

TIME AND EFFORT REPORTING INSTRUCTIONS
Framingham State University

In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-21, Section J.10.a, Framingham State University (FSU) is required to document effort spent on externally-sponsored federal activity. FSU utilizes an “After-the-Fact Activity Records” system, under which the distribution of salaries and wages by Framingham State University will be supported by reports that are described in the following way.

- A. “Time and Effort Reporting Forms” will reasonably reflect the percentage distribution of efforts expended by FSU faculty and staff who are involved in all federally-funded grants, contracts, and agreements.
- B. **For each grant-funded project**, a “Time and Effort Reporting Form” or spreadsheet will be completed and signed by each faculty member/Principal Investigator and staff member who is working on the project, provided that the approved grant, contract, or agreement commits FSU personnel time to the project, regardless of whether such time is paid by external funds or if an unpaid contribution, i.e., an “in-kind” match.
- C. “Time and Effort Reporting Forms” or spreadsheets do not need to be completed for clerical staff or students who utilize weekly time sheets.
- D. “Time and Effort Reporting Forms” will be confirmed by a person having first-hand knowledge of the employee’s activities. Confirmation is indicated by a counter-signature of the form.
 - If a form documents a faculty member’s effort and he/she is the Project Director/Principal Investigator, the form will be counter-signed by the Department Chair (or by immediate supervisor in non-academic divisions).
 - If a form documents a faculty member’s effort and he/she is not the Project Director/Principal Investigator, the form will be counter-signed by the Project Director/Principal Investigator.
 - If a form documents a professional staff member’s effort and he/she is the Project Director/Principal Investigator, the form will be counter-signed by the Department Chair (or by immediate supervisor in non-academic divisions).
 - If a form documents a professional staff member’s effort and he/she is not the Project Director/Principal Investigator, the form will be countersigned by the Project Director/Principal Investigator.
- E. “Time and Effort Reporting Forms” or spreadsheets will be completed every six months and will document the percentage distribution of effort expended during that year for each specific grant.
- F. “Time and Effort Reporting Forms” (or your documenting spreadsheets) must be returned to the Director of Grants and Sponsored Programs (O’Connor Hall G40) every six months.

FSU Time and Effort Report Form Guidelines

- 1) Grant Activities to meet commitments explicitly specified in federal grants and contracts;
- 2) Departmental or Center Administration; and
- 3) All other FSU activities, including fundraising for a Center.

For Category 1) please estimate the percentage of time spent on federal grants/sponsored activities. For Category 2) please estimate the percentage of an individual's time spent on Departmental/Center Administration activities.

Finally, please calculate a percentage for all other FSU activities as [(100% - Category 1) minus Category 2 = Category 3].

Definitions of the three efforts are as follows:

1. Grant Activity Commitments are explicit and specific to commitments of effort (in proposal texts, budgets and/or budget justifications) to programs and projects supported by federal sponsors or by the university that: 1) have specified objectives and/or deliverables; 2) are separately and specifically budgeted; and 3) require separate accounting and reporting. Besides sponsored research projects (which are often integrated with educational activities), investigators devote effort to such other sponsored activities as conferences, institutes, forums, publications, travel, and/or the purchase of equipment. Effort includes work on projects and/or supervision of the work of others connected to a grant.
2. Departmental and Center Administration includes administrative and supporting services that benefit common or joint departmental activities. This includes time spent on meetings and committee work for departments, the faculty, or the university as a whole and time spent planning and proposing future organized research.
3. All other FSU activities covers most everything else. This category includes, but is not limited to, instruction (preparing for and teaching courses, seminars and sections), advising students (including assisting with job placement and letters of recommendation), departmental research (all non-instructional scholarly activities not separately budgeted and accounted for), serving on an FSU committee like Arts & Ideas, hosting or participating in panels/symposiums and such professional activities as reading, reviewing, and referring others' research. It also includes uncommitted effort on grant/supported activities (effort for which no specific commitment was made in proposal texts, budgets, or budget justifications).

Example:

- 1) 17% - Grant Activities [for specified federal grant]
 - 2) 20% - Departmental Administration, and
 - 3) 63% - All other FSU activities [including other grant work that you may have].
- Total: 100%

Key Points to remember for Time and Effort Reporting

1. The effort planning and confirmation system only reflects the activity for which the investigator or employee is compensated by FSU. External activities such as consulting or non-university (professional) committees are not included.
2. We are required to record effort as a percentage of total activities, not as hours worked.
 - Under federal regulations on effort reporting, 100% effort is an employee's total hours actually spent on work within the scope of his or her employment regardless of how many or how few hours an employee works and regardless of the percent FTE listed on

the appointment. Effort certification must reflect actual work performed and cannot be budget driven

- Just as employee's total effort is not defined by regular business hours of the employer or by the percent FTE of the appointment, grants/sponsored programs effort does not necessarily take place only in the research facility/lab or only on the university premises. Research can occur at home, at a conference, or in off-site research-connected meetings. Remember that if these types of hours are included in calculating research effort, they must also be included in the calculation of total effort.
3. Maintain a proper separation of duties, i.e., university and grant activities.
 4. Federal Auditors are looking for patterns that suggest that an effort is formulated by factors other than actual effort on the project:
 - Patterns or retroactive adjustments to effort certifications or retroactive cost transfers. (Do these have a reasonable justification or do they appear to be motivated by desire to "mop up" or transfer unused grant funds?)
 - Very small effort percentages on many grants. (Real grant/sponsored agreements contributions or just salary support?)
 - Grant/sponsored agreement certifications that do not include an accounting for actual administrative and/or teaching and/or clinical effort as part of the total effort. If you certify research effort for your research grants totaling 95% that leaves only 5% for all other work performances – teaching, clinical, administrative. If you are teaching two classes six hours per week, for six hours to be 5% or less of your total effort, you need to be prepared to document the claim that your work week is 120 hours or more! [NOTE: For Center Directors without faculty responsibilities, a higher percentage for grant activities will make sense].

Please send the completed form to Patricia Bossange in the Office of Grants and Sponsored Programs (O'Connor Hall G40).