sponsored project are appropriate. For salaried employees, it is the only way to verify to the federal government, auditors, and other sponsors that the employee or faculty member worked on the grant in the way they said they would.

We pre-review and certify effort reports to assure external sponsors that the assignment of time (and the associated salary and fringe benefit costs) to the projects they sponsor is fair, consistent, and timely.

InfoEd
Effort commitment information

FASIS
Salary and payroll information

ERS
Effort Reporting System
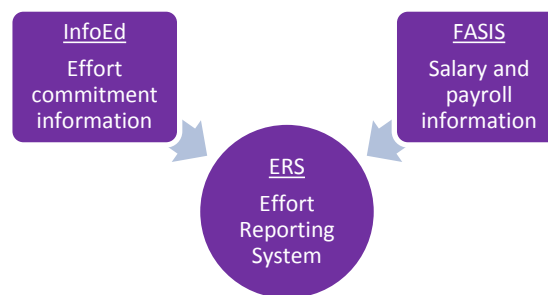
Definitions of Frequently Used Terms	
Assignment	List of faculty and staff with effort reports as well as the certifier information.
Pre-Review	Reviewing effort commitments and payroll distribution on sponsored projects for a given effort quarter.
Commitment	Percentage of effort an employee or faculty committed to working on a sponsored project at the time of proposal submission.
Payroll	Percentage of employee or faculty salary directly charged to a sponsored project during a given effort quarter.
Effort	All paid appointments that involve teaching, research, and administration. 100% effort is the estimated total number of hours worked on University compensated activities. 100% effort does not correspond to a fixed number of hours per work week.
Cost share/Cost sharing	Percentage of effort on a sponsored project charged to non-sponsored University funds.
ERS/Maximus	System for tracking effort commitments and payroll distribution for salaried employees and faculty on sponsored projects.
Post-Review	Reviewing any changes made to an effort report at the time of certification. If no changes are made at time of certification, no post-review is necessary.
Certification	Employee or faculty certifies that the effort report accurately reflects the time they spent working on sponsored projects in a given quarter.

<u>Process</u>

Note: While there are potentially 4 stages of effort reporting (Assignment, Pre-Review, Certification, and Post-Review), this quick guide walks the research or business administrator through Assignment, Pre-Review and Post-Review only. Employees and faculty members are responsible for Certifying their own effort reports, as well as the effort reports of their graduate students.

Step 1) Logging in and checking the Assignments

Use your NetID and password for log in to ERS:

Click the "Cert" tab on the left hand side.

Click on Assignments

To change the Pre-Reviewer, Certifier, or Post-Reviewer, click on "*Change Assignments for Individuals*." Note: Faculty should be assigned as Certifier on their graduate students' effort reports.

Then select "*Check All*" when your department appears. Proceed to the next screen.

Select assignment you would like to perform. Here, the certifier is being assigned.

Your department list will appear and you can choose a certifier from that list.

If the certifier is not in your department, click on "*Assign somebody not in your domain*" and a search box will appear that will allow you to find a certifier in another department.

Once you select a certifier and proceed, you will be brought to this screen. Click on "*Apply*". This screen confirms that the certifier is being assigned.

Since these two individuals do not have any other role in the system now that they are not certifying their own reports, their role has been adjusted to "None".
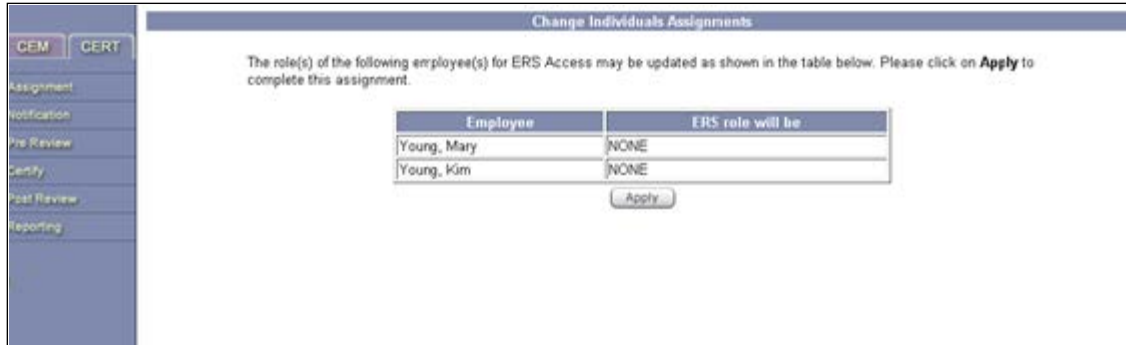
Once you hit the "*Apply*" button, you will be brought to this confirmation page. From this point, you can Exit if you're done, or you can click on Continue to make more assignments.
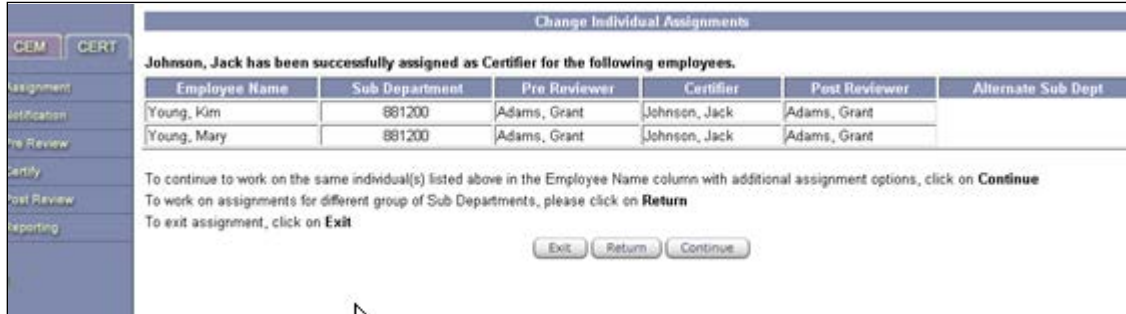
Step 2) Logging in and viewing effort reports that require your Pre-Review

Use your NetId and password to log in to ERS:

https://ersweb.itcs.northwestern.edu/GenericERS/custom/index.jsp

Click the "CERT" tab on the left hand side.

Click the number of effort reports pending Pre-Review in the "Status/My To Do" box.

STATUS / MY TO DO	
	Pre Review
	Pending
Current Period (1Q2009)	2
Prior Periods	0

Step 3) Understanding the information on an effort report

Commitment	Payroll		Accounts		Cost Sharing		Total $	Total %
			Sponsored Accounts					
30%	$13,475.64	29%	610-5249999-60012345	CHEMO RESEARCH	$ 467.25	1%	$13,942.89	30%
29%	$13,475.64	29%	610-5991234-60099999	STEM CELL RESEARCH	$ 0.00	0%	$13,475.64	29%
8%	$3,593.50	8%	650-5246000-60016972	SLEEP DRUG STUDY	$ 0.00	0%	$3,593.50	8%
67%	$30,544.78	66%		**Total Sponsored Accounts**	$467.25	1%	$31,012.03	67%
			Non-Sponsored Accounts					
	$5,400.00	11%	160-1234567	DEPT ACCT	$ -467.25	-1%	$4,932.75	10%
	$10,780.50	23%	710-1234567-99991234	NU MED FACULTY	$ 0.00	0%	$10,780.50	23%
	$16,180.50	34%		**Total Non-Sponsored Accounts**	$-467.25	-1%	$15,713.25	33%
	46,725.28	100%		**Grand Total**	$0.00	0%	$46,725.28	100%

1. "Commitment" tells you the amount of effort the employee or faculty member committed to working on that sponsored project at the time of proposal submission.
2. "Payroll" tells you both the dollar amount and the percentage of the employee's or faculty member's salary that was charged to the sponsored project during that effort quarter.
3. "Accounts" lists all the sponsored projects to which the employee or faculty member has committed effort, as well as any non-sponsored accounts to which their salary was charged. Chart string and title are given for each account.
4. "Cost Sharing" tells you that the difference between the "Payroll" percent and the "Commitment" percent is being cost shared by the University from non-sponsored accounts. In this example, 30% Commitment – 29% Payroll = 1% Cost Sharing.
5. "Total %" tells you the total of the salary directly charged to the sponsored project and cost shared by the University. The "Total %" column should match the "Commitment" column.

Step 4) How to Pre-Review an effort report

Scenario #1: Effort has been committed to the sponsored project, but no salary was charged.

- If the system has not pre-populated the "Cost Sharing" column, click "Input as %" and enter the "Commitment" percent effort in the "Cost Sharing" box of the sponsored account as a positive integer. Enter the percent effort as a negative integer in the "Cost Sharing" box of the non-sponsored account. This will increase the cost sharing on the sponsored account and reduce it on the non-sponsored account. Click "Input as $" before proceeding.

Plan	Payroll		Accounts		Cost Sharing		Total $
			Sponsored Accounts				
8%	$0.00	0%	650-5246000-60016972	Drug Discovery T	$ 1294.44	8%	$1,294.44
30%	$0.00	0%	610-5249999-60012345	CHEMO RESEARCH	$ 4854.15	30%	$4,854.15
29%	$0.00	0%	610-5991234-60099999	STEM CELL RESEARCH	$ 4692.35	29%	$4,692.35
67%	$0.00	0%		**Total Sponsored Accounts**	$10,840.94	67%	$10,840.94
			Non-Sponsored Accounts				
	$16,180.50	100%	110-1234567	Dept Unrestricted	$ -10840.94	-67%	$5,339.56

Scenario #2: Effort has been committed to the project and salary was charged.

- If the percent in the "Payroll" column matches the percent in the "Commitment" column, no action is needed.
- If the percent in the "Payroll" column is less than the percent in the "Commitment" column, click "Input as %" and enter the difference between the "Payroll" and "Commitment" columns as a positive integer in the "Cost Sharing" box of the sponsored account. Enter the difference as a negative integer in the "Cost Sharing" box of the non-sponsored account. Click "Input as $" before proceeding.

Commitment	Payroll	Accounts		Cost Sharing		Total $	Total %
		Sponsored Accounts					
30%	$13,475.64	29% 610-5249999-60012345	CHEMO RESEARCH	$ 467.25	1%	$13,942.89	30%
29%	$13,475.64	29% 610-5991234-60099999	STEM CELL RESEARCH	$ 0.00	0%	$13,475.64	29%
8%	$3,593.50	8% 650-5246000-60016972	SLEEP DRUG STUDY	$ 0.00	0%	$3,593.50	8%
67%	$30,544.78	66%	**Total Sponsored Accounts**	$467.25	1%	$31,012.03	67%
		Non-Sponsored Accounts					
	$5,400.00	11% 160-1234567	DEPT ACCT	$ -467.25	-1%	$4,932.75	10%
	$10,780.50	23% 710-1234567-99991234	NU MED FACULTY	$ 0.00	0%	$10,780.50	23%
	$16,180.50	34%	**Total Non-Sponsored Accounts**	$-467.25	-1%	$15,713.25	33%
	$46,725.28	100%	**Grand Total**	$0.00	0%	$46,725.28	100%

On the next page that appears, you are asked to distribute the employee or faculty member's "Non-Sponsored" activity among various tasks. You may leave this section as it is, or assist the faculty member by using reasonable estimates. The total effort distributed in the categories below must equal the total "Non-Sponsored" effort indicated on the line just above the gray table in which effort is entered.

- INSTRUCTION: Typically, this would be 20%-40% of the faculty member's effort per course for quarters in which they teach and 0-10% (advising, course preparation) in non-teaching quarters.
- DEPARTMENTAL RESEARCH: During a teaching quarter, this will typically range from 0% (for significant sponsored research levels) to about 40% (for low levels of sponsored research).
- ADMINISTRATION: For most faculty, this would be 5%-15% of total effort. For department chairs, associate chairs, and directors of graduate studies, and other positions with administrative responsibility or proposal writing, this would be a larger percentage (15%-40%) of total effort.
- OTHER CATEGORIES: The other categories listed in the table (Other Institutional Activity, NU-funded NMH/NMFF Activity, NMFF Activity, and Industry-Sponsored Clinical Trials) are rarely used by WCAS faculty

Faculty can alter these distributions of their non-sponsored effort at the time of Certification.

Step 5) How to Post-Review an effort report (only necessary if a change was made during Certification)

Scenario #1: The employee or faculty member certified a level of effort greater than the amount committed. When you look at the certified effort report, the "Certified Effort %" will be more than the "Commitment."

- This means the employee or faculty member voluntarily committed more effort to the sponsored project. The additional effort must be cost-shared by the university.
- On the Post-Review screen, click "Input as %" and enter the amount in the "Differences" column as a positive integer in the "Cost Sharing" box for the sponsored account. Next, enter the amount in the "Differences" column as a negative integer in the "Cost Sharing" box for the non-sponsored account. Click "Input as $" before proceeding.

Commitment	Plan	Accounts		% From Pre Review	% Certified	% Difference
		Sponsored Accounts				
8%	8%	650-5246000-60016972	Drug Discovery T	8%	20%	12%
30%	30%	610-5249999-60012345	CHEMO RESEARCH	30%	30%	0%
29%	29%	610-5991234-60099999	STEM CELL RESEARCH	29%	30%	1%
67%	67%		Total Sponsored Accounts:	67%	80%	13%
		Non-Sponsored Accounts				
		110-1234567	Dept Unrestricted	11%	10%	-1%
		710-1234567-99991234	NU MED FACULTY	22%	10%	-12%
	0%		Total Non-Sponsored Accounts:	33%	20%	-13%
			Institutional Summary			

Scenario #2: The employee or faculty member certified a level of effort less than the amount committed. When you look at the certified effort report, the "Certified Effort %" will be less than the "Commitment."

- This means the employee or faculty member performed less effort on the sponsored project than they committed.
- Confirm with the employee or faculty member that this is what they intended to do, then contact Effort Coordinator Tina Mete. Remember that sponsor approval is necessary if there is a greater than 25% change in committed effort on the sponsored project.

Commitment	Plan	Accounts		% From Pre Review	% Certified	% Difference
		Sponsored Accounts				
		610-5100000-60022601	Life Cycle of	15%	15%	0%
		610-6246000-60013793	NRSA Fellowshi	1%	1%	0%
34%	34%	610-5249999-60012345	CHEMO RESEARCH	34%	30%	-4%
10%	10%	610-5299999-60054321	Sleep Pattern Study	10%	10%	0%
		610-6326000-60014107	Mechanism of B	10%	10%	0%
17%	17%	610-5991234-60099999	STEM CELL RESEARCH	17%	17%	0%
61%	61%		Total Sponsored Accounts:	87%	83%	-4%
		Non-Sponsored Accounts				
		110-1234567	Dept Unrestricted	13%	17%	4%
	0%		Total Non-Sponsored Accounts:	13%	17%	4%
			Institutional Summary			

If you have any feedback about this quick guide, we would like to hear from you. Please contact Candice Weber (c-weber@northwestern.edu).