

Northwestern University

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Activities: January 2004 to current

- Completed and distributed the Effort Reporting Key Policies document, after thorough review and input from the Faculty Focus Group (see later point), the Project Advisory Committee, and senior management.
- Held, and continued to schedule, numerous training sessions for faculty and administrators on these key policies, their implications, and implementation specifics. Presentations were made to the FSM Executive group, the FSM clinical department chairs, and departmental Effort Coordinators (administrators – see below for more detail) within departments with sponsored research.
- Identified departmental Effort Coordinators for departments and centers with sponsored research, and conducted training sessions for them on effort reporting policy and the new electronic effort reporting system.
- Working with the HRIS and ITMS groups, designed an interim electronic (Web-based) effort certification system to replace the previous paper-based forms. We anticipate the system will be used until the more robust MAXIMUS system is implemented next fall. We have now trained all departmental Effort Coordinators on the use of this system.
- Finalized the contract and began system design sessions with MAXIMUS, who has an existing effort certification system in use by Johns Hopkins University and Sloane-Kettering Memorial Cancer Center, and is currently being implemented by the University of Pennsylvania. We are working with MAXIMUS to develop an effort commitment module that will be incorporated with the existing system. We plan to implement the combined effort commitment/ effort certification system in the fall of 2005.
- Recruited and began meeting with a department-based team to focus on the practical design and use of the effort commitment database design.
- Revised and updated the format of Northwestern University's Veteran's Affairs Memorandum of Understanding, which is required by NIH for those investigators with VA appointments. Also prepared detailed instructions for investigators and administrators to use in completing the form.
- Added the Associate Vice President for Research Integrity to our Project Advisory Committee, and continued to hold monthly committee meetings to discuss policy and system specifics.
- Continued to hold twice-weekly Core workgroup meetings to discuss policy and system specifics.

Previous activities - continued

- Convened a Faculty Focus Group for Effort Reporting, and held meetings to review policy detail.
- Held “open house” training and provided numerous one-on-one training sessions on the interim electronic effort certification system for faculty.
- Continued to present summaries of our project initiatives to other universities and federal representatives as invited to national forums.

Activities to come (summer and fall)

- Continue to conduct information sessions on effort reporting policy during faculty meetings, as invited.
- Continue to train OSR and ASRSP staff on the implementation of the key effort policies.
- Update the Effort Reporting website to include Frequently Asked Questions on policies and the electronic system; we also hope to develop an on-line tutorial on effort reporting concepts.
- Revise the Activity Reporting Manual to reflect a more comprehensive description of effort reporting and provide guidance on related topics in addition to effort certification (the manual’s current focus).
- Continue to hold monthly Project Advisory committee meetings to obtain input and review status.
- Recruit and begin meeting with a group of faculty to review the preliminary effort commitment database design.
- Perform a review of administrative appointment classifications (i.e., chairs and center directors) within HRIS to ensure consistency and appropriateness.
- Work with the Budget Office and Payroll to revise the existing Salary Distribution Adjustment (SDA) and release funds process, and streamline the salary journal entry process.
- Continue to remain abreast of current federal and other university activities related to effort reporting.
- Provide technical and functional support to administrators and faculty as use of the interim electronic certification system continues; incorporate system improvements as feasible.
- Work with MAXIMUS (system vendor) to incorporate test data; perform testing and suggest improvements to the existing effort certification system design.

Questions?

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