

EFFORT-REPORTING TASK FORCE

2/14/07 MEETING SUMMARY

Attendance: John Frederick (Provost)
Dawn Arnold (Engineering)
Ted Batchman (Engineering)
Mark Brenner (VPR)
Sharon Brush (Liberal Arts)
Mary Dugan (NSHE)
Bill Follette (Psychology)
Tammy Freeman (Effort Reporting)
Jack Hayes (Biology)
Guy Hoelzer (Faculty Senate)
Dave Lupan (UNSOM)
Gena Jones (HR)
Cindy Kiel (OSPA)
Tim McFarling (HR)
Hans-Peter Plag (NVBMG)
Ron Phaneuf (Physics)
John Price (NGBM)
Steve Rock (Education)
Bruce Shively (PBA)
Barbara Scott (UNSOM)
Bill Sparkman (Education)
Jim Taranik (MSESE)
Renee Warren (HHS)

Discussion:

John Frederick asked the groups to report back on what they had learned in the last two weeks:

- Regulations/definitions group: The group, led by Cindy Kiel, reported it had spent some time looking at policies and procedures and trying to understand what they meant. They are trying to understand the language of the regulations and the policies. Their work continues and they will move on to looking at the Board of Regents policy on the matter. There was agreement that the 24-7 definition of a professional work week is problematic when you consider the broad range of responsibilities and activities of a professional.
- The problems identification group, led by Guy Hoelzer, distributed a list of principles and problems they have identified (attached) and noted the central problem is the conflict between the fraction of effort for funded projects and the professional responsibilities of a university faculty member. It was acknowledged that there is likely a small subset of sponsored projects that are “capacity building” and would allow proposal writing as part of the subsidized effort. The possibility of creating a new employment category for those who do in fact devote 100% of their time to research effort with no teaching and service was explored. It was noted that this employee type is not uncommon in other universities and in fact exists at DRI. The importance of role statements was also agreed to.

- Bruce Shively reported the Resource Analysis Group had met twice and had devoted time to determining individuals who are 100% research funded (excluding UNSOM). Based on their work, they identified approximately 200 individuals (faculty and staff combined) who have salaries approaching \$10 million and estimated with UNSOM researchers the total would be \$15 million.
- Mark Brenner reported that he has discovered that the university is generally ahead of many other institutions in the exploration of the issues and potential solutions. However, he hopes to learn more next week at a professional meeting he will be attending and is also composing an e-mail to professional contacts to dig deeper.

A discussion of other problems ensued. For instance, it was noted that you cannot volunteer for activities for the benefit of the university for which you would normally be paid. However, it is not unusual for faculty to put these activities down for evaluation, merit, promotion, and tenure purposes. One solution would be to clarify a faculty member's activities more clearly in the role statements.

The requirements on the frequency of effort reporting was also discussed. Generally, the less frequent reporting intervals (e.g. twice a year) help by allowing more broad averaging of activities. However, our current interpretation of federal guidelines suggests that we will need to divide the year into at least three intervals for reporting purposes.

The idea of moving part of your academic year salary to a grant and then using the salary savings during the summer was a solution the group agreed needed to be explored further. This solution would involve having partially grant-supported faculty offload a portion of their effort to grants during the academic year, with the savings from their regular salary then used to provide a portion of their compensation during what are now "off-contract" days in the summer. This solution would only extend to B-contract faculty affected by effort certification issues.

It was agreed that there will likely be an array of solutions as a result of the group's work. These include:

1. Stressing the importance of carefully crafted role statements.
2. Partial grant buy-outs during the academic year, with shifting of state salary savings dollars from this to summer salaries.
3. Approximately \$1 million from institutional sources for partial salary coverage for university-related service of full-time grant paid faculty. The implementation of this solution will also require a careful crafting of university policy outlining the conditions under which faculty would be eligible.

Another related concern was the difficulty grant-funded faculty encounter when between major grants. There currently exists no bridge funding and no funding to allow faculty to wind down their projects.

At the end of the meeting, the group identified some areas in which additional research needs to be done before the next meeting:

1. A spreadsheet to outline #2 above, with the idea of providing an estimate of the added burden on the colleges.
2. Research to identify how big the problem is for full-time employee PIs.
3. Estimate of the appropriate fraction of service effort for non-research faculty
4. Creative thinking on funding #3 above.

It was recommended that for the period about to begin, the university go with the current draft policies regarding the definition of effort as well as excepting outside consulting from the definition of university service.