

University of Central Arkansas
Extramural Funding Policies and Procedures

Policy/Procedure Name: Effort Certification

Submitted by: Sonia Hazelwood and Valerie Nicholson

Approved by: Council of Deans 1/28/09

Council of Vice Presidents (Senior Staff) 3/2/09

Effective Date: 3/2/09

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to make UCA departments aware of the definitions of 100% effort and institutional base salary, and the procedures involved in capturing planned and actual effort of UCA employees for compliance with requirements of external agencies and internal entities.

Policy

UCA employees perform many tasks within their everyday workload. The culmination of UCA effort spent on these various tasks is defined as 100% of their UCA effort. **NOTE: 100% effort does not equate to any set number of hours, (40 or 50 hours per week).** It is the total University-compensated effort. 100% effort includes teaching, research, public service, administrative and other University-related activities. Colleges and departments shall assign the appropriate percentages in writing.

The University must be able to distribute the UCA effort to various defined functions for University-related tasks. The personnel expense associated with this 100% effort must also be distributed. Each employee has an institutional base salary that supports the 100% effort.

Federal regulations in OMB Circular A-21 require certifications of the effort and correlating expenses recorded on federally funded grants. This certification is accomplished through the use of the UCA effort reporting process. The process allows the employee to certify the effort spent on grants and to allocate the remaining effort to various University functions such as research, instruction, administration and other activities.

The certified effort distributions are used to support financial and programmatic information submitted to federal, state, accrediting agencies and other internal entities.

Procedures

Distribution - Effort certifications will be prepared twice annually, for the six month period July-December and distributed by Grants Accounting before the end of January, and also for the six month period January-June to be distributed by Grants Accounting before the end of July.

Effort certifications will be distributed directly to employees receiving extramural funding

with planned effort required. Planned effort is defined as the percentage of the institutional base salary charged to a project through the cost distribution in the payroll system; whereas, confirmed effort is the effort certified by the employee.

Effort Certification – The employee completes the effort certification by reporting the actual effort expended for both the extramural funding and the institutional effort. Effort reported by the employee must be within 5% of the effort requested in the proposal and approved by the funding agency. Effort certifications must be signed by the employee and forwarded to their department chair for verification and signature. Fully completed and signed effort certifications should be submitted back to the Grants Accounting Office by August 28 for the January-June certification and by February 28 for the July-December certification. Timely processing of effort certifications is critical to meeting the federal regulations outlined in OMB Circular A-21.

Once a certification has been completed and submitted, there should be no payroll adjustments made that would conflict with the salary distributions certified by the employee. No retroactive payroll adjustments should be performed after effort certification has been completed. Changes to certified effort must be requested in writing by the employee whose effort is being changed. The request must justify the change and include an explanation of why the original certification was incorrect. If the change is for more than the 5% allowance, a written justification is required. Any approved retroactive payroll adjustments will require that a revised effort certification be completed in a timely manner.

This policy is subject to change with regard to federal and agency guidelines. Modifications to any aspect of this policy may be implemented at any time, as determined by the provost. Such modification may occur through amendment of this policy or through written notice to the deans/heads of affected units.

EFFORT CERTIFICATION CHECKLIST

- 1) Grants Accountant prepares Effort Certification Form and sends to employee;
- 2) The investigator verifies effort (can be within 5% threshold, if more than 5% justification must be submitted), signs the certification, and sends to department chair; and
- 3) Department Chair verifies investigator information, reviews justification (if necessary), signs certification, and sends back to Grants Account.

