

## **Certifying Effort: What a certifier should do and know**

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- 1. *When effort is promised and salary is charged to the sponsor***
  - a. Simple example: actual effort equals promised effort
  - b. What about extra effort?
  - c. What if the effort percentage is less than the payroll percentage?
    - i. To meet a commitment, actual effort can vary over time
    - ii. Salary must be congruent with actual effort, except for *short-term fluctuations*
    - iii. The acceptable variance between actual effort and certified effort
  - d. What if the effort percentage is less than the commitment?
  
- 2. *When effort is promised and salary is NOT charged to the sponsor***
  - a. Faculty member with mandatory cost sharing
  - b. Voluntary committed cost sharing for the PI
  - c. Voluntary committed cost sharing for a key person who's not the PI
  - d. Both mandatory and voluntary committed cost sharing for the same project
  
- 3. *When there's an "implied" promise of effort to the sponsor***
  - a. What if the proposal isn't specific about the commitment level – or if there is no "proposal"?
    - i. Vilas Award
  
- 4. *Key persons with both paid and cost-shared effort***
  - a. Paid effort and mandatory cost sharing
  - b. Paid effort and voluntary committed cost sharing
  
- 5. *People WITHOUT commitments who are paid from sponsored projects***
  - a. Simple example: actual effort percentage equals payroll percentage
  - b. What about extra effort?
  - c. What if the effort percentage is less than the payroll percentage?
  - d. Short-term fluctuations
  - e. Reasonable estimates and the acceptable variance
  - f. 100% of salary charged to sponsored projects
  - g. De minimis effort

## Questions that a certifier should ask him/herself when certifying

1. Did I have a commitment?
2. If so, what was my commitment level?
3. To what time period did the commitment apply?
4. Did I meet the commitment during the effort certification period?
5. What if I didn't meet the commitment?
6. What if I devoted more effort than my commitment required?
7. Given my commitment, and what I see on the statement, and my actual effort, how much effort should I certify?
  - a. Is my actual effort within the acceptable variance between actual effort and certified effort?
8. Did I receive salary from the project?
9. If so, did I devote enough effort to justify the salary charges?
10. What if I didn't devote enough effort to justify the salary charges?
11. What if I devoted more effort than I was paid to devote?
12. Given the salary charges I see on the statement, and my actual effort, how much effort should I certify?
13. Did I have any non-sponsored activities during the period?
14. If so, did I have *more than* a "de minimis" amount of non-sponsored effort?
15. Did I spend *any* time on proposal-writing during the period?
16. Given that projects start and stop at a variety of times, and that my effort level may vary during the course of a project, how much effort should I certify for the six-month effort period?
17. What if I want to change my commitment?

## Effort principles that a certifier must understand

1. UW Effort versus Non-UW Effort
2. Activities that are allocable to sponsored projects
3. Non-sponsored activities
4. Effort that's too small to count
5. Reasonable estimate
6. Acceptable variance between actual effort and certified effort
7. Allowable short-term differences between paid effort and actual effort
8. Nine month appointments, summer salary, and the impact of these on calculations of effort percentages