Extramural Funds Accounting Contacts

Rudy Moreno, Campus ERS Coordinator, Ext 6127
rudy.moreno@bfs.ucsb.edu
ERS.Help@bfs.ucsb.edu
Table of Contents

An Introduction to Effort Reporting ......................................................... 3
What is Effort Reporting? ........................................................................ 3
Non-Compliance ...................................................................................... 4
   Risks of not complying with Circular A-21’s effort reporting requirement 4
K Awards .................................................................................................. 5
Effort Reporting System Features ............................................................ 6
   Features of ERS ..................................................................................... 6
How Effort is Calculated .......................................................................... 6
System Administration Overview .............................................................. 6
Roles Available in ERS ............................................................................. 7
How to Log In .......................................................................................... 8
How to Navigate ...................................................................................... 8
How to Search Effort Reports ................................................................. 9
How to Build PI Searches Using Subscribe Feature ............................... 10
How to Build PI Listings .......................................................................... 12
How to Open a Saved Search .................................................................. 13
What an Effort Report Looks Like ......................................................... 14
How to View Payroll Details ................................................................... 17
How to Edit an Effort Report ................................................................. 19
How to Add an Additional Sponsored Project ...................................... 20
How to Notify a PI that the Effort Reports are Ready to Certify ............ 21
How to Track Effort Report Certifications ............................................ 21
An Introduction to Effort Reporting

The federal government requires an effort report when an individual is compensated by or has agreed to contribute time to a federally sponsored project. All faculty who serve as investigators on sponsored agreements are personally responsible to certify the amount of effort that they and their employees spent on sponsored activities.

This guide provides an overview of effort reporting, including an explanation of why such a process is necessary and the minimum requirements for the process.

The University fulfills the effort reporting requirement through the use of the Effort Reporting System (ERS). ERS is a web-based tool that calculates the distribution of effort for all employees paid from federal and federal flow-through funds, captures certification electronically, and provides a mechanism for processing corrections and re-certifying reports.

What is Effort Reporting?

Effort is defined as the amount of time spent on a particular activity. It includes the time spent working on a sponsored project in which salary is directly charged or contributed (cost-shared effort).

Individual effort is expressed as a percentage of the total amount of time spent on work-related activities (instruction, research, administration, etc.) for which the University compensates an individual.

Effort reporting is the mandated method of certifying to the granting agencies that the effort charged or cost shared to each award has actually been completed.
Non-Compliance

Risks of Not Complying with Circular A-21's Effort Reporting Requirement

In fiscal year 2003, federal awards represented approximately 67 percent of the total $3.53 billion in contract and grant award activity within the UC system. Salary expense represents the largest direct cost component on these projects.

In recent years, the federal government and its auditors have become much more active in their review of effort reporting requirements, and a number of universities have received large audit disallowances as a result. Recent cases of audit disallowances are:

- Northwestern University paid $5.5 million to settle issues related to problems with effort reporting, on a contracts and grants base of $325 million;
- South Florida returned $4.1 million to the federal government to settle a number of charging issues, including effort reporting;
- University of California paid a total of $2.1 million to settle an NIH salary cap limitation disallowance for the period July 1, 1995 through June 30, 2002.

An effort reporting system must provide records on how individuals participating in federally funded sponsored agreements actually spend their time. Because the federal government mandates effort reporting, it is incumbent upon institutions that receive federal funding to maintain accurate and auditable systems and records.

Documentation on how individuals spend time on federally sponsored projects is subject to federal audit and can be cause for institutional or individual disallowances.

Disallowances Can Result If:

- The effort report was certified by an individual other than the employee or someone who has "first-hand" knowledge of 100 percent of the employee's time;
- The effort report does not encompass all of the activities performed by the employee under the terms of their employment;
- The levels of effort reported do not appear reasonable, given the responsibilities of the individual.
- The effort report certified by the individual is found to be falsified;
- The levels of effort reported do not appear reasonable.

As evidenced above, federal audit disallowances can result in serious financial penalties for institutions. In addition, criminal charges may be brought against an individual certifying to falsified effort.

Current audit plans for federal auditors include effort reporting as a specific audit focus.
K Awards & Effort Reporting

What are K Awards?
K Awards are Career Development Awards issued by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). K Awards provide support for intensive development experiences in one of the biomedical, behavioral, or clinical sciences leading to research independence. They provide up to five years of funding to enable faculty to develop careers as outstanding teacher-scholars and achieve independent research funding.

K awards typically require a 75% commitment of full-time professional effort with a salary based on a full-time, 12-month staff appointment. Each participating NIH Institute or Center has specific eligibility criteria and award provisions. Requests for Applications (RFAs) and Program Announcements (PAs) must be reviewed carefully to ensure compliance with salary limitations and effort commitments.

Determining Full-Time Professional Effort for K Awards
On August 3, 2004, the NIH issued a policy announcing that the criteria for estimating and reporting effort on K awards should be consistent with other NIH funding mechanisms. Previously, NIH defined the basis for effort commitment to K awards as encompassing the entirety of an investigator's professional commitments, both within and outside the application institution. This definition has been problematic for institutions. In response to this concern, NIH issued the policy, which indicates that a career award recipient meets the required commitment of total professional effort as long as:

- the individual has a full-time appointment with the applicant organization;
- the minimum percentage of the candidate's commitment required for the proposed career award experience is covered by that appointment.

Sharing K Award Effort with Effort on Another Federal Project
For competing applications submitted for February 1, 2004 and later: Mentored career award recipients (in the last two years of career award support) are encouraged by the NIH to obtain funding from NIH either as:

- Principal Investigator on a competing research grant award or cooperative agreement
- Project leader on a competing multi-project award

At the time the research grant is awarded, the effort required on the career award may be:

- reduced to no less than 50 percent; and
- replaced by effort from the research award so that the total level of research commitment remains at 75 percent or more for the duration of the mentored career award.

This reduction must be approved by the NIH.
Effort Reporting System Features

Features of ERS

- Certifications are easy to track
- Maintains historical information
- System becomes "office of record"
- Reduces risk of noncompliance
- Accessible online 24/7 through Web-based interface
- Reports and certifications are distributed and captured electronically
- Online editing and edit checks
- System interacts with PPS so you can drilldown to detailed payroll calculations
- Tracking of payroll changes against effort reported

How Effort is Calculated?

Below are three examples to illustrate how the new system will calculate effort:

Add up each project's weighted %, then divide that sum by the total weighted % of all projects.

Example #2 - Two different departments need to certify

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pay Period End Date</th>
<th>Project / Fund</th>
<th>Paid %</th>
<th>Weighted %</th>
<th>Effort Calculation</th>
<th>EFFORT %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6/30/2008</td>
<td>448585-21373</td>
<td>0.5000</td>
<td>0.5000</td>
<td>2.0000 / 4.0000</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/31/2008</td>
<td>448585-21373</td>
<td>0.5000</td>
<td>0.5000</td>
<td>2.0000 / 4.0000</td>
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<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/30/2008</td>
<td>448585-21373</td>
<td>0.5000</td>
<td>0.5000</td>
<td>2.0000 / 4.0000</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>2.0000 / 4.0000</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pay Period End Date</th>
<th>Project / Fund</th>
<th>Paid %</th>
<th>Weighted %</th>
<th>Effort Calculation</th>
<th>EFFORT %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6/30/2008</td>
<td>444333-24960</td>
<td>0.5000</td>
<td>0.5000</td>
<td>2.0000 / 4.0000</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/31/2008</td>
<td>444333-24960</td>
<td>0.5000</td>
<td>0.5000</td>
<td>2.0000 / 4.0000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Project Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>2.0000 / 4.0000</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total of all Weighted percentages**

Add up all project's weighted % and divide that sum by the total weighted % of all projects.

System Administration Overview

The Administration Task page functions as a portal to the various system administration pages on which you may perform administrative tasks related to ERS.
Administration Tasks related to ERS are divided into two categories: Central Administration Tasks and Departmental Administration Tasks

- **Central Administrative Tasks** include management of the organizational hierarchy and security administration, permissions roles, schedule definition, and operational tasks for monitoring ERS.

- **Departmental Administrative Tasks** include administering users, and special report generation options.

**Roles Available in ERS**

A list of defined roles is available in ERS. You can assign those roles to new users as appropriate within your department.

Table 1: List of predefined Roles in ERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predefined Roles</th>
<th>Permissions</th>
<th>Who is likely to have these roles?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coordinator Access</td>
<td>View effort reports, edit effort reports, access payroll info</td>
<td>ERS (Payroll) Coordinators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View Access</td>
<td>View effort reports, view payroll info</td>
<td>Central Office, Financial Managers, MSOs, Deans, Auditors,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance Report Generator</td>
<td>Generate Compliance Reports</td>
<td>Central Office, Financial Managers, MSOs, Deans, Coordinators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report Generator</td>
<td>Generate ad-hoc effort reports</td>
<td>ERS (Payroll) Coordinators, Business Managers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certifier</td>
<td>View effort reports, edit efforts reports, view payroll info, certify effort reports</td>
<td>PIs, Co-PI's</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the roles except Certifier and Self-Certifier can be assigned to users. One person can have more than one role if required. You will have authority to setup Preparer Access and Read Only Access.

For Preparer Access, you will assign users with the following roles:

- Coordinator Access
- Compliance Report Generator
- Report Generator

For Read Only Access, you will assign users with the following roles:

- Read only Access
- Compliance Report Generator
How to Log In

1. ERS system can be accessed from any internet connection via https://ers.ucop.edu/ucsb/. After clicking this link you will get the below login screen.

2. Log in to the system with your assigned UCSB NET-ID (user name and password, all lowercase).

3. If you do not have a user name and ID assigned to you please contact your department manager and they will direct you how to set up your NET-ID.

How to Navigate

A. There are three sections in the Effort Reporting System

- **Effort Repost List**: Lists all effort report that meet a certain search criteria.

- **Manage Saved Searches**: Allows user to edit previously saved searches and subscribe to a default “My projects” search for a particular PI.

- **Search Effort Reports**: Allows user to group effort reports by specific search criteria (e.g. home department, employee ID, Award #, FAU, etc) and save the grouping for future reference.

To access the Effort Report List, the Manage Saved Searches Module, or the Search Effort Report Module, click on the desired tab.
B. On the Effort Report List and the Search Effort Reports Module, you can navigate through search results by using the navigation buttons located at the top and the bottom of the displayed results.

C. You can also choose how many search results to display per page by using the tool bar.

D. When you are ready to log out, click on the Sign-Out link located in the header toolbar.

How to Search Effort Reports

Step 1: Navigate to the Search Effort Reports Module (see below).

Step 2: The Search Effort Reports Module uses tabs to navigate between related information. Click on the tab that contains the filter you want to use, e.g. click on the People tab to filter by Employee Name/ID or Home Department, by Department tab, by Project tab, by Award tab or FAU tab.

Step 3: Type in your search criteria, Name, Employ ID, Dept name or number, etc.

Step 4: Click on the Update Filter button.
Step 5: Your search results will appear on the lower left side of the screen.

Step 6: To select a group from these results, click on the appropriate results to transfer them to the Search Collection column on the lower right side of the screen; or Select All button to view all the reports.

Step 7: Then select “Save As” to name the search for future reference. This saved search will now appear under the name you saved it on the list of your managed searches screen.

How to Build PI Searches Using Subscribe Feature

1. Navigate to the Manage Saved Search Module and scroll to the bottom (Use the below two screen shots for this reference).

2. Click on “Subscribe”.

3. You may search for your PI by name or by home department. Enter the information in the desired search criteria and click “Update Filter”. (See 2nd screen shot below)

4. Under the “My Projects” column select “Subscribe”

5. The column will now indicate that you are “Subscribed” and you may close out of the window.

6. Return to the “Managed Searches” screen and look for the listing that you just subscribed to, it will be listed as “My Projects, and the PI’s last name, then first name (1st screen shot below).

7. To the left of this saved search you will see 3 icons: View Search, Copy Search and Delete Search. Select the second icon, “Copy Search”.

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10
8. In the pop-up box enter your desired file name and click “Save”.

9. You now have the search saved in an editable format under the name you just gave it. To edit this saved search select the “edit saved search” icon (See #9 below). This will take you to the screen where you may now remove individuals in the search or add new individuals.

   a. To remove individuals:
      1. Go to the listing on the right side of the screen and identify the individual you want to remove.
      2. Click on the blue arrow next to the name and the individual will be removed from your list.

   b. To add individuals:
      1. Go to the top of the screen and in the field “Name/Employee ID contains or equals” enter employee name or employee ID.
      2. Click “Update Filter”
      3. Now scroll down to “Filtered Results” and identify the individual you are looking for
      4. Click on the blue arrow next to the employee name. The employee is now added to your saved search listing.

10. Once you are confident your listing is complete and accurate, scroll to the bottom of the screen and select “save”, this will save all changes to the original subscribe search you saved earlier. Your search is now ready to email to your PI or certifier.

11. Once you have created and saved your PI search, the saved PI search will not need to be created again in future periods. Effort reports in future periods related to this PI will automatically be added to this PI’s saved search.
How to Build PI Listings

In ERS navigate to the Search Reports screen, from there you can build PI listings using the following tabs:

To Build a Report by FAU

1. Go to FAU’s Tab
2. In the field “fund Title Contains or Equals” enter PI’s last name and click “Update Filter”
3. On the listing click on “select all”
4. Click “Save As” and name the file how you would like it to be saved (recommend saving as the PI’s Name), this saved search now appears in your Managed Searches” tab.

To Build a Report By Project

1. Go to the Projects Tab
2. Identify the fund number associated to your PI
3. Enter your first fund number in the “LAF” field, then click “update filter”
4. On the listing click on “select all”
5. If you have additional fund numbers then repeat steps 3 and 4 until all funds numbers have been captured
6. Click “Save As” and name the file how you would like it to be saved (recommend saving as the PI’s Name) this saved search now appears in your Managed Searches” tab.

To Build a Report By Orbit Number

1. Go to the Awards Tab
2. Identify the orbit number(s) associated to your PI
3. Enter your first orbit number in the “Orbit#” field
4. On the listing click on “select all”
5. If you have additional orbit numbers then repeat steps 3 and 4 until all orbit numbers have been captured
6. Click “Save As” and name the file how you would like it to be saved (recommend saving as the PI’s Name) this saved search now appears in your Managed Searches” tab.

To Build a Report By Agency Award Number

1. Go to the Awards tab
2. Identify the Agency Award number(s) associated to your PI
3. Enter your first agency number in the “Agency Award # contains” field
4. On the listing click on “select all”
5. If you have additional agency award numbers then repeat steps 3 and 4 until all award numbers have been captured
6. Click “Save As” and name the file (recommend saving as the PI’s Name) this saved search now appears in your Managed Searches” tab.

To Build a Departmental Report By FAU

5. Go to FAUs Tab
6. In the field “FAU Contains or Equals” enter the fund number and click “Update Filter” (use only fund numbers which are associated with federal awards)
7. On the listing click on “select all”
8. Click “Save As” and name the file how you would like it to be saved (recommend saving as Master Department Cert Listing. This saved search now appears in your Managed Searches” tab.

How to Open a Saved Search

A. Navigate to the Effort Report List.

B. Display the search results from one of your saved searches. Your screen will refresh and display the search results.

C. You can tailor the search results by filtering on Status.

D. You can tailor the search results by Reporting Period.
What an Effort Report Looks Like

Step 1: Navigate to the Effort Report List.

Step 2: Display the desired Saved Search.

Step 3: Select an Effort Report to review by clicking on the appropriate line.
Effort Report will open

A. There are five sections as shown above:

- **Sponsored Projects:** Employee received pay on these projects that require effort certification. This section displays effort calculations for each individual project. If you put your mouse over the Project Name, it will give you more information regarding the project (i.e., PI, Award Title, Fund Mgr Name, and Sponsor/Funding Agency).

- **Other Sponsored Projects:** Employee receives pay on these projects that do not require an effort certification. This section displays a cumulative effort calculation for all projects in the category.

- **Non-Sponsored Activities:** Employee received pay on non-sponsored funding. This section displays a cumulative effort calculation for all effort in this category.

- **Report Options:**
  
  i. **Report requires multiple certifications:** Allows user to specify if different Sponsored Projects need to be certified by different people (e.g., employee
works for two PI’s on different projects and each PI wants to certify separately).

ii. Report allows for Cost Sharing Offset against Other Sponsored Projects.

iii. Report Under Preliminary Review. Checking this box flags the effort report that unfinished work exists for the effort report.

- **Add a Comment**: Area designated for user to input comments to the effort report.

B. There are six columns on the Effort Report as shown above:

- **Original Effort %**: Estimate of effort based on payroll distributions. These percentages are systematically adjusted to reflect exceptions, such as the NIH Salary Cap.

- **Adjusted Effort %**: The user can manually enter the effort percent dedicated to each activity

- **Original Cost Sharing %**: This feature is not functional at this time.

- **Adjusted Cost Sharing %**: See “Process Guide – Adding Cost Share to Effort Reports” on BFS ERS Website.

- **Original Total %**: This is the estimated total effort % for each activity as generated by the system.

- **Adjusted Total %**: This is the actual column being certified. It reflects the amount in the Adjusted Effort % column plus the amount in the Adjusted Cost Sharing % column.

C. To view the lines of payroll used to generate the estimated values in the Original Payroll % column, click on the View Payroll Details button.

D. There are three tabs associated with the Effort Reports.

- **Edit Report**: Allows the user to modify the current version for the selected effort report.

- **View History**: Allows the user to view previous versions of the selected Effort Report.

- **Comment Log**: Allows the user to view a compilation of all previously saved comments.

E. You can export a copy of the Effort Report to Excel, send it via email or print it.

F. You can navigate to the next Effort Report in your currently selected collection of effort reports by using the navigation bar at the top of the Effort Report.
How to View Payroll Details

The user can drill down to view the payroll transactions that generated the values in the Original Payroll % column by clicking on the View Payroll Details button located at the top and bottom of the Effort Report.

A. Each line of the Effort Report has a corresponding detail block displayed on this page.

a. Payroll lines for sponsored projects requiring certification are displayed in individual detail blocks by account fund string.

b. The special lines for other sponsored projects (not requiring certification) have aggregated detail blocks.

c. The special lines for non-sponsored activities are aggregated.

d. Unrecognized earnings are payroll transactions not recognized by PPS. Reports that contain unrecognized earnings will generally be placed in an exception status and will have to be resolved by manually editing the report to correct it.

e. Excluded earnings are payroll transactions that were not included in the effort calculation. Payroll transactions for vacation, sick leave, stipends and certain other types of payments belong to this category.

B. The columns display fields from payroll transactions that are relevant to the creation of the Effort Report.
• **Project:** The primary award name from UCSB’s financial system.

• **Original Effort %:** Calculated percent effort for this line of the Effort Report. This amount is calculated by adding all of the paid percents and dividing the percent for each project by the total percent.

• **Pay Period End Date:** Used to determine which Effort Report the payroll transaction should be included in. Each Effort report belongs to a reporting period, and the reporting period defines the range of Pay Period End Date values that should be included.

• **Pay Cycle Code:** The type of payroll cycle. Pay cycle codes include MO for monthly current and MA for monthly arrears.

• **FAU:** The full accounting unit used for the payroll transaction. The FAU categorizes the payment for the effort report. For UCSB, the FAU includes the campus code, account, fund, sub, and object code.

• **DOS Code:** The Description of Service Code defines various characteristics of pay and is one of the values used to determine whether the transaction should be included in the effort report.

• **Trans Code:** The payroll transaction code triggers the payment to the employee. For example, it indicates whether the payment was issued automatically, entered by the department as a late pay or resulted from a transfer of payroll expense.

• **Title Code:** One of the values used to determine whether the transaction should be weighted. For example, if an employee has a combination 11 month and 9 month appointment, the percentages need to be adjusted. This adjustment will be reflected on the weighted % column.

• **Pay Rate:** Shows as a monthly rate and hourly rate.

• **Rate Type:** The code indicates how to interpret the value in the Pay Rate column. Rate types include A for annual; H for hourly.

• **Paid %:** Indicates the percent of time that an individual was on pay status during a pay period.

• **Derived %:** During the payroll compute process, PPS derives an equivalent percent of time for hourly employees. It transfers this calculated derived percent of time into a field called the Derived Percent. PPS also transfers the percent of time for each pay transaction for employees paid with a monthly rate into the Derived Percent field. The derived Percent field now contains a percent of time paid for each pay transaction and that field can now be used to calculate effort for all types and combinations of payment types. The Derived Percent will differ from the Paid Percent if the employee was paid at an hourly rate. For employees paid at a monthly rate, the value will be the same as Paid Percent.

• **Weighted %:** This is a value that is calculated by ERS in situations where an employee has a combination of 9/12 and 11/12 appointments or a summer 1/9 appointment.
When all payments are made on the same Basis (either 9/12 or 11/12), the Weighted Percent value is copied from the Derived Percent Value. When there is a mix of 9/12 and 11/12 payments, the 9/12 payments must be weighted to account for the fact that each 9/12 represents one-third effort rather than one-forth effort. In these cases, the Weighted percent is calculated as the Derived Percent multiplied by 0.75 and the result can then be combined with the 11/12 payments to arrive at a valid total. This is an unusual situation, however, and in most cases employees will have a single Basis and the Weighted Percent value will be the same as the Derived Percent value as calculated by the payroll system.

- **Pay Category**: This is the Pay Category attribute associated with the DOS Code. The Pay Category Code is one of the values used to determine whether the transaction should be included in the effort report. For example, the Pay Category indicates whether the pay is leave payment, normal pay, prerequisite, differentials, and etc.

- **Time Code**: This is the Time Code attribute associated with the DOS Code. The Time Code is the values used to determine whether the transaction should be included in the Effort Report. Time Code 1, 2, and 5, will indicate whether the pay is for regular time, overtime, or by agreement amount, etc.

- **Pay Cycle End Date**: This is the date in which the payroll cycle that produced this transaction was processed.

### How to Edit an Effort Report

A. If the values in the Original Payroll % column do not reasonably reflect the actual effort allocated to each activity, you can adjust the percentages manually in the Adjusted Effort % column.

B. If payroll was not set up correctly, you may need to manually associate an employee to a Sponsored Project. To do this, click on the Add Additional Sponsored Project button and select the project you want to add to the Effort Report from the list (see How to Add Additional Sponsored Projects in next section below).

C. If the effort report requires more than one person to certify for a single employee’s effort, activate the checkbox, in the Report Options section, called Report Requires Multiple Certifications. This will generate a new column called “Line Certified”.

D. Whenever you edit an effort report, you will be required to enter a comment explaining your reason for making the change. The comment will never be deleted and is not editable after it has been saved. If additional information is necessary at a later time, an additional comment can be added.
How to Add an Additional Sponsored Project

Once you click on the Add Additional Sponsored Project button from the previous screen, the Add Additional Project window will pop up, which contains a list of all the Federal Sponsored Projects at UCSB. To find the project you want to add, follow these steps.

Step 1: Type in your search criteria.

Step 2: Click on the filter button. The screen will refresh and your screen results will appear.

Step 3: You can sort your search results by Project ID, by Project Title or by PI. To do this, click on the Column Header of your choice.

Step 4: To see the Full Accounting Unit (FAU), click on the magnifying glass icon next to the project ID.

Step 5: Once you find the desired sponsored project in the list, click on the Select button to select the award you want to add to the Effort Report.
How to Notify a PI that the Effort Reports are Ready to Certify

Please follow the protocol in your department to notify the PIs that the effort reports have been reviewed and are ready for certification.

How to Track Effort Report Certifications

A. Navigate to the effort Report List Module.

B. Display the desired Saved Search.

C. To monitor the status of the Effort reports you have two options:

   C1-Filter the List by Status:

   This will only display Effort Reports in your currently displayed Saved Search that currently has the status you want to view (e.g. only display report with status “Certified”). To filter by status, select the desired status from the Show Status dropdown menu at the top of the Effort Report List as shown below.

   C2-Sort the List by Status:

   This will display every effort report in the currently displayed Saved search, but the reports will be sorted by status. To sort by status, click on the Column Header of the Status Column.
### Effort Reporting System

**User:** KAT, FSE (00045789)

**Display Saved Search:** My Projects CAP

**Show Status:** All-Open

#### Reporting Periods
- All
- Select: FY07 APR - JUN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Display</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Effit</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Last Modified</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY07 APR - JUN</td>
<td>Open/Released</td>
<td>MANTA, RAYE (000321654)</td>
<td>ICHTHYLOGY</td>
<td>1/3/2007 v1.0</td>
<td>Open/Overdue</td>
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**Display:** 20 records per page

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