Effort Coordinator’s Guide to Certification Practices And Procedures

Version 5
May 2016
Acknowledgements

In June 2006, the office of Research and Sponsored Programs (RSP) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison convened a project team to assess the institution's effort management practices, update its effort policies and procedures, and engineer a transition from the Personnel Activity Reporting (PAR) system to a new Web-based system for certifying effort. This document was updated by the effort team in September 2010 and October 2015.

Ruth Fruehling was the chief architect and principal author of this *Effort Coordinator's Guide*. Other members of the RSP team who contributed to the business process improvements, system development, policy development, system testing, and the communication, writing, and training efforts include:

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# UW-Madison Effort Coordinator’s Guide to Certification Practices and Procedures

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1. Overview of the Effort Reporting Cycle

1.1. What is Effort Certification?

Effort is the time individuals spend on an activity, expressed as a percentage of all the time they spend on UW job duties. UW job duties may include:
- Instruction
- Administration
- Research
- Clinical activity
- Service as a member of a committee or governance body
- Outreach to the community

A sponsored project is activity that is funded by a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement under which there is a scope of work, a specific budget, and specified terms and conditions. It requires detailed financial accountability and compliance with the sponsor's terms and conditions.

If an individual works on a sponsored project, they are required to assure the sponsor that:
- They did, in fact, devote effort to the project at a level that corresponds with how they were paid from the project, and
- They've met their commitments to the project, regardless of whether the sponsor provided salary support.

Effort certification is the university's means of providing this assurance to sponsors. To certify effort, faculty and academic staff will review a statement that shows:
- The sources from which they were paid, and
- Cost-shared effort on sponsored projects.

The ECRT (Effort Certification and Reporting Technology) system will be used to certify effort.

1.2. Why do we care about Effort Certification?

Each year, the university receives millions of dollars from organizations, including the federal government, that sponsor research and other UW-Madison activities. As the stewards of those funds, it is our obligation to comply with federal and university requirements to certify faculty and staff effort on sponsored projects. Failures to propose, manage, and certify effort correctly could jeopardize the university's federal funding and lead to penalties for the university.
1.3. The Effort cycle

The Effort Reporting cycle encompasses much more than just the certification of effort. The following diagram identifies what should be considered in this cycle.

- Faculty or professional appointment is established
  - Employment terms are established
  - Institutional Base Salary (IBS) is established
  - Additional compensation is identified

- Commitments are made in the proposal and award documentation
  - Sponsor-funded portion of the effort commitment
  - Mandatory cost sharing
  - Voluntary committed cost sharing
  - NIH Salary Cap considerations

- Salary is paid and effort is expended
  - Determination of appropriate funding sources is made
  - Timely and appropriate changes to funding are made
  - Salary cost transfers are processed when appropriate

- Effort is certified
  - A reasonable estimate is made of how time was spent
  - Effort funded by a sponsor and committed cost sharing is considered
  - Voluntary uncommitted cost sharing is not included in estimate
# UW-Madison Effort Coordinator’s Guide to Certification Practices and Procedures

## 2. Key Terms and Concepts

Following are key terms and key concepts that will be used throughout this manual. It will be helpful for you to take time to understand these before you begin to use ECRT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term/Concept</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Period of Performance                                   | The semi-annual period for which people are required to certify. During this time:  
  - effort is spent on sponsored projects  
  - payroll and cost sharing amounts are recorded  
  - people, project, payroll and cost sharing data is loaded into ECRT weekly |
| Certification Period (or certification window)          | The 90 day period of time, starting a month after the period of performance, when:  
  - effort coordinators can review reports before certifiers see them  
  - certifiers review and certify their effort  
  - effort coordinators review and process the certifications  
  - effort coordinators resolve and/or explain any differences between certified effort and payroll |
| Effort Statement                                        | The web page in ECRT on which faculty, academic staff, and PIs view and certify effort for each period of performance. When certified, the statement becomes an official university document and is subject to audit. In ECRT, the statement is called an *effort certification card* or *effort card*. |
| Sponsored Effort vs. Non-Sponsored Effort               | On the effort statement, payroll, cost sharing amounts and effort are divided into two sections: *sponsored* and *non-sponsored*.  
  **Sponsored Effort** includes:  
  - Fund 133 – Non-Federal Grants (except gifts)  
  - Fund 142 – Hatch Adams - Land Grant Research  
  - Fund 143 – Smith Lever - Land Grant Extension  
  - Fund 144 – Federal Projects  
  **Non-Sponsored Effort** includes all other funding sources. Examples include, but are not limited to: 133 gifts, 101, 104, 128, 130, 135, 136 and 161. All non-sponsored funding sources are combined and shown as one line on the ECRT effort card. This line is labeled “All Non-Sponsored Effort”. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term/Concept</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary Department</td>
<td>An individual is assigned to a primary department within ECRT based on their major department in the Human Resources Appointment system. The primary department determines which Effort Coordinator is responsible for supporting the individual in the effort certification process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Effort Coordinator</td>
<td>A primary Effort Coordinator is assigned to each department in which individuals are required to certify effort. This person provides the main support for those individuals in the effort certification process and is the only person who can process (finalize) an effort certification card after the individual has certified it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Effort Coordinator</td>
<td>Some departments may assign a secondary Effort Coordinator to assist in supporting those individuals who are required to certify their effort. This person can view information in ECRT, but will not be able to process effort certification cards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Effort vs. Historical Effort</td>
<td>An effort card is completed when the effort has been certified AND the card has been processed by the primary Effort Coordinator. Once the card is completed, it becomes a Historical Effort card. Prior to that, it is a Current Effort card.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department</td>
<td>The term “department” is used in ECRT to refer to an organizational unit, whether it's a college, school, department, center, or subdepartment. When looking up a department, it is sometimes best to use the UDDS number.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Campus Policy & Procedures

Following is a brief explanation of policies and procedures that you need to be aware of regarding effort certification. More extensive documentation is available at the following web site: http://www.rsp.wisc.edu/effort/msnEffortReference.html

3.1. Whose effort must be certified?

Effort must be certified for all UW faculty, staff, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers who either:
- Charge part or all of their salary directly to a sponsored project, or
- Expend committed effort on a sponsored project, even though no part of their salary is charged to the project.

3.2. Who certifies for whom?

Effort must be certified by a responsible person with suitable means of verifying that the work was performed. This is a federal requirement. It is never acceptable to circumvent this rule.

The following individuals must certify their own effort:
- Faculty members
- Academic staff members
- Principal investigators on a sponsored project

Each Principal Investigator certifies the effort for the graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and university staff who work on his or her research projects.

Sometimes the PI doesn't have a suitable means of verifying the effort for all the people who work on a project - and someone else, like a lab manager, does. In such cases, the PI and the effort coordinator can work together to establish a designee's authorization to certify for project staff members.

Sometimes a staff person works on multiple projects for two or more PIs. In such cases, any one PI with suitable means of verifying all the effort can certify. Or, to collaborate in certifying the staff person's effort, the PIs can enlist the help of an effort coordinator.

3.3. When must effort be certified?

Effort must be certified twice yearly. Effort is certified for a specific period’s of performance, which are January through June and July through December.
3.4. How is effort certified?

The Web-based Effort Certification and Reporting Technology (ECRT) system is used to certify effort for faculty, staff, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers.

For student hourly workers, the timesheet serves as the mechanism for certifying effort.

ECRT cannot be used to certify the effort for some individuals. Separate procedures are included in this manual for these situations. This includes:

- Faculty and staff with zero-dollar, zero-percent appointments
- Some faculty and academic staff members who have left the university and can no longer log in with a UW-Madison NetID

3.5. Maximum allowed effort on sponsored projects

No one can ever have commitments to sponsored projects that total more than 100%.

Commitments to sponsored projects can add up to a full 100% only if all of an individual’s UW job duties can be allocated to sponsored projects. Faculty members generally have academic or administrative responsibilities in addition to their work on sponsored projects. Consequently, a faculty member's commitments to sponsored projects generally cannot total 100% for any consecutive 12-month period.

It is not against the rules for academic staff, university staff, graduate students, or postdoctoral researchers to be paid 100% from sponsored projects. There are a number of instances where this is entirely appropriate, given the individual's job duties. However, everyone's allocation of effort to sponsored projects must be reasonable in light of their non-sponsored university activities.

3.6. Recertification of effort

Within the certification window, a request to recertify can be approved by the effort coordinator.

Once the last date of the certification window has passed, a subsequent recertification can call into question the reliability of the certification process. Therefore, an individual’s request must explain why the effort was erroneously certified, and why the requested change is more appropriate within the context of law, federal requirements, or University policies and procedures. The written request will be reviewed by the Associate Vice Chancellor for Research Administration. Only in the most compelling of circumstances will it be approved.
3.7. Salary cost transfers after effort certification

Effort reports are designed to confirm that salary charges are in alignment with effort. Therefore, the effort statement is a good tool for identifying allowable transfers of salary charges. When a certified effort statement indicates that a salary distribution from a period being certified was not correct, it may be necessary to initiate a transfer of salary charges from one account to another. In such a case, the transfer is a mechanism for finalizing provisional salary charges to a sponsored project. This kind of transfer to bring salary charges into line with certified effort is an important and appropriate part of sponsored projects administration.

Once effort has been certified and transfers to bring salary charges into line with certified effort are complete, subsequent changes to the salary charges must be carefully scrutinized. Federal officials and institutional administrators, alike, will ask: “If the initial cost distribution was certified by a ‘responsible person using suitable means of verification’, how can a change to that distribution be appropriate?” If it is determined that a cost transfer is acceptable, the circumstances must be clearly documented.

Retroactive adjustments placing salary onto a sponsored agreement are allowed only in keeping with the University’s policy on cost transfers. A request to transfer salary charges off of a sponsored award to an institutional fund (e.g. due to a cost overrun) will rarely require the same level of scrutiny, though repeated cost transfers off of federal awards could be a sign of poor internal controls.

A salary cost transfer after effort certification may give rise to a need for recertification of an effort statement. When this is the case, the criteria for reviewing the salary cost transfer request are consistent with the criteria for reviewing the recertification event.

To minimize the potential need for cost transfers after effort certification, investigators, supported by their department administrators and effort coordinators, should review sponsored project budget statements, payroll expense distribution reports, and effort statements at least monthly.
4. Roles & Responsibilities

Compliance in certifying effort requires involvement at many levels of the university. Following is a list of responsibilities of the various roles needed in the effort certification cycle. The first section identifies the role of the employee (i.e. faculty or academic staff) and the administrative roles that support the effort coordinator in various ways. The second section identifies the role and responsibilities of the effort coordinator. In some divisions each of these roles will be separate individuals. In other divisions two or more roles may be performed by the same person. It is assumed that all parties who perform these roles understand the principles of time and effort reporting and salary allocation.

4.1. Overview of UW roles involved in the Effort process

Principal Investigator and Other Certifiers:
- Expend effort on the sponsored project.
- Ensure that all effort expended on the sponsored project is appropriate.
- Ensure that all project staff meets their commitments to the sponsor as documented in the proposal and/or the award agreement.
- Ensure compliance with University Effort Policy.
- Certify direct-charged and committed cost-shared effort on a timely basis.
- Maintain sufficient knowledge of staff effort in order to certify effort for project staff as appropriate.
- When required, obtain prior approval from the sponsor for potential changes in effort levels as outlined in the terms and conditions of the award. (For example, many federal agencies require prior approval for a PI absence from the project for more than 3 consecutive months.)
- Communicate discrepancies to the Effort Coordinator.

Department Grants Administrator:
- Monitor the accuracy of commitment and cost-sharing information.
- Notify RSP of any changes in commitments.
- Notify RSP of missing or incorrect committed cost-sharing information.
- Work with the PI and department Payroll Coordinator to initiate the payroll and appointment processes and to coordinate payroll-related changes.
- Work with the PI and Effort Coordinator as necessary to ensure that appropriate changes are occurring in a timely fashion.

Department Payroll Administrator:
- Promptly assign salaries to the proper grant funding.
- Promptly process changes to funding streams as needed.
- Promptly process salary cost transfers as necessary as requested by Principal Investigator, Department Grants Administrator, and/or Effort Coordinator.
College/School Research Administrator:
- Review proposals to ensure that there is no excessive commitment of effort.
- Review the proposed cost-sharing for appropriateness and ensure that an appropriate cost-sharing source is being documented.
- Review the award to ensure that there are no unexpected changes to the effort and cost-sharing commitments.
- Ensure that cost-transfers are fully documented, completed, and routed in a timely fashion.
- Ensure effort cards are submitted timely and implement penalties for non-compliance as needed.

RSP Pre-Award Office Staff Member:
- Review the appropriateness of cost-sharing during the proposal stage.
- Re-review cost-sharing and commitments for appropriateness and correctness at award set-up.
- Compare cost-shared categories of proposal and Notice of Grant Award for consistency, working with campus as appropriate.

RSP Post-Award Office Staff Member:
- Promptly process salary cost transfers to ensure that complete and accurate payroll data can be loaded into ECRT in a timely manner.
- Verify that all related effort certifications are completed at project close-out.
- Reconcile ECRT and the WISPER to ensure correct cost-sharing information.

RSP Effort Administration:
- Develop and implement effort reporting policies and procedures.
- Assist with development of educational programs for all employees involved in the effort certification process.
- Monitor federal agencies and the audit community for policy changes affecting the reporting of effort.
- With RSP Post-Award staff, load data into ECRT and monitor the quality of the data and the loading process for accuracy and integrity.
- Develop and maintain ECRT management reports for use by RSP, College/School Research Administrators, department Effort Coordinators and others as needed.
- Maintain the necessary tables and configurations within ECRT.
- Ensure that the effort system produces accurate effort cards in a timely manner.
- Monitor the effort process for timely submission and provide effort submission reports to College/School Research Administrators.
- Review requests for retroactive adjustments to effort cards and, if appropriate, re-open effort reports.
- Report questionable practices and recurring problems, depending on their severity, to the department head, Dean, RSP management, and/or others as necessary.
- When unique situations occur, work with the proper campus offices (i.e. DoIT, Accounting, Dean’s offices, etc.) to resolve any issues.
4.2. Effort coordinator responsibilities

The Effort Coordinators are vital to the effort certification process. Their extensive responsibilities support faculty and academic staff, including:

- understanding the Federal requirements related to effort
- ensuring that administrative tasks are completed appropriately
- monitoring all aspects of effort compliance

The following list is intended to outline the Effort Coordinator’s responsibilities. More details on how to accomplish these responsibilities are covered in later chapters of this manual.

**Ongoing:**
- Review the effort cards for faculty members and senior/key personnel in ECRT on an ongoing basis, to determine whether the distribution of salary charges and cost sharing is consistent with expectations
- Follow up with faculty, academic staff, and payroll coordinators to make adjustments as necessary

**Prior to certification:**
- Work with faculty and academic staff members to ensure that the most appropriate person can certify each effort card in ECRT

**During the certification window:**
- Help faculty and academic staff members interpret and understand their effort cards
  - Log into ECRT to look at the cards before faculty and academic staff members see them
  - Use the notes field on the effort cards to explain potentially confusing info
  - Assist in identifying situations where a researcher expends effort on a project, but there is no payroll or cost sharing data to trigger a line in the sponsored half of the effort card

**After certification:**
- Process each certified card, applying the evaluation method outlined on the diagram found in Appendix B, and optionally:
  - Work with the department Grants Coordinator to resolve cost sharing issues
  - Return the card to the investigator if something is unclear
  - Initiate one or more salary cost transfers if needed
- Ensure that inappropriate statements and questions do not persist in the "notes"
- Respond to requests for **retroactive adjustments** to payroll, and/or to the effort card:
  - Prior to the end of the certification window: Reopen a certified effort card for recertification, in response to a request from an investigator
  - After the end of the certification window: assist the faculty or academic staff member in obtaining approval from the Associate Vice Chancellor for Research Administration in the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs.
- Maintain documentation (in the notes and otherwise) to support resolution of potential questions from auditors, and respond to questions from auditors if necessary
Follow-up:
- Ensure all effort cards are certified
- Follow up when effort certification is overdue

When questions arise:
- Respond to questions from auditors, if necessary
5. Certification Cycles

5.1. Employee types, certification periods and payroll periods

Effort must be certified on a semiannual basis. The semiannual periods of performance and their corresponding certification windows are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period of Performance</th>
<th>Certification Window</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 1 – June 30</td>
<td>August 1 – October 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1 – December 31</td>
<td>February 1 – April 30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The period of performance start and end dates for university staff will vary from year to year, because:

- University staff are paid biweekly as where all other staff are paid monthly;
- Periods of performance contain only whole payroll periods, never portions of a payroll period, and
- Biweekly payroll periods typically do not start on the first day of the month or end on the last day of the month.

Effort for an individual who works on one or more sponsored projects must be certified for each and every period of performance during which the individual charges salary or devotes effort to the project.
5.2. Certification cycle – an illustration

It is important to understand the various stages of the effort certification cycle. The following example, based on semiannual certification, is intended to help you understand what activity occurs in each stage.

Period of Performance is 01/01 through 06/30
- Effort is spent on sponsored projects
- Payroll is recorded and cost sharing is tracked
- People, project, payroll and cost sharing data is loaded into ECRT weekly

The last payroll that applies to the January through June period of performance is posted at the end of July.

Certification period (window) is open 08/01
- Email notification is sent to certifiers on 08/01
- Certifiers review and certify their effort cards
- Effort coordinators review and process certifications
- Effort coordinators resolve and/or explain any differences between certified effort and payroll
- Departments initiate salary cost transfers, if necessary, to make payroll consistent with effort

Certification period is closed 10/31
- Effort coordinators follow-up on uncertified reports
- Changes to certified effort reports require appropriate justification and approvals
6. How is ECRT (Effort Certification & Reporting Technology) populated?

ECRT is the web-based system that UW-Madison uses to certify effort and manage the certification process. As the official system of record, effort statements and ECRT transactions are auditable for compliance with federal and University policies.

This section provides detailed instructions in how to use the ECRT software. But, it is also important to understand the data that ECRT uses. The following table explains what is and what is not included in ECRT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data</th>
<th>What’s Included</th>
<th>What’s Excluded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| People             | • Every employee who has at least one appointment that is not a student hourly appointment | • Employees with only student-hourly appointments  
 |                    |                                                                                   | • Non-employees                                      |
| Department(s) for a person | • All departments in which people hold appointments  
 |                    | • The primary department is assigned on the basis of information from the UW's human resources information systems | |
| Projects and Pay Sources | • Every sponsored project from which an individual has been paid during the period of performance, or to which an individual has a cost-sharing commitment  
 |                    | • Every non-sponsored pay source from which an individual has been paid during the period of performance. (On the statement, these are rolled up into one line item titled “All Non-Sponsored Effort”) | |
| Payroll            | • All regular payroll transactions posted to the UW’s Shared Financial System except payroll for student hourly appointments and those that have been excluded on the | • Payroll for student hourly appointments  
 |                    |                                                                                   | • Salary cost transfers that are processed after an effort certification card is completed  
 |                    |                                                                                   | • Transactions, such as |
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data</th>
<th>What’s Included</th>
<th>What’s Excluded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>basis of the account code (as outlined in Appendix A)</td>
<td>tuition/remission and lump sum payments, that are excluded on the basis of the account code. See Appendix A for a complete list of included and excluded payroll codes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Salary cost transfers that are posted to SFD before the individual’s effort card is certified and processed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>• A specific and quantified effort percentage as promised in the budget, budget justification, or narrative of a proposal and accepted by the sponsor, regardless of whether salary support is requested</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost Sharing</td>
<td>• Mandatory</td>
<td>▪ Voluntary Uncommitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Voluntary Committed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• NSF Institutional (for NSF awards made before July 1, 2007)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.1. **When is ECRT updated?**

Data is loaded into ECRT on a weekly basis. Each effort statement shows only the payroll transactions and cost sharing commitments that apply to a single period of performance. If a salary cost transfer occurs after the period of performance, it will be reflected on the effort statement only if the statement *has not yet been processed* by the effort coordinator. Once an effort coordinator has processed the statement, a subsequent salary cost transfer is not reflected on the statement but must still be considered in evaluating whether salary charges are consistent with the individual's actual effort.

**Assignment of an Effort Coordinator**

An individual's primary department determines which effort coordinator will process the effort card. The primary department is assigned based on the person’s major department in the Human Resource appointment file. The following situations could cause a change to the primary department, and possibly the effort coordinator, in ECRT:

1. If an employee has a new appointment and there is already an existing appointment, the primary department would only change if the new appointment was a faculty appointment.
2. If an employee has a new appointment and the existing appointment ends, the primary department will be updated with the next data load to ECRT.
3. If an employee leaves the university, the primary department will not change for the employee’s last effort certification card.
**Linking PIs to researchers on their projects**

PIs are required to certify for the graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and non-PI university staff who work on their sponsored projects. PIs are identified with projects in the WISPER and this information is used in ECRT to determine who appears on the PIs “Certify my Researchers” list. Academic staff are required to certify for themselves; therefore, they will not appear on a PI’s list.

### 6.2. Sponsored vs. Non-Sponsored

The effort certification card shows 100% of an employee’s effort regardless of whether s/he works 20 hours a week, 40 hours a week or 60 hours a week. Payroll expense data is loaded into ECRT and a percentage distribution is calculated and shown on the certification cards. Each payroll funding source is reflected in one of two sections on the card – sponsored or non-sponsored.

**Sponsored Effort** includes:
- Fund 133 – Non-Federal Grants (excludes gifts)
- Fund 142 – Hatch Adams - Land Grant Research
- Fund 143 – Smith Lever - Land Grant Extension
- Fund 144 – Federal Projects

**Non-Sponsored** includes all funding sources that are not included in sponsored. All non-sponsored funding sources are combined and shown as one line on the ECRT effort card. This line is labeled “All Non-Sponsored Effort”.

### 6.3. Cost sharing

Cost sharing is the portion of the total costs of a sponsored project that is borne by the UW rather than by the sponsor. UW funds used for cost sharing may support all or part of an employee’s effort on a particular project.

Cost sharing amounts are entered and calculated in the WISPER. They are loaded to ECRT on a regular basis. Any new cost sharing commitments or changes to existing commitments must be changed in the WISPER.

There are four types of cost sharing, as listed below. Mandatory, NSF Institutional cost sharing and Voluntary Committed cost sharing **MUST BE INCLUDED** in certified effort. Voluntary Uncommitted cost sharing **SHOULD NOT BE INCLUDED** in certified effort.

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Mandatory cost sharing is any cost sharing that is required by the sponsor as a condition for proposal submission and award acceptance.

NSF Institutional cost sharing is a form of mandatory cost sharing. The NSF requires institutions to provide an aggregate one percent (1%) cost sharing on unsolicited awards with a start date before July 1, 2007. The cost sharing is not stated in the proposal, nor is it required on a grant-by-grant basis, but it must be met in aggregate on all unsolicited awards.

Voluntary Committed cost sharing is not required by the sponsor as a condition of proposal submission, but once it is offered by the institution and agreed to by the sponsor; this becomes an obligation that the institution must fulfill. Cost sharing that is proposed in the budget or the budget justification becomes a commitment upon execution of the award agreement. When cost sharing proposed in the narrative is specific and quantified, it also becomes a binding commitment upon execution of the award agreement.

Voluntary Uncommitted cost sharing is neither pledged explicitly in the proposal nor stated in the award documents. This typically occurs when an individual expends more effort on a sponsored project than his or her commitment requires. This type of cost sharing, or "extra effort," is above that agreed to as part of the award and is not required to be documented, tracked, or reported.

6.4. Commitments

Committed effort is the amount of effort proposed in a grant proposal or other project application and accepted by the sponsor, regardless of whether salary support is requested for the effort. Committed effort may be adjusted with the approval of the sponsoring agency.

For example, if an NIH grant application proposes that a faculty member will devote 30% of his or her effort to the grant, with salary support for 10% of effort, then the cost sharing is 20% and the effort commitment is 30%.

Commitments are recognized, and effort must be tracked, for the principal investigator/project director or key personnel who are listed on the Notice of Grant Award (NOGA). In situations in which the award does not explicitly identify the PI, Co-PI, or key persons, the University tracks the effort commitment of the principal investigator on a sponsored project.

Commitments by person and by project are be entered and maintained in the WISPER. Any new commitments or changes to existing commitments must be updated in the WISPER. The updated commitments will load to ECRT on a regular basis and will be displayed on individual’s effort statements.
Using the ECRT (Effort Certification and Reporting Technology) system

ECRT is a role-based system. A user logs in with their UW-Madison Net ID. The options to work within ECRT are determined by the role (or roles) the user has been assigned in the system. Some important roles are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role Name</th>
<th>Role Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty/PI</td>
<td>Anyone who is assigned to one or more sponsored projects in the WISPER as a Principal Investigator (PI) or who has a faculty appointment in the HR Appointment system. This person certifies his or her own effort as well as effort of grad students, post doctoral researchers and non-PI university staff working on their projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Staff</td>
<td>Anyone who has an academic staff appointment in the HR Appointment system. If someone has both an academic appointment and a faculty appointment, they are given the role of Faculty/PI. This person certifies his or her own effort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PI Designee</td>
<td>An individual “with suitable means of verification” who has been designated to certify for researchers on a project in place of the PI.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effort Coordinator</td>
<td>An individual in a department who supports PIs, faculty and academic staff in certifying their effort; processes effort cards; and ensures that any needed follow-up is completed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean/Division Level Administrator</td>
<td>An individual within a college/school/division who oversees the effort certification process and provides support for effort coordinators and for faculty and academic staff who certify their effort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effort Administrator</td>
<td>Research and Sponsored Programs (RSP) staff member who has responsibility to oversee the ECRT system, maintain the tables and configurations, support campus and ensure that ECRT produces accurate effort cards in a timely manner.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each ECRT user has one or more roles. For each role, there is a set of rights that control what a user can see and do. If you have one role, you have the rights that are associated with that role. If you have more than one role, you have all of the rights that are associated with each of your roles.

This chapter describes the ECRT features that are available to individuals who have been assigned the Effort Coordinator role in ECRT.
6.5. Access & supported web browsers

ECRT is a web-based system and can be accessed at the following Web address:

http://ecrt.wisc.edu/

The following web browsers are recommended for use with ECRT. Other browsers may be used at your own risk.

- Internet Explorer version 6.0 and higher
- Firefox 1.0 or higher (preferred browser)
- Safari

6.6. How to log on

1. Open a web browser and access ECRT using the following URL:  http://ecrt.wisc.edu

2. Campus: select UW-Madison

3. Enter your UW-Madison NetID and password. If you are not familiar with your NetID, contact the DoIT help desk or see the following web site for more information:  http://kb.wisc.edu/helpdesk/page.php?id=4966

4. Select the checkbox to save your campus and username. If you do this, the next time you go into ECRT you will only need to enter your password.

5. Click the “Login” button
6.7. Email notification

Following each period of performance, it takes approximately a month before the start of the certification period for payroll and cost sharing data to post in ECRT. After the final posting has occurred, a 90 day certification period will open for staff to certify effort and for effort coordinators to process the effort cards and initiate any necessary salary cost transfers.

Email notifications will be sent out on the following schedule:

**Effort Coordinators**-
1. **The week prior to the certification period** - Effort Coordinators will be notified of the date that the certification period will be open.
2. **Day 75 of certification period** - Effort Coordinators will be reminded that there are 15 days left in certification period.
3. **Approximately 10 days after the certification period ends** – Effort Coordinators will be reminded that in 10 days effort penalties will be assigned to any certifier with overdue tasks from the last certification period.
4. **Approximately 20 days after the certification period ends** – Effort Coordinators will be notified that effort penalties have been assigned to certifiers with overdue tasks from the last certification period.

**Certifiers**-
1. **At the opening of a certification period** - An email will be sent all employees who have a certification task to notify them that the certification period has opened.
2. **Day 30 of certification period** – An email will be sent to all employees who have not yet certified, reminding them to log into ECRT and certify their effort.
3. **Day 60 of certification period** – An email will be sent to all employees who have not yet certified, reminding them to log into ECRT and certify their effort.
4. **Day 75 of certification period** - Effort Coordinators will be reminded that there are 15 days left in certification period.
5. **Approximately 10 days after the certification period ends** – An email will be sent to all employees who have not yet certified, reminding them that in 10 days effort penalties will be assigned to any certifier with overdue tasks from the last certification period.
6. **Approximately 20 days after the certification period ends** – An email will be sent to all employees who have not yet certified, informing them that effort penalties have been assigned to certifiers with overdue tasks from the last certification period.

After this series of email notifications, additional follow-up will need to be done by the effort coordinator on an individual basis.

Employees or emeritus faculty who do not have payroll, cost sharing, or commitments recorded to a sponsored project will not receive an email, even if they are required to certify. An example would be an employee whose entire salary is paid on 101 funds, is a key person on a sponsored project and is not the PI. In this situation, the employee’s time spent on the project would most likely be voluntary committed cost sharing. These employees need to be identified by the PI on the project.

*Version 5.0 – May 2016*
6.8. Welcome page

You will see this screen when you initially log into ECRT.

Click on the “Continue” button to go to the Home Page

6.9. Home page
6.9.1. Navigation tips and helpful links

Menu choices
There are three ways to navigate to various menu choices within ECRT.

1. The ecrt Home Page provides tabs that present an Effort Coordinator with access to tasks and statements that are important to them. The Statements Awaiting Certification tab will only be populated if the EC has a personal statement to certify. The Effort Tasks tab will display any processing tasks created as a result of certification. These tasks need to be opened, reviewed, and processed. The Effort Tasks tab only displays if there are tasks present. The Associated Certifiers tab contains a list of all outstanding statements that need to be certified that are in the Effort Coordinator’s department, or for individuals who work on grants in the Effort Coordinator’s department. This list will update as effort statements are certified and should be the first check an Effort Coordinator does related to the progress of certifications within their department(s).

2. The Search Bar at the top of each page allows you to enter a person (to navigate to their effort statement), a project (to navigate to the project summary page), or a department (to navigate to the department dashboard page). Enter enough criteria to yield a single result and ecrt will automatically take you to the next page.

Menu groups are listed along the top of the page with drop-down lists that show the menu choices. As you navigate throughout ECRT, note that the menu options continue to be available. You may find this useful so that you do not need to return to the home page each time you want to navigate to another option.

Logging out of ECRT
You can logout of ECRT by closing your browser or clicking the “Sign Out” menu choice at the top right part of the page.

Looking up a record
When looking up information, many of the pages within ECRT will require you to identify key data such as a person’s name or a department. A “type-ahead” feature is used to allow you to select the information from a list. After you have typed the first few characters/numbers, you will see a list. You can continue to type more characters/numbers to refine the list or pick from the list. If you are looking up the name of a person, type the last name followed by a space (do not use commas) and then the first name. For example: Smith Jane. Once you see the person you are looking for, you can select them and click “submit”.

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If you want to look up a department, start typing the 7 digit UDDS number, including ‘A’ for Madison campus. Once you see the department that you are looking for appear on the list, you can select it and click ‘submit’. If you type in the entire 7 digits, you will see only one department in the list. You can then select it or press ‘tab’ to bring that department into the selection field. Click ‘submit’ to navigate to that department.

Links
On the left side of the Home Page of ECRT you will find links to other resources related to effort. They include:

1. **MSN ECRT Help** will provide access to information that is intended to help someone use ECRT more effectively. Examples of what you might find on this page include information from this manual, a quick start guide for certifiers and a link to ECRT “How-To” videos for certifiers.

**MSN Effort Reference** will provide access to FAQs, as well as various policy and guidance documentation relating to effort certification requirements.

2. **MSN Add-on Tools** will include reports and queries that have been developed by UW- Madison to help you in fulfilling your effort coordinator responsibilities.
6.9.2. ECRT help

As you navigate in ECRT, you can find out more information about the page you are using by clicking the “help” button. Keep in mind that this information is not specific to the University of Wisconsin.

6.10. Viewing an Effort Certification Card

There are multiple ways to look up someone’s effort card. Each of these menu choices is discussed in more detail later in this chapter. This section is intended to describe the information that you will find on the card. The three ways to access cards are:

1. **Associated Certifiers** - this list provides links directly to any statements associated to your department(s) that have not been certified.

2. **Search Bar** - use this functionality to enter an individual’s name or employee id, the system will take you directly to the effort statement if you enter enough criteria to produce a single, unique result.

3. **Effort Tasks** - allows you to view current effort cards that have been certified and are assigned to you for processing.

4. **Department Dashboard** - will give you access to current and historical effort cards for anyone who has an appointment in a department for which you are the effort coordinator. In addition, you will be able to view cards for anyone else who has payroll, cost sharing or a commitment on a sponsored project that is associated with your department.

5. **Manage Users** - gives you access by name and/or person ID to a current effort card. You will have access to effort cards for anyone who has an appointment in a department for which you are the effort coordinator. In addition, you will be able to view cards for anyone else who has payroll, cost sharing or a commitment on a sponsored project that is associated with your department.

Following is an example of the effort card certification screen, along with a description of the information that you can find on the effort card.
Work List
The Work List displays the names on any individual that a PI is able to certify for. Selecting names in the work list will show the effort statement(s) of the individual below. The Work List can be filtered and sorted to display only people paid from a certain project or who are in a particular department. You can also select multiple names from the work list at once to display multiple statements below. Use the CTRL or SHIFT buttons while clicking individual names from the Work List to display multiple statements. You can also select the View All button to display up to 25 statements from the Work List.

Certifier Information
When you select an individual’s name from the Work List, the top right window will update. This window displays the individual’s name, title, department, and the name of the effort coordinator assigned to this person is also listed. This is especially useful if you have someone working on a grant assigned to your department, but they are assigned to an effort coordinator in a different department. You will need to coordinate with this individual on any issues regarding the effort certification card.
If you click on the email address, your default email software should open up a new message window and allow you to send a note to this individual. Keep in mind, however, that this address may not be current. It may be more useful to send a separate email, using the campus directory, which may be more current. Also, keep in mind that not everyone certifies their own effort. For example, if you have a question about an effort certification card for a graduate student, it would be more appropriate to contact the PI.

The Effort Statement section of the Certifier window organizes the individual’s effort statements in 3 lists:

1. **Needing Certification**: statements that require certification at this time.
2. **In Progress**: statements that are currently building for the next period.
3. **Historical**: statements from prior periods that have been certified and processed.

Expand one of the lists and click on a statement to view it below. The headers of each individual statement will contain information about the Period of Performance, Status, and Due Date. An INFORMATION BAR will be present to communicate any critical information about each statement, such as a designee relationship that has been established or a ‘hold’ that has been placed on the statement that is preventing it from being certified.

**Certification Information**

The effort statement displayed will provide information that will help the certifier to determine if the appropriate effort is represented.

1. **Project (column 1)** lists the activities associated with this individual. The projects are loaded from payroll, cost sharing or commitment records. Projects are grouped into Sponsored or Non-sponsored categories. The term “All non-sponsored effort” is used for all activities that are not considered to be sponsored for purposes of effort reporting. Details of the accounting coding for a person’s non-sponsored funding sources can be found in the UW’s Financial System (i.e. WISDM).

   If you click on the project number or project name, you will see a “Project Summary” page that provides more information about the sponsored project, including all employees connected with that project through payroll, cost sharing or a commitment. (See section 7.8 for more information.)

2. **Commitment (column 2)** displays the individual’s commitment to that project. This is the commitment percentage that is stored in WISPER. An individual will be able to compare their commitment percentage to what they are certifying for that project. If a certification percentage is significantly less than an commitment, the Effort Coordinator will be notified that a reduction in effort may be necessary. If changes to commitments are needed, they must be updated in WISPER.

3. **Payroll (column 3)** shows how the individual’s payroll is distributed, by percentage, to his/her various funding sources. Payroll will always total 100%, regardless of what the person’s appointment FTE is or how many hours per week they work. This is consistent with
how effort needs to be reported. Section 6 identifies what is included in the payroll amounts. Click on the “Show Dollar Value” link to see the payroll dollars that were used in the calculation.

4. **Cost Share (column 4)** includes all known cost sharing. Currently, only mandatory cost sharing appears in this column. Voluntary committed cost sharing is being collected in WISPER. See section 6.3 for more information. Cost sharing will display as a negative percentage on the line that represents the ‘source’ of the cost sharing. The sponsored project(s) receiving the cost sharing will show as a positive percentage. The total of the Cost Share column will always be zero. Click on the “Show Dollar Value” link to see the cost sharing dollars that were used in the calculation.

5. **Computed Effort (column 5)** is a sum of the payroll and the cost sharing percentages. This column will always total 100% and is key to the individual certifying effort. You will need to reconcile any differences between this column and the ‘Certified’ column.

6. **Certified (column 6)** is where the certifier enters the effort for each activity. The certifier must enter a percentage on each line, even if it is zero. The total of the column must equal 100%. The check box next to each percentage line must also be selected before the effort certification can be completed. Normally this box is automatically checked when an amount is entered. Links at the bottom of the page will allow the certifier to check ‘All’ or ‘None” of the boxes.

**Effort Calculator**

An effort calculator is available to help convert hours of work to percentages or convert percentages to hours of work. You can access the Effort Calculator from the RSP Home Page at: [http://www.rsp.wisc.edu/effort/calculator.html](http://www.rsp.wisc.edu/effort/calculator.html)
Show Dollar Value

Click on “$ Value” to show the dollars used to calculate the percentages on the effort card. This information can be useful in understanding what is included on the effort card. It may also assist in reconciling differences between the computed effort and the certified effort.

Note: If percentages are entered in the “Certified” column, they need to be saved or certified before selecting the “Show Dollar Value” link. Otherwise, they will be cleared out and will need to be re-entered.

Effort Card PDF Version

On the top left header of every effort statement you will find an icon that allows you to view and print a PDF version of the effort card prior to certifying and processing a card. Any percentages or notes entered on the web effort card will NOT be included on the PDF version. This is most useful in procedures to certify effort for someone who has left the university.

Note: A paper copy of a certified, processed card can be obtained by running an External Audit Report.

Certification Payroll Report

The icon, found at the top, right part of the page, opens a menu that allows you to run a “Payroll Report” that provides the details behind the payroll percentages on the certification card. This icon is also located on each line of the effort statement. Selecting the icon for a project will run the Payroll Report and display the details for only that project.

Note: When you access this report from an individual’s effort card, a second window will open. To close this window use the ‘X’ in the top right corner of the screen. DO NOT use the logout option on the menu bar.
Effort Note Section

Users can enter a note by clicking the icon, typing the note, and then clicking the “Save Note” button to store it as part of the permanent record. This option allows you or the certifier to document information that applies to the effort certification card and is appropriate to be part of the permanent, auditable record. The two most common uses of this section will be:

1. When multiple PIs are required to certify someone’s effort (see FAQs for more information).
2. To record voluntary committed cost sharing when the sponsored project being cost shared does not appear on the effort card. This will happen if there is no payroll recorded to the sponsored project and the certifier is not the PI for the project. In that case it is not possible to link the project with the certifier and the effort must be documented as a comment. Note: This situation is temporary. It will not be necessary once voluntary committed cost sharing is captured through WISPER.

The Effort Note History link provides a list of notes that have been entered along with the author, the date and icons that allow you to copy, edit or delete a note.

List of Certifiers and Processors

This list at the bottom of the page is useful to determine who at UW will have to process the statement and which PI’s are able to certify the statement. The List of Processors will display the Primary Effort Coordinator for the individual. The Primary Effort Coordinator will receive a review task when the statement is certified and is responsible for processing the statement after a review is performed. The List of Certifiers will contain any PI who has a project on the individual’s statement and any designee who has been set up for a project on the statement. This is a list of all of the individuals who are able to certify the statement through the Certify My Research Staff functionality.
**Effort Transaction History**
This link, found at the bottom of the page, provides a log of the activity on this effort card. Click on the ‘?’ to see the detail. For example, you can see the dates that various payroll transactions for this certifier were loaded to ECRT. This tool may be helpful in investigating discrepancies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>User</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/27/2013</td>
<td>JULENE C GASPARD</td>
<td>0019</td>
<td>Not processed at 5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/27/2013</td>
<td>JULENE C GASPARD</td>
<td>0019</td>
<td>Not processed at 29.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/27/2013</td>
<td>JULENE C GASPARD</td>
<td>0019</td>
<td>Not processed at 4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/27/2013</td>
<td>JULENE C GASPARD</td>
<td>0019</td>
<td>Not processed at 55.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/27/2013</td>
<td>JULENE C GASPARD</td>
<td>0019</td>
<td>Not processed at 5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/11/2013</td>
<td>HOWARD H BAILEY</td>
<td>00081913</td>
<td>Certified at 0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/11/2013</td>
<td>HOWARD H BAILEY</td>
<td>00081913</td>
<td>Certified at 5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/11/2013</td>
<td>HOWARD H BAILEY</td>
<td>00081913</td>
<td>Certified at 15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/11/2013</td>
<td>HOWARD H BAILEY</td>
<td>00081913</td>
<td>Certified at 1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/11/2013</td>
<td>HOWARD H BAILEY</td>
<td>00081913</td>
<td>Certified at 20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/11/2013</td>
<td>HOWARD H BAILEY</td>
<td>00081913</td>
<td>Certified at 4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/11/2013</td>
<td>HOWARD H BAILEY</td>
<td>00081913</td>
<td>Certified at 55.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/11/2013</td>
<td>HOWARD H BAILEY</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Changed from Not Certified, Not Processed to Certified, Not Processed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/11/2013</td>
<td>HOWARD H BAILEY</td>
<td>00081913</td>
<td>Not Processed to Not Certified, Not Processed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.11. Manage Effort Tasks

Reviewing Effort Tasks are one of the most important responsibilities of an Effort Coordinator. If you are a primary effort coordinator, the Effort Tasks tab will be present on your home page displaying the list (with links) to all of the tasks awaiting your review.

Effort Processing Tasks

Each individual in ECRT has a primary department. When an individual in your department certified their effort statement (or has it certified for them) you will receive a “Processing Certification Statement” task in your Effort Tasks list notifying you to review the statement. Each task is displayed with description of the type of task, employee id, employee name, and date that task was added. These lists are sortable based on the column headers so that you can quickly find a task for a specific individual. The task will remain on this list until you process the card, at which point it will disappear from your list.

When you click on a line you will be taken to the Effort Statement Processing page showing the person’s certification information. You need to review the effort card and determine whether or not to process it (see screenshot on following page).
This page looks very much like the certification page used by the faculty and academic staff. There are a couple of additions:

1. You will see an additional column titled “Cost Transfer Dollars”. The dollar amounts in this column are automatically calculated on any rows where “Computed Effort” differs from “Certified Effort”. This column can be very helpful, but please use this information with caution. There are several reasons that may cause computed effort to differ from certified effort. Not all of them require a salary cost transfer. Also, ecrt calculates the most accurate dollars it can, but it may not reflect the correct dollars needed for a salary cost transfer.

   The total of the Cost Transfer column must equal zero before you can process the card. It may be off by a small amount due to rounding. When this happens, you can change the amounts so that the total equals zero. These cost transfer dollars are for information only. Any required cost transfers will need to be processed through the regular UW cost transfer process.

2. You need to review the effort card for each researcher to determine if it can be processed or if further discussion and follow-up is needed. You have three possible choices:

   **Do Not Process** - If you click this button (or hit the enter key), the effort card will no longer be certified. This action is appropriate if there is a reason the effort that was certified on the card needs to be changed. You will be prompted with an email...
message that can be sent to the individual to notify them that you have rejected their certification. Once issues are resolved, the PI, faculty or academic staff member will need to certify the effort again. When you click “Do Not Process” the certifier will not appear again on your “to do” list until the effort has been re-certified.

**Cancel** – If you determine that you need to do more investigation before you process a card, you can click the Cancel button. The card will still be certified and the individual will continue to appear on your “to do” list until you are ready to process the card.

**Process** – The process button will finalize the effort card and it will become an official, auditable record.

### 6.12. Department Dashboard

The **Department Dashboard** gives you access to effort cards for anyone who has an appointment in a department for which you are the coordinator. In addition, you will be able to view cards for anyone else who has payroll, cost sharing or a commitment on a sponsored project that is associated with your department.

The list you see through this menu choice could include people who have left your department(s) as well as some with a primary department assigned to a different effort coordinator. You can access both current and historical effort cards through this page.

**Selecting a Department**

Once you’ve selected the “Department Dashboard” menu option, there are three ways to access a specific department.

1. If you are the effort coordinator for only one department you will be taken to that department.
2. You can see a list of all of your departments by clicking on the arrow just to the left of the “Submit” button. Select a department and click ‘Submit’.
3. You may have authorization to access a large number of departments and therefore option 2 may be difficult to use. A third option is to start typing the number, including ‘A’ for Madison campus, in the field on the left. Type as much of the department as you need to see the full number and name show up in the selection field. Click ‘Submit’ to display information for that department.

Certification Summary for Last Period

Note: Please do not use the statistics that you see in this section to determine work that needs to be completed. ECRT contains information for all employees who receive payroll from UW-Madison, regardless of whether or not their effort needs to be certified. These statistics include everyone for the department and therefore will not be meaningful. However, it may be useful to note some of the icons identified in this section. They are used in the “Certifiers for this Department” section described below. The icons that you will find to be the most useful include:

- In Progress for Certification – this icon identifies cards that cannot be certified yet because the certification window has not yet started. The certification cards can be viewed, but no processing can occur.

- Not certified, not processed – this icon applies to cards that are in a period that is open for certification. This indicator shows that the card has not been certified by the PI or staff member and therefore, has not been processed by the effort coordinator.

- Certified, Not Processed – this icon applies to cards that are in a period that is open for certification. This indicator shows that the card has been certified by the PI or staff member, but has not yet been processed by the effort coordinator.

- Certified, Processed – These cards are finalized. They have been certified by the appropriate person and processed by the effort coordinator.
Department Information

This section identifies effort coordinators for the department. The primary coordinator is highlighted in yellow and is the only person who can process effort cards for this department. If it is necessary to change the primary effort coordinator, please contact the campus effort administrator in Research & Sponsored Projects.

Certifiers for this Department

This section includes:
1. a list of the people who are assigned to the department, separated into the following sections:
   - **Sponsored** includes people who have an appointment in this department AND they have payroll, cost sharing or commitments on sponsored projects.
   - **Non-Sponsored** includes people who have an appointment in this department, but they do NOT have payroll, cost sharing or commitments on sponsored projects.
   - **Non-Department** includes people who do not have an appointment in this department, but they have payroll, cost sharing or commitments on a sponsored project that is managed by your department.
2. The employee type assigned to each certifier. This employee type determines how often and for which periods a person is required to certify his/her effort.

3. The Employee ID of the individual.

4. The Role of the individual in ecr. This is helpful if you are troubleshooting the different functionality an individual can/cannot perform within the system.

5. An icon for each of the last 5 cards for an individual. If you move your cursor over the icon, the certification period of the card is shown. The last icon contains a list of ALL historical statements of the individual. If you click on any of the icons, you will be taken to the corresponding card.

6. A stoplight indicator that identifies each person's commitment status. As an individual certifies effort, ECRT can track the individual's progress toward meeting his or her commitments. If you move your cursor over the stoplight, information about the commitment status is shown.

**Awards and Projects Tab**

This section includes:

1. A list of all sponsored projects that this department is assigned to manage. Projects are grouped into active or inactive based on the end date of the project relative to the day that this information is being viewed. Note: This list does NOT reflect whether a project is active or inactive in the Grants system.
2. A link to more information about a particular sponsored project. By clicking on the name of the project, you will be taken to the Project Summary page (see example below). This page provides more details about the project as well as a list of everyone who has payroll, cost sharing or a commitment recorded to that grant.
3. You can sort the information in this section by clicking on any of the column headers.
6.13. Effort Recertification

If it is determined that changes need to be made to an effort certification card after you have processed it, you will need to re-open the certification card. To do this:

1. Navigate to the individual’s certification page.
2. Open the Historical tab in the top right window and select the statement (based on the dates displayed – hover over each statement link for additional information on the period of performance).
3. Click the “Reopen” button on the statement.
4. An email form will pop-up that you can customize before sending it to the certifier.
5. You will need to work with the individual to resolve any discrepancies. The certifier will need to make any necessary changes to their certification card and certify their effort again.

Once the individual re-certifies their effort, they will again appear on your “Effort Tasks” list for you to process the effort card.

Note: You will NOT be able to re-open an effort card after the certification period is closed.
6.14. Manage Users

Manage Users displays information about individual certifiers, including the certifier’s department(s), their primary department, a list of projects connected to the certifier and any assigned roles within ECRT. Manage Users also provides a link to the certifier’s current effort certification card.

You will be able to view information for anyone who has a primary department that is assigned to you. In addition, you will be able to view cards for anyone else who has payroll, cost sharing or a commitment on a sponsored project that is associated with your department.

**Look up a user**

1. Select Manage Users from the Administration menu list at the top of the page.
2. Look up the user by typing their last name, a space, and then their first name (no commas) until you see them on the dropdown list. Then select their name so that the full name appears in the box.
3. Click ‘Choose’.

**User Information**

[Image of user information page]
Email addresses

You can view, add, delete or select a different primary email address for someone who has effort on a sponsored project that is assigned to your department. The campus email directory will not be updated if changes are made here.

Departments

This section shows all of the departments that are associated with an individual in ECRT. Initially, this list includes all departments assigned to the user that were loaded into ECRT from UW HR appointment records. The primary department is highlighted in yellow.

Please use this for information only. Any changes should be requested through the campus effort administrator in Research & Sponsored Programs

Effort Coordinator Department Relationships

This section will only be populated for Effort Coordinators and will display each department that they are an Effort Coordinator for. Any department where the individual is a Primary Effort Coordinator will be highlighted in yellow.

Effort Coordinator Department Relationships

UW will not utilize the Department Viewer Relationships functionality in ECRT. You should not see anyone populated in this list at this time.

Version 5.0 – May 2016
Projects

This section lists all of the sponsored projects for which the individual has payroll, cost sharing and/or a commitment. If s/he has payroll on a non-sponsored funding source, you will also see a line for “All Non-Sponsored Effort”.

Please DO NOT click the red “X” to remove a project from this list.

Roles

This section will show any role that is assigned to this individual. The various roles determine what information someone is able to access in ECRT. Note that ECRT is used by multiple campuses and so you will see more roles in this list than just those used by Madison campus.
6.15. Placing Effort Statements on Hold
ECRT has functionality in place that allows UW to place Effort Statements on hold. Only the Effort Administration team will be able to place statements on hold, but an Effort Coordinator can request this action through an email to the team.

When a statement is placed on hold, the individual can still access the statement but will not be able to certify. A statement could be placed on hold in the circumstance that salary cost transfers need to be processed and applied to the statement before the individual can certify.
6.16. View Reports

ECRT provides reports and queries that you may find helpful in fulfilling your responsibilities as an effort coordinator. A few of these reports are described below. There are some additional reports under this menu option that you may also find useful.

Additional queries and reports are available through the “MSN Add-on Tools” link on the left side of each page in ECRT. Two of the reports that you may find particularly useful are:

1. **Effort Status Report** – This report will provide you with a list of all individuals with sponsored effort whose primary department is assigned to you. It will show you the status of each individual for a period of performance.

2. **Report of Transactions Not Posted To ECRT** – This report shows payroll transactions that have been processed through the UW Financial System (SFS), but are not posted to ECRT because the effort certification card for that individual and that period of performance has been certified and processed. The most common type of transaction you’ll see on this report will probably be salary cost transfers that you, hopefully, were expecting to still be processed.

**ECRT reports include:**

**Payroll Report**

This report shows payroll information, by pay period and project, for an individual or for all individuals assigned to a department. It can be requested by dates or by employee type. The following describes each of the two options for requesting data. You will probably find that the selection by employee type is the most useful option.

Note: This report can also be accessed for an individual through an icon at the top of that person’s effort certification card.
Select Report by Employee Type (recommended selection)

1. Select one of the following employee types from the dropdown list:
   - Semi-annual A – C Basis (faculty, academic staff, graduate students, post-docs)
   - Semi-annual – University staff
2. Use the dropdown list to select a period of performance.
3. Select an employee and/or a department. To do this, begin typing the name of the individual or the department until you are able to select them from the dropdown list that appears.
4. Click “Run Report” to view the report.
Select Report by Dates

1. Select a date range using the calendar that appears when you click in the “Start Date” or “End Date” fields. The double arrows at the top will allow you to move forward or backward a year at a time. The single arrows will allow you to move forward or backward a month at a time. Your date range must include (at least!) an entire period of performance. If it doesn’t, you will get no results.

2. Select an employee and/or a department. Start typing the name of the individual or the department until you are able to select the appropriate name from the dropdown list that appears.

3. Click “Run Report” to view the report.
Viewing the payroll data

Two formats are available for viewing the payroll data: Pay Period view or Account view. You can switch the view using the links at the top of the report results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pay Period View</th>
<th>Account View</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

At the bottom of the page you will find icons that provide you with options to export the data to other formats.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Count</th>
<th>Total Payroll</th>
<th>Pay %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Certifiers</td>
<td>$189,499.47</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Count</th>
<th>Total Payroll</th>
<th>Pay %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Certifiers</td>
<td>$189,499.47</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Certification Status Report

You are able to monitor statements that have not been certified using the Associated Certifier tab on your home page. You can also navigate to the Department Dashboard (see section 7.8) where you are able to see the status of the effort certification cards for each person assigned to your department. The “Certification Status Report” allows you to select one status to see a list of individuals that currently have effort cards with that status. It can be requested by dates or by employee type. Each option is described below. You will probably find that the selection by employee type is the most useful option.

Select Report by Employee Type (recommended selection)

1. Select one of the following employee types from the dropdown list:
   - Semi-annual A – C Basis (faculty, academic staff, graduate students, post-docs)
   - Semi-annual – University staff

2. Use the dropdown list to select the appropriate effort certification period.

3. Identify a department. Begin typing the department until you are able to select it from the dropdown list that appears.

4. Click “Run Report” to view the report.
Select Report by Dates

1. Select the status that you want to see.
2. Select a date range using the calendar that appears when you click in the “Start Date” or “End Date” fields. The double arrows at the top will allow you to move forward or backward a year at a time. The single arrows will allow you to move forward or backward a month at a time. This report works best if you select dates that match the period of performance dates or are outside of those dates. You may not get desired results if part of the date range does not include an entire period of performance.

3. Identify a department. Begin typing the name of the individual or the department until you are able to select it from the dropdown list that appears.
4. Click “Run Report” to view the report.
Viewing the Certification Status information

At the bottom of the page you will find icons that provide you with options to export the data to other formats.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Effort Coordinator</th>
<th>Effort Coordinator Grade</th>
<th>Prjy Assignment</th>
<th>Certifier Email</th>
<th>Certification Period</th>
<th>Current Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALBERT, DONA</td>
<td>0001402</td>
<td>ASST PROF/HEAD ORCH CANCER</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nia.alden@wisc.mayo.edu">nia.alden@wisc.mayo.edu</a></td>
<td>01/01/2015 to 06/30/2016</td>
<td>Not Certified, Not Processed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DONALD, HENRY</td>
<td>0001402</td>
<td>ASSISTANT PROF/HEAD ORCH CANCER</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nia.alden@wisc.mayo.edu">nia.alden@wisc.mayo.edu</a></td>
<td>01/01/2015 to 06/30/2016</td>
<td>Not Certified, Not Processed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Department Project Report

This report displays all projects that are associated with your department(s) along with the name of the Principal Investigator (PI). The sponsor name is not currently loaded for UW-Madison, but will be available in the future.

1. Identify a department. Begin typing the name of the individual or the department until you are able to select it from the dropdown list that appears.
2. Click “Run Report” to view the following report.
3. The report can be sorted by any of the columns by clicking on the column header.

At the bottom of the page you will find icons that provide you with options to export the data to other formats.
7. The year-round duties of an effort coordinator

In addition to processing the effort statements, an effort coordinator has many responsibilities. This section provides guidance regarding the responsibilities you should concentrate on during each stage of the effort certification cycle.

7.1. Responsibilities for ongoing review of certification cards

Payroll transactions and cost sharing commitments are loaded into ECRT on a weekly basis. Because of the ongoing nature of this data loading process, you are advised to periodically review the effort cards for your faculty and research staff during the period of performance. The Manage Department screen (section 7.8) is useful in looking up effort certification cards during the period of performance and prior to effort certification. Please note that you may not be the effort coordinator for everyone listed on your Manage Department screen. You will process the effort for an individual only when his/her primary department is one for which you are the coordinator. Your Manage Department screen shows more than just the people for whom this is the primary department. To determine whether you are the effort coordinator for each individual, you can open each effort statement. Or, a report in the Add-on Tools section can help you identify the individuals for whom you are responsible.

Here are some questions to consider on an ongoing basis and actions to take if you find issues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions for review</th>
<th>Actions to take:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Do the payroll percentages look appropriate for the researcher in that period of performance? | Yes: No action is needed.  
No: Discrepancies should be discussed with the appropriate payroll office. A salary cost transfer may need to be initiated and the researcher’s payroll distribution changed to the correct funding for future payrolls. |
| Is cost sharing reflected on the effort card as you expect? | Yes: No action is needed.  
No: Any necessary changes should be made in WISPER’s cost sharing module. |
| Are research employees who are new to your department added appropriately to ECRT? | Yes: No action is needed.  
No: Once payroll, cost sharing or a commitment has been added, you will be able to access an individual’s effort card. If someone has been added to the HR system, but has not yet been paid, their profile may be viewable in Manage Users. If you do not find them through “Manage Users” or through “Manage Department”, you should work with your HR person to determine if they have been set up in the HR system. If they |
Questions for review | Actions to take:
--- | ---
Have any of your employees left the university during the period of performance? | Yes: See section 8.2  
No: No action is needed.

### 7.2. Prior to certification

For each certification window, there will be at least a few weeks between the time that all payroll and cost sharing data has been posted to ECRT and the time that your faculty and academic staff are notified that they should log into ECRT to certify effort cards. During that time you should again review the effort cards. The goal of this review is to verify that (a) the effort cards reflect your best understanding of each person’s effort, and (b) each effort card is ready to be certified by the appropriate individual. If possible, you should address any anomalies before people begin to certify their effort cards.

When reviewing the effort cards, remember that your faculty and staff will be certifying their effort, not their payroll. The effort statement should properly reflect payroll transactions and cost-sharing commitments. However, it is okay to certify effort before all salary cost transfers have been processed and posted. When this is the case, you may wish to remind the certifier of any outstanding salary cost transfers. The certifier will be entering his or her effort distribution onto the card, and can take into account the difference between their reasonable estimate of actual effort and the payroll percentages.

In addition to the questions from the previous section, you should consider the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions for review</th>
<th>Actions to take:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Does your PI’s “Certify My Researchers” list contain the appropriate people and not list people who are required to certify for themselves? Hint: Use the “View PI Researchers” menu choice for this review (see section 7.9). | Yes: No action is needed.  
No: Contact the campus effort administrator at Research & Sponsored Programs for assistance. |
| Is the PI a person with “suitable means of verification” and | Yes: No action is needed.  
No: A PI designee needs to be assigned. Certification can only be |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions for review</th>
<th>Actions to take:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>therefore the most appropriate person to certify effort for others on his/her project(s)?</td>
<td>delegated to someone who has a suitable means of verification of the effort to be certified. Delegation of certification for a PI’s researchers in ECRT is a function of the campus effort administrator in RSP. All requests for delegating certification authority are reviewed by the Associate Vice Chancellor for Research Administration and approved on a case-by-case basis. To request a delegation of authority:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ensure that the designee has completed the mandatory effort training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Access the “Principal Investigator Delegation Request” form at “MSN Effort Reference” link on the left side of the ECRT page. (see Appendix E for a copy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• List the projects to be delegated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Have the PI sign and date the document, verifying the intent to delegate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Have the Delegate sign, verifying agreement to act on behalf of the PI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Send the original to the RSP Effort Administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The RSP Effort Administrator will notify, via email, both the PI and the designee when the change has been made.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Copies of the completed forms will be kept on file by the RSP Effort Administrator and will be retained indefinitely.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is there information that you want to communicate to the certifier regarding their effort card?</th>
<th>Yes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Notes that are appropriate to include as part of the permanent record can be added to the comment section of the effort certification card. Keep in mind that any notes that remain at the time a card is certified and processed will be part of the permanent record and will be auditable. Other correspondence should occur outside of ECRT.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No:  No action is needed.
7.3. During the certification window

Since faculty and research staff are notified that the certification window is open, your main concentration will be to assist them in understanding what is on the effort card. Following are some possible questions that you may be asked along with some suggested responses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions from Faculty &amp; Research Staff</th>
<th>Responses/Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| I had effort on a project, but I don’t see it on my effort card. | This would most likely be one of the following scenarios:  
1. This person should have been paid from the grant, but the payroll documentation has not yet been processed. It should be resolved through the appropriate payroll office and may need to be documented in the comment section.  
2. There could be voluntary committed cost sharing and no payroll, mandatory cost sharing or a commitment recorded. In this case, the certifier should note in the comment section of the card the percentage of the non-sponsored line that was voluntary committed cost sharing and the appropriate project. |
| There are people missing from my “Certify My Researcher” list that I expected to be there. | The person may be able to certify his/her own effort card. Verify who should certify this person’s effort:  
- All faculty, PIs and academic staff members certify their own effort.  
- A PI certifies the effort for all graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and non-PI university staff who work on his or her projects.  
Use “Manage Users” to verify that the appropriate role is assigned to this person. Contact the campus effort administrator in RSP if the role is incorrect. |
| There are people that show up on my “Certify My Researcher” list that I believe should be certifying their own effort. | You should verify who should certify this person’s effort:  
- All faculty, PIs and academic staff members certify their own effort.  
- A PI certifies the effort for all graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and non-PI university staff who work on his or her projects.  
Use “Manage Users” to verify that the appropriate role is assigned to this person. Contact the campus effort administrator in RSP if the role is incorrect. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions from Faculty &amp; Research Staff</th>
<th>Responses/Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| I have to certify effort for someone who has sponsored projects other than mine listed on their effort card. | When a graduate student, postdoctoral trainee, or non-PI university staff member works on multiple sponsored projects for two or more principal investigators:  
  - Any of the PIs may certify all of the individual's effort, as long as he or she has suitable means of verifying that the work was performed as allocated. **Or…**  
    Each PI can certify the portion of the individual's effort for which he or she has suitable means of verifying that the work was performed. In this case, each PI should do the following:  
      - enter the percent of effort they know about on the appropriate lines of the statement  
      - add a comment in the “Effort Notes” section indicating which projects s/he certified and the date  
      - Save the effort card without certifying UNLESS they are the last PI to certify the sponsored effort. In that case, they should enter any remaining percent under Non-Sponsored Effort so that the effort card equals 100 percent. Then they should click the “certify” button to complete the certification.  
  - The PIs and the effort coordinators should work together to ensure that all of the individual's effort is certified in a timely manner, by one or more responsible people with suitable means of verifying that the work was performed. |
7.4. After certification

Once an effort card has been certified, the effort coordinator must review it and determine whether it should be processed or whether changes are needed before it can be completed. **All differences of more than 5% between “Computed Effort” and “Certified Effort” must be documented and action taken when necessary.** An effort certification card can be processed if the “Certified Effort” is correct. Appropriate follow-up, such as salary cost transfers, can occur later.

As you complete your review, you have three choices:

1. **Return to Certifier** – If you click this button or hit the enter key, the effort card will no longer be certified. This action is appropriate if there is a reason that the effort that was certified on the card needs to be changed. Once issues are resolved, the PI, faculty or academic staff member will need to certify the effort again. When you click “Return to Certifier”, the certifier will not appear again on your “to do” list until they have re-certified their effort.

2. **Cancel** – If you determine that you need to do more investigation before you process a card, click the Cancel button. The certification by the researcher will still be complete and they will continue to appear on your “to do” list until you are ready to process the card.

3. **Process** – The Process button will complete the effort card and it will become an official, auditable record.

You may find the diagram in Appendix B helpful in reviewing certification cards. The following questions may also be helpful in understanding what to look for and what actions to take to resolve issues.
### Questions for review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are the salary charges consistent with certified effort?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yes:</strong> As long as there are no other reconciling items to be resolved, the effort certification card can be processed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No:</strong> A difference between Computed Effort and Certified Effort should be discussed with the PI and the appropriate payroll office to determine whether a salary cost transfer is necessary. Factors to consider include:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Is the difference due to cost-shared effort? If so, no salary cost transfer may be required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Is the difference due to a short-term fluctuation? If so, no salary cost transfer is required. A short-term fluctuation is an effort deficit of not more than two months. As long as the catch-up occurs in a comparable amount of time and it all evens out, the effort deficit is permissible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The certification card should be processed once it’s fully reviewed and reconciled. It is not necessary to hold up processing until the salary cost transfer has been processed through the university’s financial system. The need for a salary cost transfer should be referenced in the comment section of the effort card and follow-up should be done to ensure that it is completed. Note that a salary cost transfer is not required when the dollar amount, per sponsored project, is less than $100.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If a researcher has a commitment of mandatory and/or voluntary committed cost sharing on any of his/her sponsored projects, is it reflected correctly in the “Cost Share” field on the effort card?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yes:</strong> As long as there are no other reconciling items to be resolved, the certified effort card can be processed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **No:** The Grants module for cost sharing needs to be changed to reflect the correct committed cost sharing percentages. This is essential in order for the appropriate cost sharing to be calculated for reporting to the sponsor and also to appear correctly on future effort certification cards. This discrepancy and the action taken should be referenced in the comment section of the effort card as a reconciling item. Follow-up needs to be done to ensure that changes are processed appropriately. As long as there are no other reconciling items to be resolved, the certified effort card can be processed.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions for review</th>
<th>Actions to take:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Does the effort that the researcher certified include all mandatory and voluntary committed cost sharing? | **Yes:** As long as there are no other reconciling items to be resolved, the certified effort card can be processed.  
**No:** The effort certification card should NOT be processed if any cost sharing is omitted. Work with the certifier to find out why the effort certified does not include the appropriate cost sharing commitment.  
- Make sure the effort card reflects actual effort, including mandatory and voluntary committed cost sharing  
- Contact the sponsor, if approval is required, when the commitment needs to be changed  
- Correct committed cost sharing in the Grants system |
| Has a researcher entered a note into the Effort Notes section? | **Yes:** Check to be sure the note is appropriate. This certified effort card, including comments, is the official permanent record and is subject to audit.  
**No:** As long as there are no other reconciling items to be resolved, the certified effort card can be processed. |
| Does a discrepancy still exist after all of the above factors are considered? | **Yes:** There are some allowable factors that may cause differences between the “Computed Effort” and the “Certified Effort”. Following are three situations when the difference between computed and certified effort are appropriate and potential cost transfer dollars should be ignored completely.  
- Salary cost transfers or check corrections have already been initiated, but not yet processed through the university’s financial system.  
- A researcher had multiple rates of pay within the certification period. Example: Joe works on one project at salary X for January through March. He works on another project at salary Y for April through June. His effort for each project is 50%. But if salary Y is greater than salary X, the payroll distribution for the two projects will not be equal. When this is the case, Joe should certify 50% effort for each project. Ignore the difference between the payroll distribution and the effort distribution.  
- Rounding to whole numbers can cause a small discrepancy, which should be ignored. In addition, a salary cost transfer is not required when the dollar amount, per sponsored project, is less than $100.  
**No:** The certified effort card can be processed. |
Questions for review | Actions to take:
---|---
Does the dollar amount in the Cost Transfer column of the effort card seem reasonable? | Yes: Discrepancies should be very small and most likely are due to rounding. Also, be sure that any necessary salary cost transfers are processed through the normal UW-Madison procedures.
No: Reconcile and account for the differences. Make sure the total in this column equals zero before processing the certified effort card. Also, be sure that any necessary salary cost transfers are processed through the normal UW-Madison procedures.

7.5. Follow-up

Once a certification period is completed, it’s important to verify that all effort cards have been certified and processed. Following are things that are important to check.

Questions for review | Actions to take:
---|---
Has everyone assigned to you certified his/her effort? | Yes: No further action is needed.
No: Look up an individual via “Manage Users” to determine whether they are required to certify for themselves or whether the PI is required to certify their effort. Alternatively, you can use the Effort Status Report in the Add-on Tools to determine their certification status, and to find out who is responsible for certifying the outstanding statement. Then, follow-up with the appropriate certifier.
7.6. Audit responsibilities

The UW's record retention policy requires that RSP, as the central office, keep effort report records for three years. Departments are required to keep their records for two years. (http://archives.library.wisc.edu/RM/GENSKED/commonrecs.htm).

With the implementation of an electronic system, most information will be stored centrally and retained for the required period. Departments need only be concerned about keeping relevant documentation not recorded in ECRT. Examples may include items such as:

- notes, memos, or email messages from staff regarding changes to ECRT information
- similar types of correspondence indicating reasons for not being able to certify
- correspondence between effort coordinators regarding certifications for individuals who work in multiple departments

This hard-copy information is to be kept for two years and then disposed as "destroy confidential".
8. When it is necessary to document effort manually

In general, all effort expended on a sponsored project must be certified using ECRT. However, there are situations when an individual will expend effort on a sponsored project but is not able to complete the certification using ECRT. In these situations, effort will be certified using a manual, paper-based process. There are two situations, described below, that will require a manual process:

1. Faculty members who are principal investigators or key personnel on a project, but are not paid through UW-Madison. For example, this may be the case for an emeritus professor.
2. An individual terminates their UW employment during the certification period.

8.1. Faculty members not paid through UW

There are circumstances when a faculty member will act as principal investigator or a key person on a sponsored project, but is not paid by the UW for that time. In this situation, ECRT will not generate an effort card for this individual. However, because of the key role the individual plays in the project, this unpaid effort has been committed in the proposal. This is voluntary committed effort and must be certified.

If the individual is a PI, they will be responsible to certify their own effort. If the individual is a key person on the project, it is the PI’s responsibility to ensure that the certification is completed.

The effort coordinator will:
- Help the PI determine that a manual process must be initiated
- Become familiar with the instructions for completing the “Report of Contributed Unpaid Effort/Activity on Sponsored Projects” form found at the ‘Effort Reference’ link on the left side of the ECRT page. See Appendix F for a sample of this report.
- Assist the PI in completing the report, if necessary
- Process the form and cover sheet after the PI has completed, signed, and returned it. The effort coordinator will sign the form and return the original to the effort administrator at RSP, where this card will be available in the event of an audit.

The PI will:
- Take the required effort reporting tutorial at the ‘Effort Reference’ link on the left side of the ECRT page
- Complete the form with accurate information on the amount of effort committed to each project
- Initial each line to certify its accuracy
- Read and sign the certification
- Return the signed card to the effort coordinator
8.2. Certifier who leaves the UW

There are situations when an individual will expend effort on a project, but is not able to complete the entire certification period due to a change in employment, unexpected leave of absence, health issues, etc. Because the certification window must be open before ECRT can be used, a modified process is required.

If the individual leaving is not required to certify for themselves, normal procedures can be followed and a manual process is not necessary.

If a PI, faculty member, or academic staff member leaves, the following procedures should be followed. In addition, if a PI leaves, the effort coordinator should make sure that a person with suitable means of verification is designated to certify for the PI’s grad students, postdoctoral researchers and/or non-PI university staff members when the next certification window opens.

If an individual who would normally have certified for themselves does not certify prior to their departure, the primary effort coordinator must make reasonable attempts to follow up with the individual to obtain the certification after the departure. If the person has left university service but the NetID is still active, that person can log into ECRT to certify. It may be necessary for RSP to “reactivate” the person’s ECRT access to allow them to certify their own effort.

If the person who left was an Academic Staff member but not a PI, RSP can make it possible for the PI to certify for them. This is not a designee. It is the simple revocation of that person’s academic staff title in the ECRT system. This causes the person to show up under the PI’s Statements Awaiting Certification tab. In this case, email effort@rsp.wisc.edu and indicate the person’s name who has left. RSP will make the necessary change and let you know when the change has been completed.

If the person who left was a PI, RSP can make possible for another ECRT user to certify for them. As with all certifiers, the alternate must have suitable means of verifying that the work was performed. If the department chair has suitable means of verification, he or she can serve as the alternate. To do this, send an email to effort@rsp.wisc.edu and indicate that the PI has left. RSP will discuss the options with you. There are two ways to handle this situation; assigning a designee or certifying via paper. It is always preferable to use ECRT rather than paper when possible. If a designee assignment makes the most sense, use the designee form at the effort webpage.
When ECRT certification is not possible, the paper method must be used.

The effort coordinator will:

- Navigate to the individual’s effort card.
- Select the option in the upper right-hand corner for Effort Card PDF Version.
- Generate and print the PDF document.
- Identify information that may not be reflected on the card, but should be considered in the certification, and communicate this to the individual. This may include:
  - payroll transactions that are not yet posted to ECRT
  - cost sharing information that is not yet posted to ECRT
- Give the printed effort certification card to the individual or to the person who has suitable means of verifying.
- Assist the PI in completing the report, if necessary.

The certifier will:

- Review the information on the form for accuracy and correction, if needed.
- Discuss any discrepancy with the effort coordinator.
- Enter the appropriate effort percentages
- Make sure the total effort equals 100%
- Read and sign the certification.
- Return the signed card to the effort coordinator.

The effort coordinator will complete the process by:

- Making a notation on the form as to the circumstances that required manual certification.
- Completing the “cover sheet” at [http://www.rsp.wisc.edu/effort/manualCertCoverSheet.pdf](http://www.rsp.wisc.edu/effort/manualCertCoverSheet.pdf), thus providing assurance that you have taken any necessary follow-up steps if needed
- Signing the form and sending or scanning a copy to the effort administrator at RSP (via email or campus mail), where this card will be available in the event of an audit.
- Initiating any necessary salary cost transfers, cost sharing adjustments, etc.

RSP will manually certify and process the cards. The cards will change status on the Effort Coordinator’s Manage Department page and will also be updated in the certification status lookup tool.
9. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

| 100% Effort       | Q: I have an employee who only works 20 hours a week, but his effort shows 100%. I don’t understand why it doesn’t show 50%.  
A: Effort is not based on a 40-hour work week, nor is it based on appointment percent. It’s based on 100% of the activities for which an individual is compensated by the UW, regardless of the number of hours worked. If you work 20, or 40, or 60, or 80 hours per week, your total effort is always 100%. Think of a pie chart. You may have a big pie (if you work a lot of hours) or a smaller pie (if you work only a few hours), but no matter the size of the pie, you can divide this pie into pieces that add up to "your entire pie" – your total UW effort. |
| Changing Departments | Q: One of my academic staff employees moved to a new position in a different department. Who should process their effort card?  
A: If the effort was certified before the appointment change was loaded into ECRT, an item will have appeared on your “Effort Tasks” list. If the appointment change is loaded and then the effort is certified, a to-do item will appear on the “Effort Tasks” list for the effort coordinator assigned to their new department. You and the coordinator for the new department must come to an agreement about who should process the statement. Either of you can process it; use your best judgment and be aware that you can share information between yourselves and document your discussion in the statement's notes. Any communication between you and the new effort coordinator will need to take place outside of ECRT. |
| Changing from university to academic staff | Q: If someone is a university employee for the first part of the period of performance and then moves to an academic staff appointment, will they have two effort cards?  
A: Yes, there will be two effort cards that must be certified for that period of performance. The status of the employee at the time of the certification should govern who needs to certify all effort cards for this individual.  
Example 1: if person X was a university employee at the start of the period, but moved to an academic staff position at the time of certification, he should certify his own effort.  
Example 2: if person Y was an academic staff member at the start of the period, but moved to a university position at the time of certification, her effort should be certified by the PI or PI’s designee. |
**UW-Madison Effort Coordinator’s Guide to Certification Practices and Procedures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grants that start and/or end during the period of performance</th>
<th><strong>Q:</strong> I have a faculty member who had effort on two grants during the period of performance. She worked 20% of her time on project 144-ABCD, which ended 4/30. She worked 50% of the time on project 144-WXYZ which began 4/1. She was paid out of fund 101 for her instructional time and for other duties. What should her effort percentage of effort be for the 6 month period of performance?</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>A:</strong> Following shows how this effort would be calculated for six months. For each line item, the calculation is:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(actual effort level) x (fraction of the six-month period during which the effort was devoted)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In this example, the effort distribution for January through June is:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>144-ABCD</td>
<td>20% effort for four months out of six=20% x (4/6) = 13.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>144-WXYZ</td>
<td>50% effort for three months out of six=50% x (3/6) = 25.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Sponsored (Fund 101)</td>
<td>80% effort for Jan thru Mar (3 months)= 80% x (3/6) = 40.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30% effort for April (1 month) = 30% x (1/6) = 5.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50% effort for May through June = 50% x (2/6) = 16.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total:</strong> 100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of certifiers</th>
<th><strong>Q:</strong> How can I identify who I’m responsible for when other people also show up on my “Associated Certifiers” list?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>A:</strong> We’ve created an “Effort Status” report that may help you determine this. This report will provide you with a list of all individuals with sponsored effort whose primary department is assigned to you. It is accessible through the “MSN Add-on Tools” link on the left side of the ECRT page.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Multiple Appointments

**Q:** I have an employee who has two appointments in two different divisions. Will he have to certify two separate effort cards? Does it make a difference if one appointment is academic staff and one is university staff?

**A:** All appointments for this employee will be combined into one effort card. If at least one of those appointments is an A (annual) basis or a C (academic) basis appointment, he will certify effort on a semi-annual basis. If both appointments are university staff, the PI on the sponsored project for which the employee works will certify the effort quarterly. His effort coordinator will be determined by his primary department.

## Multiple Campuses

**Q:** One of our faculty members has a full time appointment at Madison campus, but also has a part time appointment with UW-Extension. How does his effort look? Who is responsible for his effort card?

**A:** All appointments for this employee will be combined into one effort card. If at least one of those appointments is an A (annual) basis or a C (academic) basis appointment, he will certify effort on a semi-annual basis. If both appointments are university staff, the PI on the sponsored project for which the employee works will certify the effort quarterly. His effort coordinator will be determined by his primary department.

## Multiple PIs

**Q:** I have a grad student who works on three projects. Two of them are managed by one PI and the third is managed by a different PI. Who is responsible for certifying the effort card?

**A:** When a graduate student, postdoctoral trainee, or non-PI university staff member works on multiple sponsored projects for two or more principal investigators:

- Any of the PIs may certify all of the individual's effort, as long as he or she has suitable means of verifying that the work was performed as allocated. **Or**...
- Each PI can certify the portion of the individual's effort about which he or she has suitable means of verifying that the work was performed.

The PIs and the effort coordinators should work together to ensure that all of the individual's effort is certified in a timely manner, by one or more responsible people with suitable means of verifying that the work was performed.
### Payroll Dollars

**Q:** I reviewed a faculty member’s effort card just before he certified. Now, when I go to process it, the payroll percentages have changed. What happened?

**A:** Payroll transactions, including salary cost transfers and salary adjustments, will continue to post to ECRT after a card is certified, until it has been processed. If the effort was certified appropriately, this should not impact the certified effort. Instead, it might impact the follow-up analysis that is needed.

### Recertification

**Q:** The effort certification period is closed and one of my faculty members needs to make a change to his effort card. I am not able to re-open it for recertification. What should I do?

**A:** Once the last date of the certification window has passed, a subsequent recertification can call into question the reliability of the certification process. Therefore, any subsequent recertification request requires justification that clearly sets forth why previous effort was erroneously certified, and why the requested change is more appropriate within the context of law, federal requirements, or University policies and procedures. Such requests are submitted in writing to the Associate Vice Chancellor for Research Administration in the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. Requests should include the signatures of both the certifier and the effort coordinator. Only in the most compelling of circumstances will such a request be approved.

### Salary Cost Transfers

**Q:** What happens when a salary cost transfer goes through after I’ve processed an effort card?

**A:** Once an effort card is processed, a transaction will no longer post to the card. However, this transaction must be considered in the effort coordinator’s “after certification” review. A “Report of Transactions Not Posted To ECRT” is available that includes these salary cost transfers as well as any other payroll transactions, such as adjustments, that are posted to the UW Financial System (SFS) after an effort card has been certified and processed.
### Summer Salary

**Q:** I'm confused as to how to figure out a six-month percentage for C-basis (academic) faculty and staff members. Their appointments are for the duration of the academic year, and they may or may not be paid for part or all of the summer months.

**A:** Following are two examples that will help answer this.

**Example 1** – A C-basis faculty member with no summer salary: During the spring semester, Professor Smith works 30% on sponsored projects and 70% on a combination of instruction, administration, and service. He works 0% during the summer. Therefore, the six-month effort distribution is the same as the spring semester distribution. This is because the effort distribution is *100% of the activities for which you are compensated by the UW*. Professor Smith receives no compensation during the summer, so his "100% effort" for the six-month period is the same as his "100% effort" for the spring semester. For the six-month period, Professor Smith should certify 30% effort on the sponsored projects and 70% effort on non-sponsored activities.

**Example 2** – A C-basis faculty member with summer salary for June and July: During the spring semester, Professor Jones works 10% on sponsored projects and 90% on a combination of instruction, administration, and service. Professor Jones has an NSF grant and charges 100% of his salary to the grant during June and July. For any six-month period of performance, effort for each activity is calculated as:

\[
\text{(actual effort level)} \times \left(\text{fraction of the six-month period during which the effort was devoted}\right)
\]

In this example, the effort distribution for January through June is:
- 100% effort for one month out of six = 100% \( \times \) (1/6) = 16.67%
- 10% effort for five months out of six = 10% \( \times \) (5/6) = 8.33%
- 90% effort for five months out of six = 90% \( \times \) (5/6) = 75.00%

**Total:** 100.00% is the same as the spring semester distribution. This is because the effort distribution is
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who should certify for themselves?</th>
<th>Q: How do I know which of my employees are required to certify their own effort?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A: Each effort card must be certified by a responsible person with suitable means of verifying that the effort indicated was, in fact, expended in the proportions shown. The University’s practice is:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ All faculty and academic staff members certify their own effort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ All Principal Investigators certify their own effort, regardless of the type of position they hold at the UW.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A Principal Investigator certifies the effort for all graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and non-PI university staff who work on all of his or her projects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10. Where to get help

The following is a list of available resources and the types of issues for which you might want to consult them.

Division Payroll Office (or Research Administrators in your Dean's Office)
- Assistance in determining the appropriate payroll funding for a person
- Assistance in initiating needed salary cost transfers
- Assistance in resolving effort that is late in being certified
- Assistance in supporting you in all areas of your effort coordinator responsibilities

DoIT Help desk at 264-HELP (264-4357). Note that DoIT can only assist with problems related to your logon (UW-Madison NetID) and password. Any questions related to the use of ECRT should be directed to the Campus Effort Administrator at effort@rsp.wisc.edu.
- Use of UW-Madison Net ID (see also the following web site: http://kb.wisc.edu/helpdesk/page.php?id=4966)
- Trouble logging in to ECRT
- Need help to reset a password

RSP Managers at effort@rsp.wisc.edu.
- Effort policy and procedure questions

RSP Effort Administrator at effort@rsp.wisc.edu.
- Change security access in ECRT
- Help in using a feature in ECRT
- Help in understanding data that you see on an ECRT page
- Questions about cost sharing that shows on an effort card
- Help in changing an individual’s primary department
- Assistance with available reports and queries
- All other ECRT or effort-related questions

Web resources:
- http://www.rsp.wisc.edu/effort
- ECRT Help: http://www.rsp.wisc.edu/effort/msnECRTHelp.html
- Effort Reference: http://www.rsp.wisc.edu/effort/msnEffortReference.html
- Add-on Tools: http://www.rsp.wisc.edu/effort/msnAddOnTools.html
## Appendix A

Salary codes to be included/excluded:

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<th>Account</th>
<th>Account Description</th>
<th>Account</th>
<th>Account Description</th>
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<td>Faculty - Annual</td>
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<td>Faculty/Acad-Legal Settlement</td>
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## Salary Codes INCLUDED in ECRT

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## Salary Codes EXCLUDED from ECRT

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<td>Tuition &amp; Fees(Program 9 Only)</td>
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<td>5714</td>
<td>Scholarships/Fellows - Non Res</td>
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<td>5715</td>
<td>Scholarship/Fellow - Res Alien</td>
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<td>5732</td>
<td>Fellows&amp;Scholars-Academic</td>
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<td>5742</td>
<td>Fellows&amp;Scholars-Summer Sessn</td>
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<td>5750</td>
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