**Time and Effort**

**Glossary**

The following terms are commonly used when referring to the work that a university employee undertakes on a sponsored project:

**Effort** is the proportion of time spent on any activity, and is expressed as a percentage of total professional activity for which an individual is compensated by the University such as work on sponsored projects, teaching and instruction, service, or other duties. An individual’s total Effort must equal 100%. Effort is not calculated based on a standard forty (40) hour work week, but is calculated as a percentage of the total hours spent on work-related activities.

A **Sponsored Project** is a project funded by an award from a grant, contract, or agreement under which the University agrees to perform a certain scope of work, according to specified terms and conditions, for a specific budget and period.

A **Primary Individual** is an individual with paid, Cost Sharing, and/or Committed Effort on a sponsored project, and who is listed as principal investigator, project director, co-investigator, or co-project director on a sponsored proposal; or has comparable responsibilities on a sponsored project.

**Supporting Individuals** (sometimes referred to as **key personnel**) are individuals other than the Primary Individuals who have expended effort on a sponsored project to benefit the sponsored research.

**Committed Effort or Effort Commitment** is the amount of effort identified in a sponsored project proposal that is accepted by the sponsor for funding regardless of whether salary support is requested in support of that effort. It is the total effort committed to a Sponsored Project, expressed as the sum of: (1) effort proposed to be paid by the sponsoring agency and (2) contributed effort. Committed effort can be expended during the academic year, the summer, or both.

**Contributed Effort** or **Cost Shared Effort**, is Committed Effort that is contributed by an Individual on a Sponsored Project, which is to be paid and cost shared by the University or a third-party. It represents effort committed to the Sponsored Project with University or third-party resources.

**Cost Sharing** describes the mandatory or voluntary commitment of University resources contained in the proposal or award agreement. The concept of matching is synonymous with Cost Sharing.

These are different types of cost Sharing:

* **Mandatory Committed Cost Sharing** is required by the sponsor as a condition of obtaining an award, it is tracked and reported to the sponsor.
* **Voluntary Committed Cost Sharing** is not required by the sponsor but is voluntarily offered by the institution, documented and quantified in the proposal and accepted by the sponsor. This includes minimal effort not directly charged to a sponsored project, but tracked and reported to the sponsor.
* **Voluntary Uncommitted Cost Sharing** represents effort that may benefit a project but was not committed in the award agreement or in any other communication with the funding agency.

**Minimum Level of Effort**: If there was no level of effort described in the proposal, we require a minimal of 3% commitment on the part of the PI and other key personnel during the period of the project. This minimum requirement does not apply to: equipment grants, dissertation support, other awards intended as “student augmentation”, and limited-purpose grants such as travel grants or conference support.

**Maximum Level of Effort**: The Maximum Level of Effort, as it pertains to Sponsored Projects, sets the upper limit of time and effort for an Individual that can be devoted to a Sponsored Project. Most PIs and other Primary Individuals who are faculty at UTPA working on Sponsored Projects generally have other responsibilities as part of their total work load that would preclude them from devoting 100% of their time and effort to a Sponsored Project. In most situations, faculty may not have more than 80% effort committed on a Sponsored Project during the academic year. However faculty with a nine-month appointments for the academic fiscal year who have Committed Effort on a Sponsored Project may be allowed a 100% appointment during one or more summer months but cannot perform other activities during that period (e.g. serving on institutional committees, writing proposals, etc.) as these activities would exceed the 100% limitation. Primary Individuals who do not hold faculty positions and Supporting Individuals may be allowed a 100% appointment on a Sponsored Project with a similar level of effort, provided that the individual does not perform any other activities.

**Time and Effort Certification** or **Effort Reporting**, is a means of certifying that the salaries charged to, or contributed to, sponsored projects are reasonable and consistent with the portion of total professional activities committed to the projects. It is important to note Payroll Distributions and Time and Effort Certifications are not the same thing. Payroll distribution describe the allocation of an Individual’s Salary; whereas, Time and Effort Certification describes the allocation of an Individual’s time.

A **course buyout** is the use of externally generated grant funds to cover part of a faculty member’s salary, thereby releasing funds to his/her home department to use for replacement teaching or other such academic purposes. Course buyouts are meant to support a faculty member’s scholarly activities in a way that enhances his/her scholarly productivity.

A **course release** is the use of a limited number of release options that a department is granted by its home college to release a faculty member from teaching a course.

**Workload policy** is a uniform standard developed by an individual college for the purpose of providing guidance on how a faculty member can divide his/her total institutional activities (i.e., teaching, research, service, and administration). Workload policy typically specifies the types of assignments and the distribution of the percent of effort in each function.