UF Commitment Entry Guidelines

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Commitment Entry Guidelines

Definition: A commitment is reflective of the promise of time/effort made to the sponsor. This time can be designated over the life of the award, a project period, a budget period or to specific terms. Most Federally-funded research programs should have some level of committed effort, paid or unpaid. This effort can be provided at any time within the fiscal year (summer months, academic year, or both).

The University collects commitments through UFIRST at a person level as it was specified to the sponsor. Each person provides their commitment over the appropriate sponsor defined budget, project or award period. The commitment data is translated to job level by Cost Analysis and entered into myUFL. If there needs to be term by term adjustments, reductions within allowable sponsor tolerances, or other adjustments that are allowable but not reflective of what was communicated to the sponsor, those are made ONLY in myUFL and UFIRST maintains the commitment from the sponsor’s perspective.

General Entry

- Commitments are at the AWARD level, not the project level. Not every project under an award requires a commitment, even if the project’s type is not exempted. If no key personnel’s effort is tied to that project, then no effort is to be entered. All awards should have at least one commitment or a clear indication in the UFIRST award smartform why none was entered.
- If the Sponsor does not break the award into budget periods, then as long as the individual’s commitment remains constant, one commitment for the life of the award may be entered.
- Generally, one commitment line per person per budget period should be entered. For example, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) funds each budget period separately. To account for this requirement one line will be entered for each budget period even if the commitment is the same expected amount each year.
- For Cost Analysis entry into myUFL:
  - For 9-Month Employees, assume full summer FTE; this can be adjusted later. For example, a one-month commitment would be entered as 33% assuming the individual will be appointed full-time for the full summer.
  - Academic term commitments should be entered on the FA09 appointment and summer appointments should be entered on the FASU.

UFIRST General Guidance

- For awards set up in myUFL prior to the inception of UFIRST (July 1, 2016) and then converted into UFIRST, it is not necessary to enter all historical information. Only the current budget period and forward should be entered. The sole exception is no cost extensions where the final budget period and extension period should both be entered.
**myUFL General Guidance**

- A change to a commitment for a certified term will cause an error in the myUFL system. If an adjustment to an effort commitment is required for an effort term that has already been certified, this must be done at the Core Office level. Changes to previously certified terms will require a recertification of the effort record.

**Personnel**

- Individuals - Commitments to be entered for award level:
  - Principal Investigators
  - Co-PI and Co-Investigator's with quantified commitments
  - Any other individual identified in the award as key personnel with quantified commitments
  - Individuals used to meet voluntary committed or mandatory cost sharing requirements

- 0 FTE Personnel – No individual with a 0 FTE should be proposed with a commitment. However, if the individual was committed but is retired or under a non-pay appointment (i.e. Courtesy), a commitment cannot be entered and effort cannot be tracked in the system. If no other individuals meet the requirements for a commitment for this project no commitment will be entered. If the budget includes specific commitment, Cost Analysis will notify the Director of DSP to ensure appropriate resolution with the sponsor.

**Minimum Effort**

- Although PIs might reference a specific period of effort (summer months), they cannot be absent from the project for all other periods. Per UF guidelines, a 1% voluntary committed cost share commitment will be entered for the other terms.
  - Exception to the above: If the faculty has a nine month appointment, a summer commitment does not need to be entered in the event that (1) there is no expectation of effort during the summer, (2) there is no budget for summer and (3) there is no summer appointment for the PI.

- In cases where award commitment for the PI is not quantified, a minimum of 1% voluntary committed effort should be entered in UFIRST and also in myUFL. No such entry is required for other key personnel. See: [https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/omb/memoranda_m01-06/](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/omb/memoranda_m01-06/)

- Some programs have standard minimum commitments such as NIH K awards. Most NIH K awards have a minimum 75% commitment. However, levels of effort and salary reimbursement limitations vary among types of K awards and within NIH divisions. Consult the K award kiosk and matrix to determine the correct commitment and salary reimbursement levels for your award. K Kiosk: [http://grants.nih.gov/training/careerdevelopmentawards.htm](http://grants.nih.gov/training/careerdevelopmentawards.htm)
**Exceeding Tolerance Levels**

- If a full time faculty is committed over 90% on sponsored projects, a review of other University activities must be performed to determine that the faculty member can meet the sponsored requirement and other duties as assigned by the department.
  - Cost Analysis will enter the commitment and notify Contracts and Grants who will in turn contact the department to review the situation and determine what if any action needs to be taken.
- If the individual exceeding 90% is an NIH Career(K) award recipient, no communication to C&G is necessary as long as there is no teaching.
- If total commitments exceed 100%, the pending commitment cannot be entered in myUFL. It should be entered into UFIRST to track the actual sponsor commitment.
  - Cost Analysis will notify the Directors of C&G & DSP who will work with the department and committed individual to review the commitments during the effort term to determine how to resolve.

**Adjustments to Effort**

- myUFL is calibrated to require core office approval for any reduction of effort of 25 percent or more from the level that was approved at the time of the initial competing award for the PI and Key personnel.
- **Federal Awards**: If the Principal Investigator (PI) and/or Key Person effort on an award is reduced by more than 25% of the effort committed in the funded proposal, prior approval must be obtained from the federal sponsor (2 CFR 200 – 200.308 c.1.iii). Any request for such a reduction should be submitted as a Personnel modification through UFIRST.
  - For NIH: Prior approval is only required for a change in effort for the Program Director (PD)/PI or other senior/key personnel specifically named in the NoA. Other personnel, if not named in the NoA, do not need prior approval. UF will track the effort for all personnel named in the proposal as key, even if not specifically named in the NOA. Similar to NIH No Cost extensions, this simply means prior approval is waived for this subset of personnel which puts the requirement on UF to manage the information. UF will require that declaration of reduction is submitted as part of a UFIRST Personnel modification and then passed to Cost Analysis through the normal reporting communication channels.
• **Nonfederal/Industry**: Sponsors also anticipate that the PI and/or the Co-PI will spend the time and effort on the funded project that was committed in the funded proposal. The terms and conditions of the nonfederal award will govern whether changes in PI/Co-PI or other personnel effort will need to be reported or if sponsor approval will be required for a reduction in effort. Any request for changes in effort to nonfederal sponsored awards should be submitted as a Personnel modification through UFIRST. DSP will review the award conditions and determine what approvals or notifications are necessary. After determined that the modification will move forward, DSP & C&G will complete the modification in UFIRST and Cost Analysis will be informed through the normal reporting communication channels.

• When commitments for a single term need to be reduced, the entire budget period including academic and summer terms need to be considered for tolerance. In a typical one year budget period, there are three University academic terms (Fall, Spring, Summer). Cost analysis will take all terms into account when any term reduction impacts the overall budget period. The overall will not be adjusted in these cases but a note will be added to the override such as “Commitment within tolerance considering Academic Year (AY) and Summer (SU) terms for budget period.”

**Special Award Types**

**No Commitments**

- The following project types are exempted from required commitments under UF policy. If no personnel are cost shared and no explicit PI commitments, the de minimus 1-2% does not have to be entered:
  - Equipment Grants
  - Multiple sponsors – *unless a specified commitment has been communicated to the sponsors.*
  - IFAS Faculty Service Program projects
  - UF Foundation funding where there is no non-UFF Prime Sponsor listed
  - Student Stipends or Fellowships if they are for student augmentation
  - Mentors on Institutional Training grants
  - PI on IPA (Intergovernmental Personnel Act Assignment) award if the PI is not the recipient of the IPA award. If the PI is the recipient, commitments will be entered as normal. Commitments will be entered for the IPA recipient.
  - Pilot Projects on existing awards (unless effort is a condition of the funding)
  - Industry Sponsored clinical trials including any award that will reside in University fund 214
  - Patient, Clinical Care, or Clinical Service (unless a quantified commitment is specified in the award)
  - Per sample contracts where the number of samples is not known at the time of agreement and the contract is paid based on number of samples that are run
Memberships

- If paid externally, the PI’s commitment will be reviewed case by case.
- Internal grants for membership fees have no commitment
- NSF membership - project for membership should not have commitments.

Internal Awards

- Internal Awards are generally not managed in sponsored programs. Due to the institutional nature and the cost sharing requirements, the following internal awards are managed in sponsored programs and expected to have commitments:
  - Office of Research Opportunity Funds
  - CTSI pilot awards

Fixed Price Awards

If an award is reimbursed at a total set upon price rather than reimbursed based on actual costs:

- The price of Government (federal, state and local) and Non-Profit organization awards are negotiated based on expectation of services. Any determination of price should be considered a commitment by the University. Even if no detailed cost breakouts are included, the effort for the PI and Co-I’s that comprised the price determination will be entered into UFIRST and myUFL.
- Industry: The price is determined based on acceptable market value and if NO explicit statement of commitment is made in the contract, budget or budget justification agreed to by the sponsor, only the de minimis amount of effort (1%) required by UF Effort Procedures and Directives is required for the PI. If commitments are explicit in the contract, budget or budget justification approved by the industry sponsor, it will be included in UFIRST and myUFL.

Advance Release Awards (Temps)

- Commitments at the time of the temp are optional. There is no legal obligation to enter effort as the University does not have the award. If the department wishes to log anticipated commitments, commitments can be entered.
No Cost Extensions (NCE)

- Unless otherwise stated on the award, the original commitments of the PI and all key personnel are expected during the no cost extension period. For federal agencies where the original budget was broken out by budget period, even if multiple budget periods are awarded at one time (ie NSF application for three years funded in full), then the commitment should be assumed by individual budget period not the full award period.
  - If the commitment was proposed in months: Months are a finite amount. No additional months are expected during the extension period. Simply the time to meet the commitment is extended.
    - In UFIRST, DSP & C&G will ensure that months committed in the last budget period are entered with the dates being: start date of the last budget period through end date of the NCE.
    - Cost analysis will review the entry.
      - If the original months commitment has been met, a 1% cost share will be entered
      - If the original months commitment has not been met, the commitment will be extended into the myUFL system diluted to include the last funded budget period and the NCE period.
  - If the commitment was proposed in percentage: The commitment will continue at the proposed percentage level unless a reduction is approved by the sponsor.
    - In UFIRST, a new row will be added for the NCE period to reflect the percentage expectation.

- If there is a change to the quantified commitment during the No Cost Extension, a new row should be entered into UFIRST for the NCE time period. The original committed budget period would not be extended as it would be in the examples above.
• **NIH No Cost Extension:** Unless stated in the award that this is prohibited, no prior approval is required to reduce effort for Senior/Key Personnel during the NCE. This includes the personnel named in the Notice of Award (NOA).
  
  o NIH Guidelines 8.1.1.3
  
  https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps/html5/section_8/8.1_changes_in_project_and_budget.htm Extension of Final Budget Period of a Previously Approved Project Period without Additional NIH Funds: With the exception of grant programs that have an effort requirement, or where terms and conditions prohibit such reductions, NIH will not require prior approval for the reduction in effort for Senior/Key personnel. The recipient is reminded that active awards must have a measurable level of effort.
  
  o Although prior approval is waived, this simply puts the requirement on UF to manage the information. UF will require that declaration of reduction is submitted as part of the internal NCE request through UFIRST and then passed to Cost Analysis through the normal reporting communication channels.

**Reduction/Removal of Effort Used to Meet Cost Share**

- This change does not need to be communicated to the sponsor unless the individual is Senior/Key personnel or the request is intended to reduce the overall required cost share commitment
- In UFIRST the department should process a mod to reduce or remove this individual’s effort
- C&G will work with the department to identify how the required cost share will now be met
- Cost Analysis will reduce/remove the effort commitment in the commitment module