# Effort Reporting

Overview

❖ Introduction, overview (Mike Malone)

❖ 10 Things You Should Know About Effort Reporting (Jim Kurose)

❖ ECRT (Will Shea)

❖ Q&A

# 10 things you* should know about effort reporting

*you = faculty and staff responsible for effort reporting for federal awards
*(if you are a faculty member with a federal research grant, that definitely means you)*

# 1. Why are we here?

It is (very) important that faculty and staff know about effort and effort reporting, particularly with respect to federally sponsored projects

*… and the Office of the VCRE is trying to help*



"The first commandment is: Thou shalt not shoot the messenger."

# 1. Why are we here?

❑ federal agencies have stepped up auditing of effort reporting (and other items) on federal grants

*Many major audits[1].....*

2008  ?  UCSD, UIUC, UCSF, Georgia Tech

2007  9  CalTech, Vanderbilt, Georgia State, UMBC

2006 19 Yale, Chicago, Columbia, Berkeley, Penn

2005 13 Dartmouth, Cornell, Mayo Clinic, UMass

2004  7  Harvard, Johns Hopkins, U Washington

2003  2  Northwestern

*.. and resolutions/fines[1]*

| 2008 | $7.6M | Yale – effort reporting |
|------|-------|-------------------------|
| 2006 | $2.5M | UConn – service centers |
| 2005 | $4.4M | Cornell – funded non-research staff |
| 2005 | $6.5M | Mayo Clinic – improper cost transfers |
| 2005 | $11.5M | Florida International – improper cost transfers |
| 2004 | $2.4M | Harvard – billing for unrelated salaries |
| 2004 | $2.6M | Johns Hopkins – faculty effort reporting |
| 2003 | $5.5M | Northwestern – faculty effort reporting |

# 1. Why are we here?

❑ …. and these audits can be time-consuming, costly, and "unpleasant", e.g., Yale[1]:

  ❖ 1.5 year-long audit, covering 6,000 federal grants  1/00 –12/06
  ❖ $7.6M settlement: $3.8M in actual damages; $3.8M in *penalties*
  ❖ > 1million pages of documentation submitted to investigators
  ❖ FBI agents visit/question faculty, staff at home and on vacation
  ❖ subpoenas served on 47 grants from 13 departments

So why are we here?  - effort reporting
❑ educate/inform faculty & staff: know what is going on
❑ implement proper effort reporting procedure

# 2. What is "effort"?

❑ effort is the time you spend on an activity, expressed as a percentage of all the time you spend on your UMASS effort (a.k.a. job duties ) regardless of # hours worked:

   ❖ therefore, when you are paid for 100% effort, all of your UMass-related working hours must be on that effort, and that effort alone

❑ effort is *not* defined on 40-hour work-week model

   ❖ e.g., you can't say:  "I worked 20 hrs on funded research, 20 hrs teaching, 20 hours other UMass activities.  20 hrs is half of a 40 hr work week, therefore I charge research grant for 50% of my salary." This simply won't pass muster with auditors.

# 3. What activities count as part of my "UMass effort"?

**Included in UMass effort:**

- ❑ sponsored research
- ❑ un-sponsored research
- ❑ instruction and university-supported academic effort.
- ❑ admin work (including chair, PD, dean, etc.)
- ❑ service on univ. committees
- ❑ proposal preparation
- ❑ IP activities
- ❑ public service, outreach directly related to univ professional duties
- ❑ vacation time, sick leave

**… not included:**

- ❑ approved consulting
- ❑ continuing ed courses
- ❑ advisory/review panels for NSF, NIH, DOD, DOE, etc.
- ❑ peer review of papers
- ❑ leadership in professional societies, including journal editing
- ❑ lectures, presentations compensated by source other than UMass Amherst

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*Effort-reporting:* *documenting how you divide your time among these activities*

# 4. If I put 100% of my UMass effort in an activity, what does that really mean?

Included in UMass effort:

- ❑ sponsored research
- ❑ un-sponsored research
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- ❑ admin work (including chair, PD, dean, etc.)
- ❑ service on univ. committees
- ❑ proposal preparation
- ❑ IP activities
- ❑ public service, outreach directly related to univ professional duties
- ❑ *vacation* time, sick leave

*100% of your effort here….*

*… means 0% effort everywhere else (i.e., none of these activities allowable during times of 100% sponsored research effort)*

# 5. What does this mean for my summer salary?

❑ sponsored summer salary paid as ad comp during summer

❑ effort associated with sponsored summer salary must be expended during summer, since UMass pays your fulltime AY salary

  ❖ AY effort on project (even if not paid) does *not* count towards summer effort

❑ 100% effort for sponsored activity during a summer period means *all* of your UMass effort must be on that activity during that period (see Q4)

# 5. What does this mean for my summer salary?

❑ max summer salary is 1/3 of AY salary

   ❖ NSF limit: 2/9 sponsored salary during year (summer+AY), NSF waiver possible but required

   ❖ NIH has Exec Level I salary cap; your NIH monthly summer salary charge limited to

   *min(your monthly rate, 1/12 NIH cap)*

❑ faculty taking 3 months summer support are in most difficult situation:100% effort over 3 months required

   ❖ see Q4

# 6. How can UMass help me?

❑ ensure faculty are aware of rules, requirements

❑ put policies, procedures in place to  ensure faculty activities are compliant (more shortly)

❑ under discussion:

- ❖ summer period lengthened (e.g., by two weeks) to include time for university work (course prep, curriculum development, etc) .  Summer compensation max is still 33%

- ❖ PI-paid academic buy-out partially returned to PI to expend during summer, if < 3 month sponsored summer research

# 7. What is effort certification/reporting?

❑ PI certifies % effort devoted to project
  ❖ whether paid (e.g., by sponsor as sponsored summer salary) or unpaid (e.g., cost share)
  ❖ shows you're making the "committed effort"
❑ effort reporting not an "exact science;" gov't not expecting exactitude here but reasonableness
❑ UMass: *ECRT (Effort Certification and Reporting Technology):* online effort certification
  ❖ used elsewhere: Wisconsin, Duke, Columbia, various UT, Kansas, VCU, …
  ❖ *more shortly*

# 8. Who can certify effort?

❑ effort must be certified by "***responsible person with suitable means of verifying"*** that the work was performed. PI can self-certify, as can a staff member meeting "suitable means" requirement

❑ PI certifies effort for staff, students, postdocs working PI's research projects.

# 9. What are other institutions doing?

*An unscientific survey of some colleagues at R1 institutions*

❑ "it is possible for a professor to support their 3 summer months of salary…  the university does report effort, but the reporting is fairly opaque to PIs. we sign some forms given us by our financial admins once a year and that's about it."

❑ "all faculty on 9 month contracts are eligible to get 1/3 summer support. …  As I have had full summer support for many years, I would be aware of  (and perhaps will soon be made aware of) stricter enforcement. "

❑ "Our university requires that each faculty member certifies his/her own effort … It essentially means that if a faculty member pays himself for 3 months, he is not taking any vacation time… the burden is on the faculty to certify that he/she is not taking any vacation time. However, most of my colleagues who get 3 summer months charge 2 months to federal and 1 month to non-federal funds."

# 9. What are other institutions doing?

❑ "we're not allowed to take 3 months of Summer support from federal sources.  If one has non-federal funds, for example, industry money, then one can take a third month from these sources"

❑ "To protect the interests of … and ensure compliance with federal policies, the university is instituting consequences for failing to certify effort and complete the training. Any faculty or academic staff member who fails to fulfill the appropriate responsibilities noted below may be the subject of disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, under university policies and procedures."

❑ "So far I have heard nothing about this here  … We do indeed pay ourselves for the entire summer."

❑ "effort reporting is becoming a major headache, particularly summer salaries. The Yale audit and fine seems to have scared the local bureaucracy. All the faculty that have 3 summer months (say, 2 NSF, 1 DARPA) are getting letters and have to sign "I did not go on summer vacation" affidavits. Legally, we can't even do fall orientation any more, since this takes place in late August. "

# 9. What are other institutions doing?

❑ "There's no policy against taking 3 months of summer salary, but some colleges and departments have their own policies (such as signing a commitment not to take any summer vacation)."

❑ "We have made changes to the policy this year, and have made efforts to clarify the purpose and meaning of effort reports to the employees."

❑ "yes, faculty can be paid up to 3/9 of their nine-month salary over the summer. Our budget officer asks faculty in spring to tell her what summer support they are taking, and from which sources. It is generally not reviewed by anyone…"

❑ "there's never been any effort to make it clear to faculty what they are attesting by signing the report"

❑ "If you are funded 3 months during the summer you should not be on vacation, grant writing, etc…. Effort reports are distributed 3 times per year. "

*Take home message: we are not alone*

# 10. Are there auditing "red flags"?

❑ PI's not certifying on time

❑ department assistants certifying for entire departments with little chance of "suitable means of knowing"

*HEY! Look over here!*

❑ statements like "I work on my grant during the AY and take my pay in the summer"

❑ curriculum development for a new course taught in the fall when 100% effort charged to grants.

# 11. Where can I find more info?

❑ http://www.umass.edu/af/systems/fca/ecrt.htm
  ❖ UMass Amherst ECRT homepage
❑ http://gaia.cs.umass.edu/effort_reporting has several relevant documents
❑ policy, procedures:
  ❖ Bruce McCandless, Office of VCRE
  ❖ Jen Donais, OGCA
  ❖ ECRT: your department business manager, Help Desk at 545-2119, or jpickul@admin.umass.edu

# ECRT: Effort Certification and Reporting Technology



"The first commandment is: Thou shalt not shoot the messenger."

# ECRT: Basic info

❑ ECRT Home Page:
  ❖ http://www.umass.edu/af/systems/fca/ecrt.htm
  ❖ instructions, training, ECRT help, online resources
  ❖ dept business managers given early access (before PIs), review data, training

❑ short ECRT training required (by those certifying effort) via OWL
  ❖ "Basics of Effort Reporting Principles"
  ❖ accessed via ECRT homepage

# ECRT: dates and more info

❑ dates:
- ❖ 9/24/09: available to departmental admin's for review
- ❖ 10/8/09:  available to PIs (or effort certifier)
- ❖ 10/8/09 – 11/30/09: certification period for FY2009 (July1, 2008 – June 30, 2009) data

❑ questions about ECRT effort certification:
- ❖ see your departmental business manager
- ❖ contact Help Desk at 545-2119  /  jpickul@admin.umass.edu