Stockton University
Guide to Online Effort Reporting and Certification

Contents

Introduction to Effort Reporting

Effort Basics

Effort comprises one's professional workload at Stockton University for which an employee is compensated. This includes instruction, research (including scholarly and artistic endeavors), other sponsored activities (such as training and public programs), service to the University, administration, and even competitive proposal preparation.

For the purpose of effort certification, effort totals 100%, regardless of the number of hours worked.

Effort Reporting

The effort certification process is Stockton's means of providing assurance to sponsors that:
Salaries charged to sponsored projects are reasonable in relation to the work performed; and that faculty and staff have met the effort committed to a project when the proposal was initially sent to a funder. Once a sponsor agrees to fund the project, the commitment of effort becomes a condition of the award.

Our Obligation to the Federal Government

Definitions

Pass-through funding: Awards from non-federal sponsors such as the State of New Jersey or a non-profit or a private company where the funding originates with the federal government.

Committed cost sharing: The effort or other resources reported to the sponsor at the proposal stage that will be supported by the University or another non-federal source.

Uncommitted cost sharing: The effort or other resources utilized on the project at the cost of the University or another non-federal source, but were not specified to the sponsor at the proposal stage.

Effort reporting is required by the U.S. government's OMB Circular A-21 (Principles for Determining Costs Applicable to Grants, Contracts, and Other Agreements with Educational Institutions), which requires certification of effort spent by all employees whose salaries are charged directly or indirectly (via pass-through funding) to federal awards, as well as for reporting committed cost sharing (but not uncommitted cost sharing).

Therefore, effort reporting is important because it is required by federal regulation. Failure to certify effort correctly and in a timely manner could:

- Jeopardize Stockton's federal funding;
- Result in sponsor disallowances if Stockton cannot document that an employee required to certify effort is devoting the required amount of effort to the appropriate project; or
- Subject the institution to fines if it is found that effort reports have been erroneously certified.

Individuals Required to Certify Effort

An effort report is required for any employee whose salary or any portion of salary is charged to a federally sponsored award, including federal flow-through funds, and for any employees with a cost sharing commitment associated with a federal or federal flow-through award. If effort was committed on a sponsored project charged to a federal or federal flow-through project, the report must be certified.

However, Stockton has opted to have all employees dedicating effort to a sponsored project certify effort, as more non-federal sponsors are beginning to ask for such documentation.

It is the preference that individuals certify their own effort, because it is the individual who is in the best position to determine the amount of effort they have devoted to a particular project or projects. However, in cases where the individual is unavailable to certify, the Project Director/Project Investigator (PD/PI) or other project staff who has firsthand knowledge of the individual's effort devoted to a particular project can certify on the individual's behalf.

How the Effort Report is Generated

When an individual has committed effort to an externally sponsored project, whether or not the sponsor is compensating Stockton for that effort, the University must show evidence of that commitment by generating an effort report. Generating an effort report is accomplished by redirecting payroll charges according to the effort outlined in the proposal or award contract to draw salary from the project fund set up for the project or from the project match fund (if effort is not paid by sponsor). This change happens "behind the scenes" and does not affect when or how much someone gets paid. The only exception to this rule is when a faculty member receives summer compensation in addition to their contracted salary; this compensation should occur during the pay periods in summer when a faculty member is working on the project.

The effort report generated is based on plan-confirmation, meaning that the system asks each employee to certify effort based on what was originally committed in the proposal plan or award contract. If actual effort after-the-fact is significantly different from what was originally committed, alert the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, as a salary reallocation may be necessary to correct the effort report.

NOTE: It is a time consuming process to reallocate salaries and related benefits after the charges have been incurred. Therefore, if you anticipate your effort will vary significantly (10% or more) during a reporting period, you should inform the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, about the variance in advance of the pay period or effort reporting period.
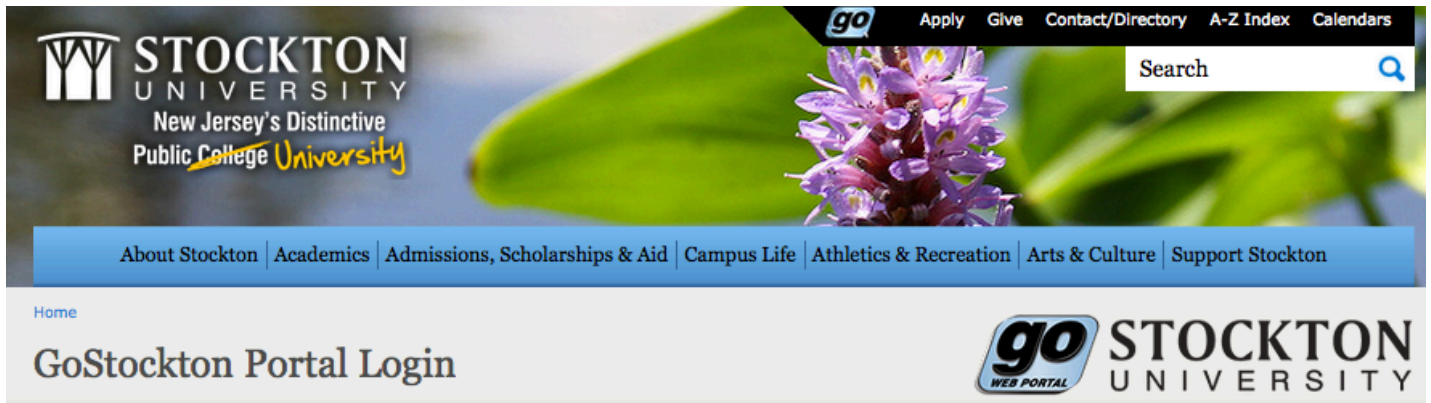
General Information about the Effort Reporting System

- The Effort Certification software uses Adobe Flex to create the reports and Adobe Flash® to display them. Therefore, to complete your report, you need to have the latest version of Adobe Flash® Player installed on your computer. If you do not have Adobe Flash® Player installed on your computer, please visit this Web page to download it: http://www.adobe.com/products/flashplayer.html

- Currently, because of the Adobe Flash® Player requirement, the Effort Certification module does not work on some devices such as iPads, iPhones, and other computers/devices that do not support Flash®. Please make arrangements to use a computer with Flash® capability to complete your report.

- Stockton's policy regarding Effort Reporting and Certification provides detailed information about the purpose of Effort Certification and Stockton's procedure regarding Effort Reporting and Certification governs when and how often effort reports must be completed. Before completing your report, be sure you have reviewed and understand the policy and procedure in their entirety. All Stockton operating policies and procedures may be accessed on this Web page: http://intraweb.stockton.edu/eyos/page.cfm?siteID=192&pageID=1

General Information about the Effort Reporting System

Step 1: Log in to Stockton goPortal

You may use any computer to login to the goPortal. The goPortal login page is located at:
https://intraweb.stockton.edu/eyos/gologin/content/docs/loginbypass/prod_login.html

Then, click on "Self Service Web Services for Students and Employees."

Step 2: Click on "Enter Secure Area"

STOCKTON
UNIVERSITY

Enter Secure Area (provides access to registration / tuition payment and other college information systems.)
Prospective Students
Apply for Admission or Non-Degree Status
General Financial Aid
Campus Directory
Class Schedule (View Only)
Course Catalog
Stockton Home Page
GoStockton Portal Login
RELEASE: 8.5.2

Step 3: Enter your Z number and Pin

If you do not remember this information, call the Computer Services Help Desk at ext. 4309 to obtain it.

STOCKTON UNIVERSITY

HELP   EXIT

User Login

Please enter in CAPS your user Identification Number (Z number) and your Personal Identification Number (PIN). When finished, click Login.

If you have forgotten your PIN and previously set a challenge question, enter your Z number and click the Forgot PIN button. The system will prompt you with your challenge question.

CLICK HERE IF YOU FORGOT YOUR ZNUMBER

When you are finished, please Exit and close your browser to protect your privacy.

Unauthorized use of this system is P R O H I B I T E D. These computing systems are accessible only to authorized students and employees who agree to abide by the terms and conditions of the Stockton University Acceptable Use Standards By logging onto this system you are acknowledging that you will abide by the College?s standards of use.

User ID:

PIN:
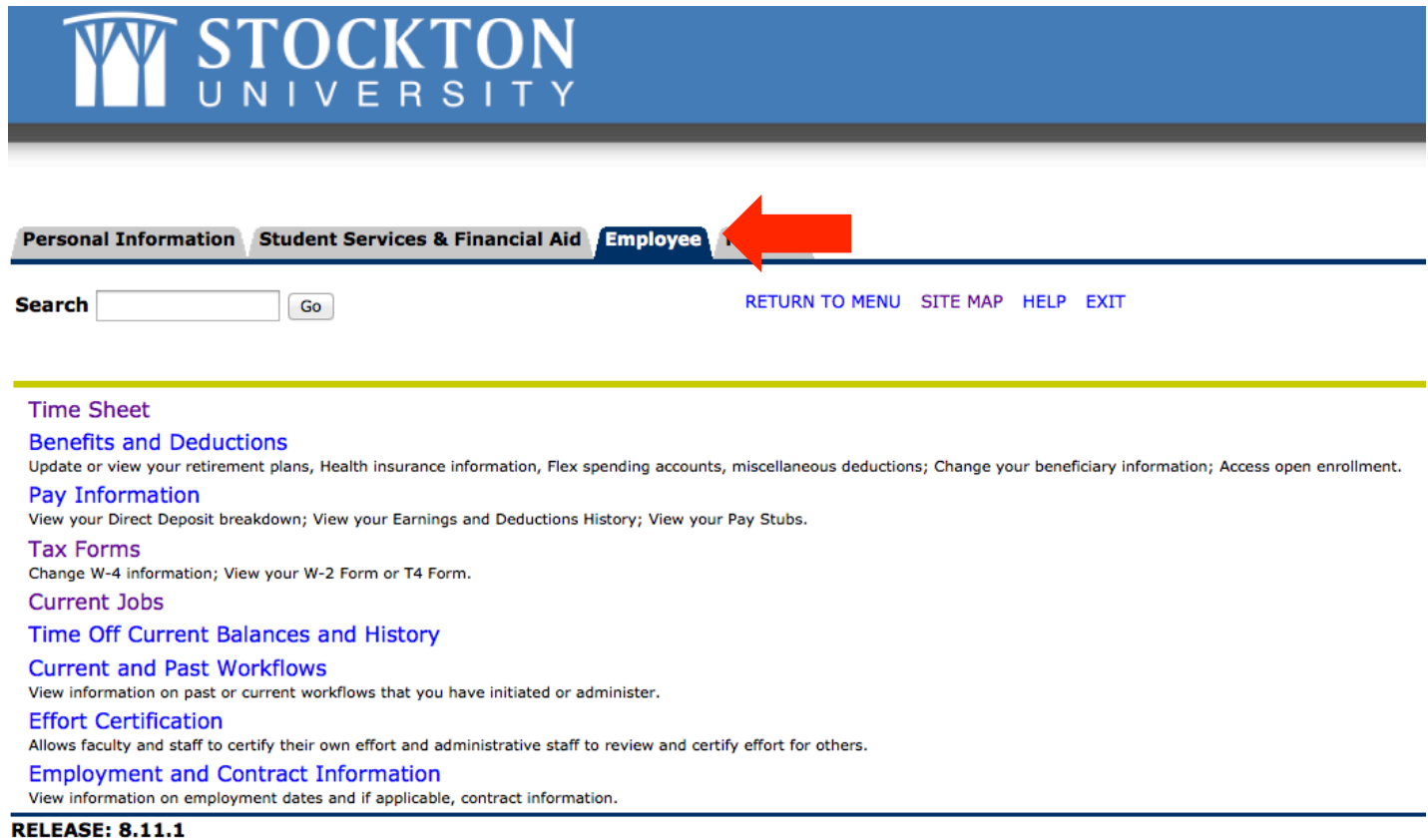
Login   Forgot PIN?

RELEASE: 8.5.2

Step 4: Select the "Employee" Tab

After you have logged into the Stockton GoPortal, click on the "Employee" tab (as shown below).

Step 5: Enter the Effort Certification Module

Under the Employee tab, click on the "Effort Certification" link to access the Effort Certification system.

Step 6: Find your Effort Report

1. After you have selected the "Effort Certification" hyperlink, you should see a new screen that looks like this:

2. To view your report, double click on the row for the appropriate reporting period. For example, the reporting period shown in the image above is spring 2013.

   Note: The dates listed under the "Start Date" and "End Date" column do not refer to the Report Period (e.g., Spring 2013). These dates actually refer to the certification period; these are the dates during which you can certify your effort report.

   In the screen shot shown on this page, the Reporting Period is spring 2013, which encompasses the dates 1/1/2013-5/17/2013. However, the "Start Date" and "End Date," June 6, 2013 and June 30, 2013 respectively, actually refers to the period of time in which you have to certify the report for spring 2013.

Step 7: View your Effort Report – General Information

After you have double clicked on one of the elements in the appropriate reporting period, you should see a screen that looks like this (a guide to the numbered items is included below):

1. The "Sponsored" section shows the assigned award and fund number where the employee's labor charges appear, the effort category, the charge type and percent of effort expended on the funded project.

2. The "Non Sponsored" section shows any other accounts from which the employee has been paid. This may include general institutional funds for instruction and/or other restricted or non-restricted accounts. This section can also include effort that the employee spent on a funded project, but that was funded by the College (cost-share or match).

3. The "Effort Report Overview" section shows the reporting period name (Spring 2013), the dates of review, and a statement on the status of your report.

   Note: If the status of the report says anything other than "Awaiting Certification-Unlocked," please contact the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs immediately at 609-652-4844 or grants@stockton.edu.

4. The "Funding Chart" is a simple visual representation showing the percent of effort allocated to different funding sources in a pie chart format.

Step 8: View your Effort Report – Pay Period Summary

To view more details in your effort report, click on the "Pay Period Summary" located in the left-hand navigation:

After you click on the Pay Period Summary, you should see a screen that looks like this:

(Note: This is only a partial screen print.)

To view the summary for each pay period, click on the hyperlink titled "Bi-Weekly…" for the specific pay period(s) you want to review:

A screen will appear that looks like the screen shot below.
On this screen, you can review the fund, organization, account, and program codes, as well as the percent allocation for each account from which you were paid for the selected pay period.

Once you have reviewed the information for each pay period, simply choose the "Close" button to return to the Pay Period Summary screen.

Step 9: Certify Your Effort

If you approve the percent allocations and the "Effort Category" descriptions, you can certify your effort as instructed below. **However, if the percent allocations and "Effort Category" descriptions are <u>incorrect</u>, please see the section on Requesting Changes in the appendix.**

To complete your certification process:

1. Return to the "Effort Report" screen by clicking on the link in the left-hand navigation

2. To confirm that you have reviewed and approve your effort, click on the "Certify" button at the bottom of the page.

Note: Do not choose the "Certify" button if you have not reviewed your effort as stated in Steps 5 and 6 or if you do not agree with the percent allocations or effort categories.

NOTE: If the "Certify" button does not appear on your screen, contact the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. The absence of the "Certify" button can mean the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs needs to review the report or it could mean that a salary reallocation is in process.

Once you click on the "Certify" button, a smaller window will appear with a certification statement, as shown below. If you agree with the statement, click on the "I Agree" button to complete the certification of the report.
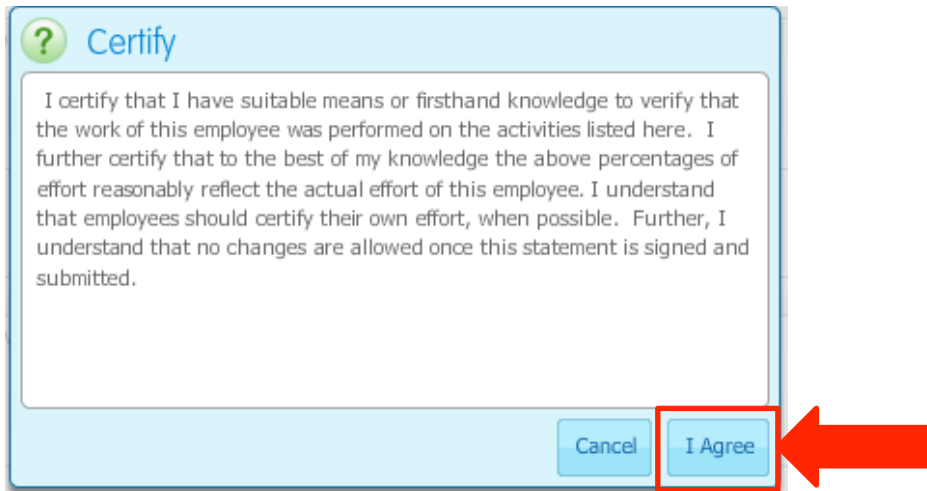
Once you click on "I Agree," the Certify button disappears from the effort report screen.

You have completed your certification of the effort report and can exit the system by clicking on "Sign Out" at the top of the screen.
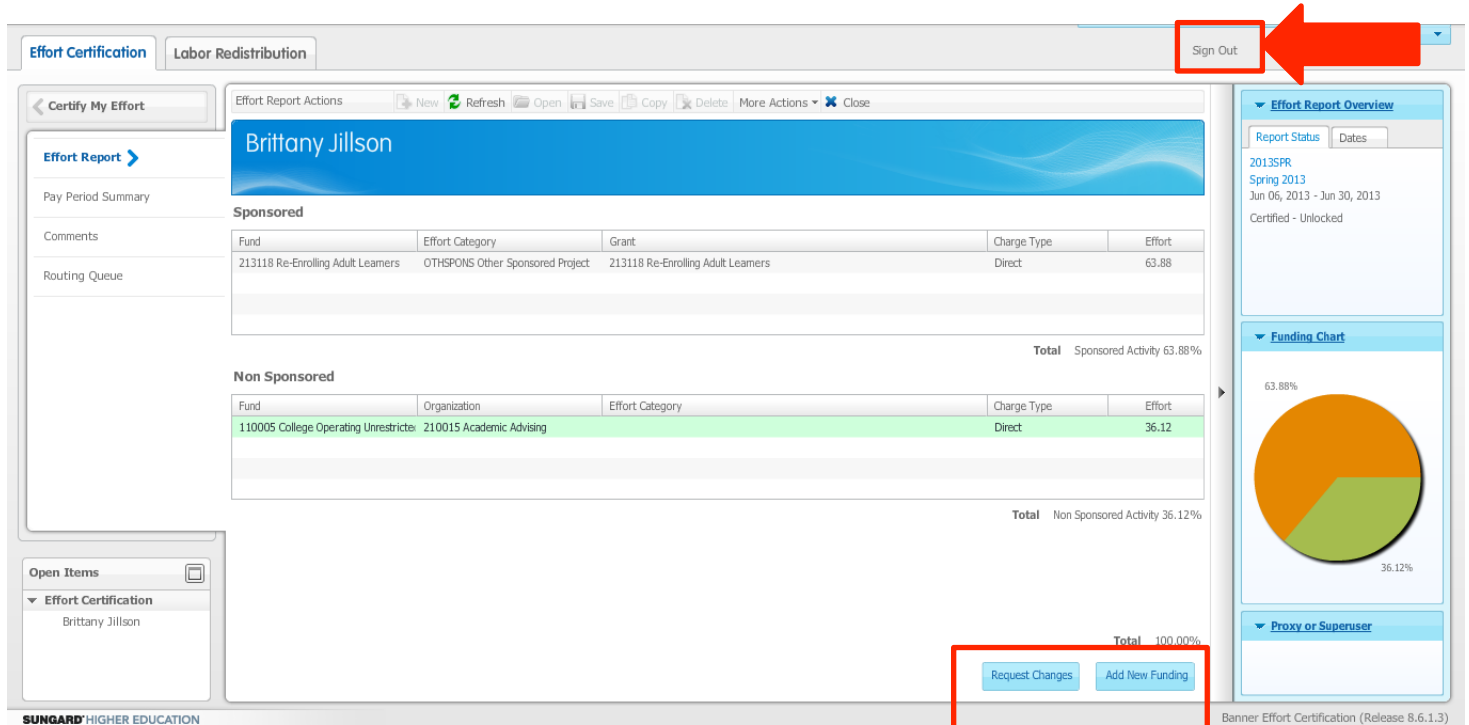
What Happens After I Certify my Report?

After an employee certifies an effort report, the report is routed to the Project Director for Post-Review. The Project Director should be familiar with the employee's work on the funded project, so this step serves to verify that the Project Director agrees with the employee's certification.

For the step-by-step instructions for Project Directors completing the Post-Review, visit the Appendix section entitled "Reviewing or Certifying an Employee's Report."

Once the Project Director completes the Post-Reviewer function, the effort report is locked from further changes. This locked report becomes the official record that may be reported to sponsors, if required.

Appendix

On the following pages, you will find guidance on the following topics:

- Requesting Changes
- Reviewing or Certifying an Employee's Report
- Reviewing the Routing Queue
- Adding Comments to an Effort Report

Requesting Changes

If your report is incorrect, please follow these instructions:

1. To request changes, click on the "Request Changes" button at the bottom of the Effort Reporting screen (see screen print below). This will cause your default e-mail application to open a new mail message.
   If your default e-mail application does not open, open a new e-mail message manually.
2. Enter grants@stockton.edu in the "To" line of the message and copy Christy.santiago@stockton.edu in the "CC" line. If you are not the Project Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) on the project, you should also send a copy of the e-mail message to the PD/PI.
3. Indicate which percentages, effort categories, and/or other data are incorrect and provide the corrections in your message. When recalculating the percent effort (if it is incorrect)*, make sure your combined effort equals 100%. You cannot report effort in excess of 100%.
4. Send the e-mail message to grants@stockton.edu, and you will receive a response within 3-5 business days.


*NOTE: It is a time consuming process to reallocate salaries and related benefits after the charges have been incurred. Therefore, if you anticipate your effort will vary significantly (10% or more) during a reporting period, you should inform the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, about the variance in advance of the pay period or effort-reporting period.

Reviewing or Certifying an Employee's Report

If you are required to review or certify an employee's report, you will follow similar instructions to those provided above. However, getting to your employee's report follows a different process than finding your own.

After following Steps 1-3 in the main portion of this guide, you should be on the "Certify my Effort" screen as shown below.

On the left-hand navigation pane, click the "Review or Certify Reports" link.
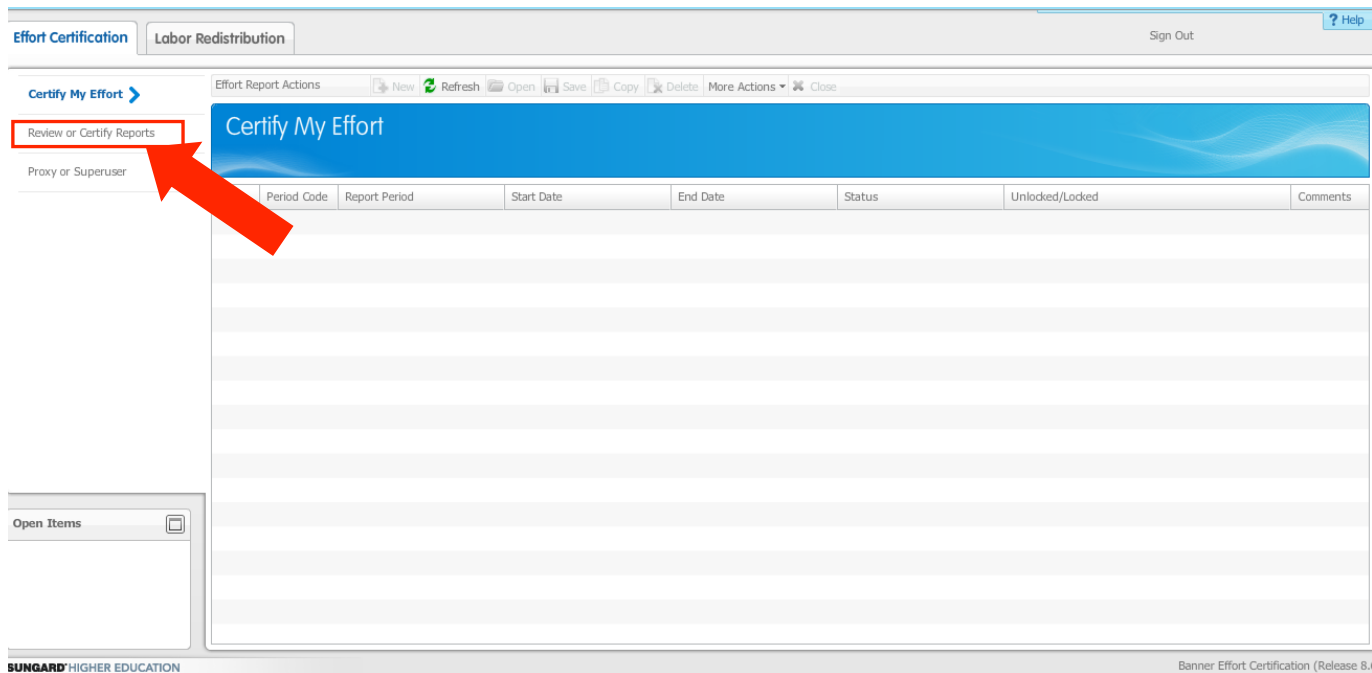

You should enter a new screen titled "Review or Certify Reports." At this point, you have several options to search for the reports you should certify, such as searching by ID number (Z#), effort report period, or name. If you have several employee effort reports to view, the easiest option is to search by "Chart of Account Code." To do this, follow these instructions:

1. Under "Review or Certify Reports," select the "Advanced Search" link:
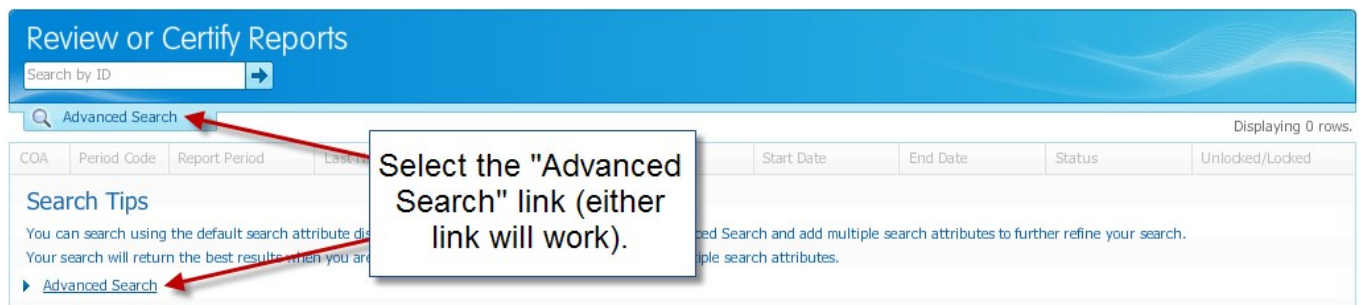
2. This will open a new subsection with a drop down menu titled "Select Attribute." Click on the down arrow

beside Select Attribute and choose "Chart of Account Code."
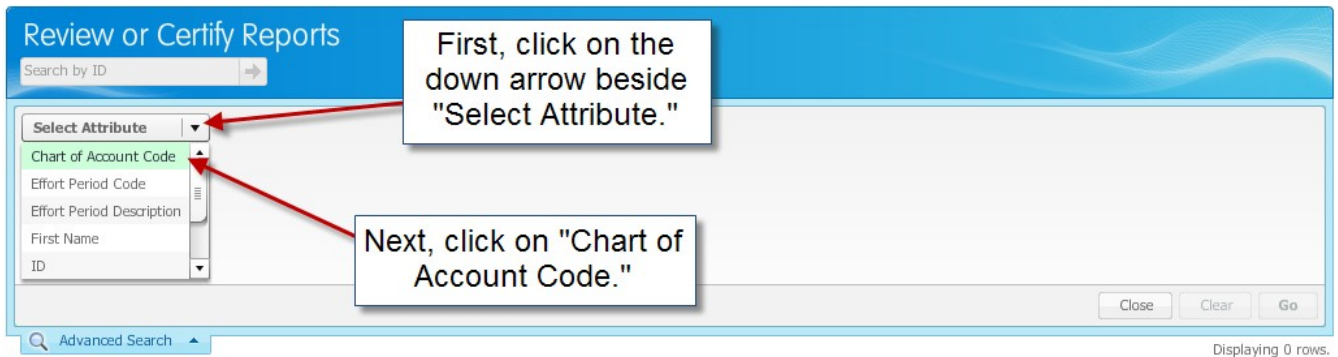
3. After you have chosen Chart of Account Code, a new line will appear. Enter the number 1 in the Chart of Account Code line and then click on the "Go" button:
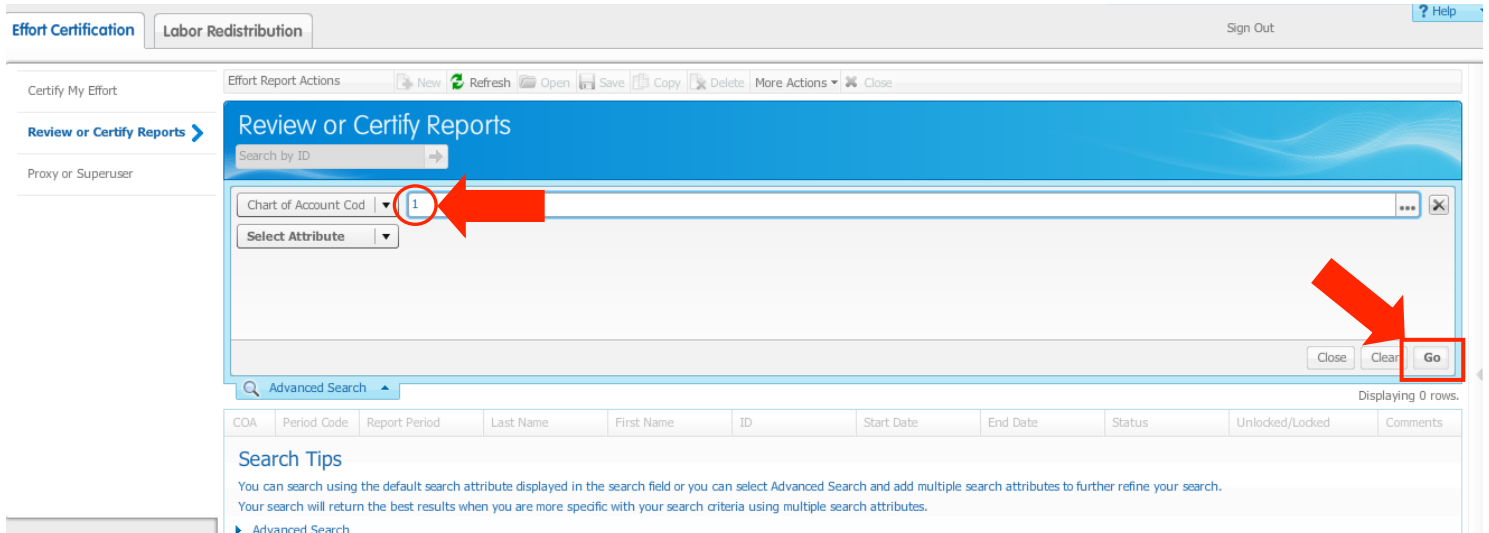
4. You should see a list of one or more effort reports for you to review or certify (see the list below). Follow Steps 4-7 of the main guide to review or certify the appropriate effort reports. The "Certify" button will be replaced by a "Review" button if you are a PD/PI acting as Post-Reviewer.
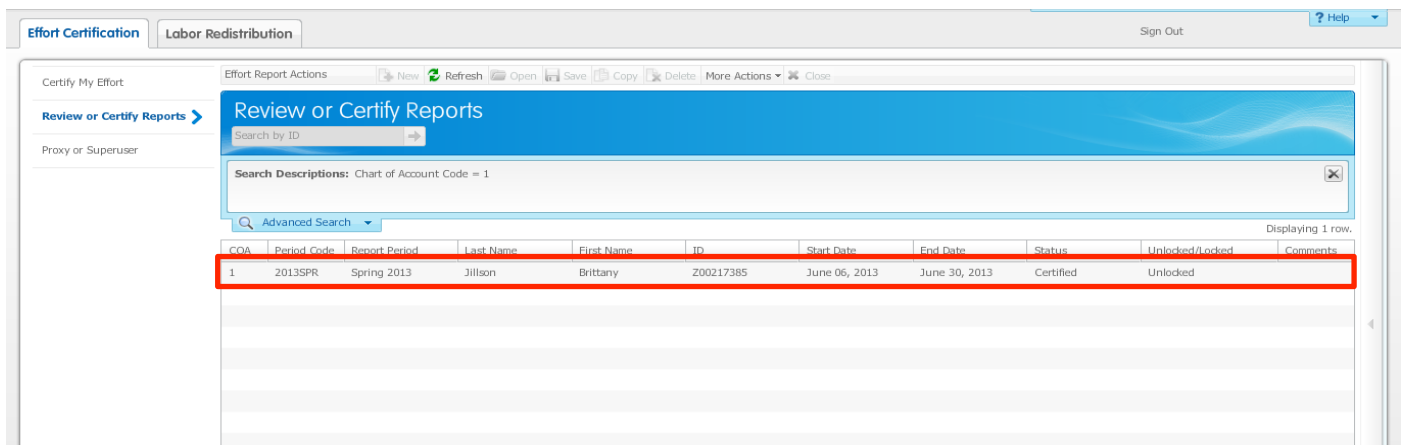
Reviewing the Routing Queue

Like many other applications in Banner Self-Service, you can view the routing queue for your effort report. This allows you to see who, if anyone, has reviewed your effort report and on what date(s) it was reviewed.

After you have followed Steps 1-4 of this guide, click on the "Routing Queue" link in the left hand navigation:

After clicking on "Routing Queue," a new screen should appear.
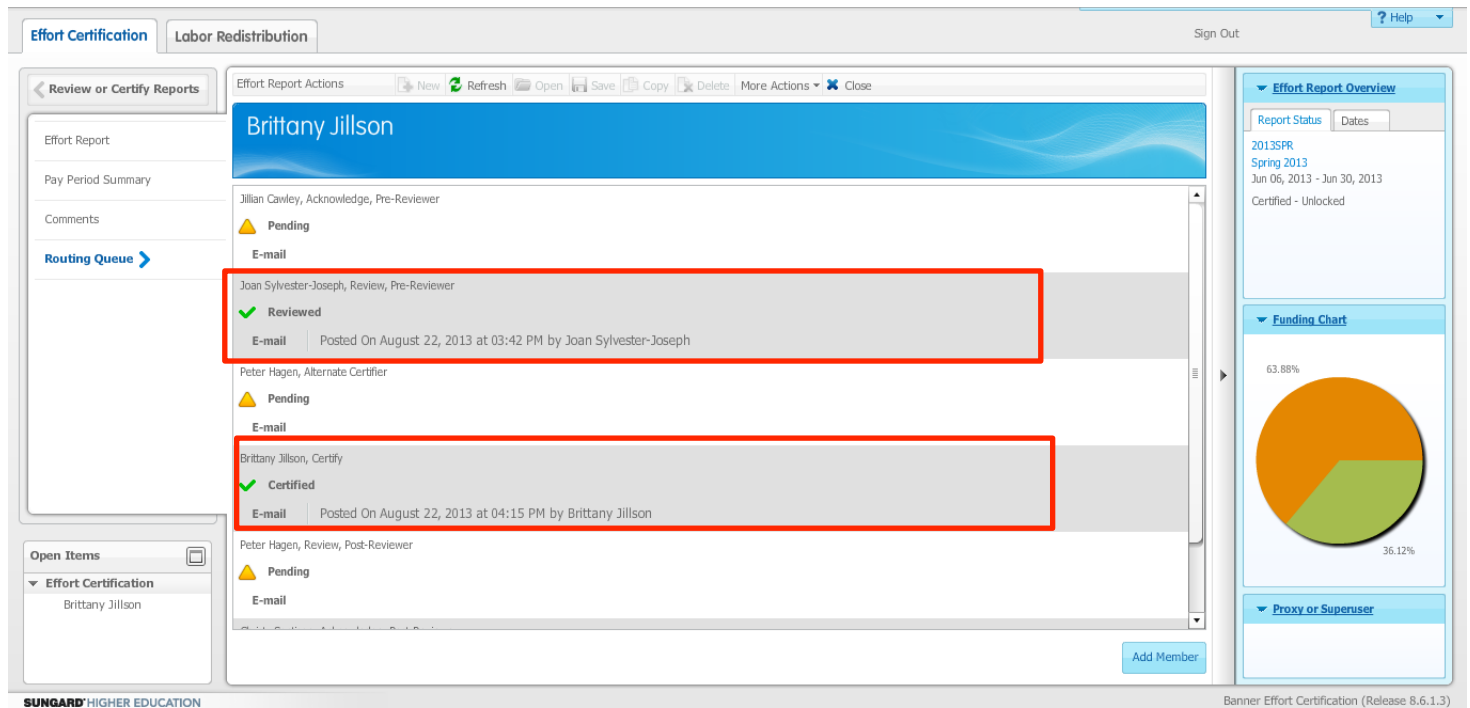
As shown in the image above, when each member of the routing queue has completed his/her review/certification, a green check mark will appear. Pending reviews/certifications are indicated by a gold colored triangle.

Note: Only three (3) users in the routing queue must complete their task of reviewing or certifying the effort report in order for it to lock the report:

- Pre-Reviewer must Review;
- Employee or alternate certifier (not both) must Certify; and
- Post-Reviewer (PD/PI) must Review.

Note: The Project Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) has a special role in effort reporting in that the PD/PI can serve as an alternate certifier for the employee, having first-hand knowledge of their work on the project. In addition, the PD/PI reviews the certified report indicating agreement with the employee's certified report.

You will notice that there are two users with "Acknowledge" function. These are administrators that need to view or access the reports, but do not have to carry out a task in the system. The "Acknowledge" function is optional and will not prevent the report from being certified or locked.

Adding Comments to Your Effort Report

If you would like to add comments to your effort report, you may do so in the Comment section of the Effort Certification module.

Example: An employee that conducts interviews with different age groups on social media usage works on more than one funded projects that have related scopes of work. In this case, the employee may wish to distinguish between activities conducted on each project to support the effort report. In this case, the employee might make the following comment:

"During this period, I conducted and transcribed 24 interviews with college students 18-24 years of age for grant # 55555 'Social Media Usage on University Campus X' and conducted 12 interviews with older adults over 65 years of age for grant #44444 'Social Media Usage and Older Adults.'"

This comment would support an effort report showing that the employee exerted more effort on the study related to college students than the study on older adults, as conducting and transcribing double the amount of interviews would undoubtedly take more time if the length of the interviews is the same.

After you have followed Steps 1-4 of the main guide, click on the "Comments" link in the left hand navigation:

Once the Comments screen appears, click on the "Add Comment" button at the bottom of the screen.

Effort Certification | Labor Redistribution

Review or Certify Reports

Effort Report Actions | New | Refresh | Open | Save | Copy | Delete | More Actions ▾ | ✖ Close

Effort Report

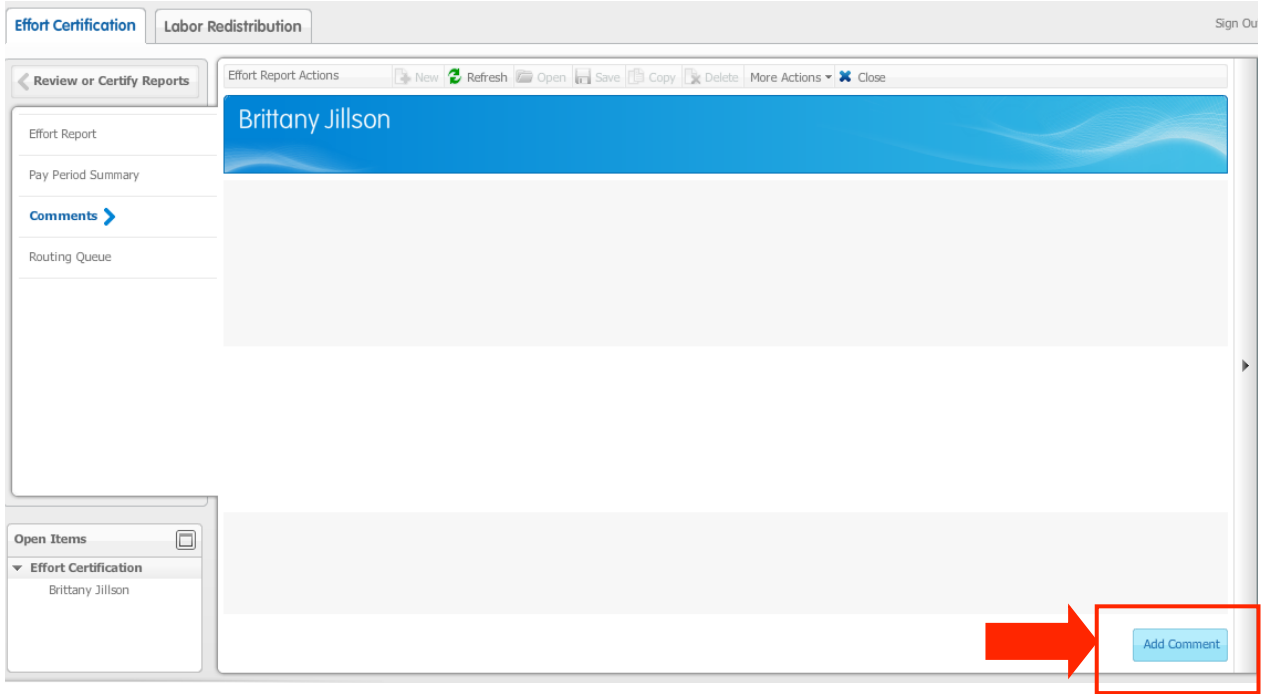Pay Period Summary

Comments ❯

Routing Queue

Brittany Jillson

Open Items ▣

▾ Effort Certification

    Brittany Jillson

Add Comment

When the "Add Comment" box pops up, simply type your comment in the box provided and then click on the "Save" button to save your comment.

Once the comment is saved, anyone in the routing queue (employee, Post-Reviewer, and administrators) can view the comment when they open the effort report for that particular period and click on the "Comments" section. You will know a comment is present if you see a gold note icon under the comments column on the main report screen.
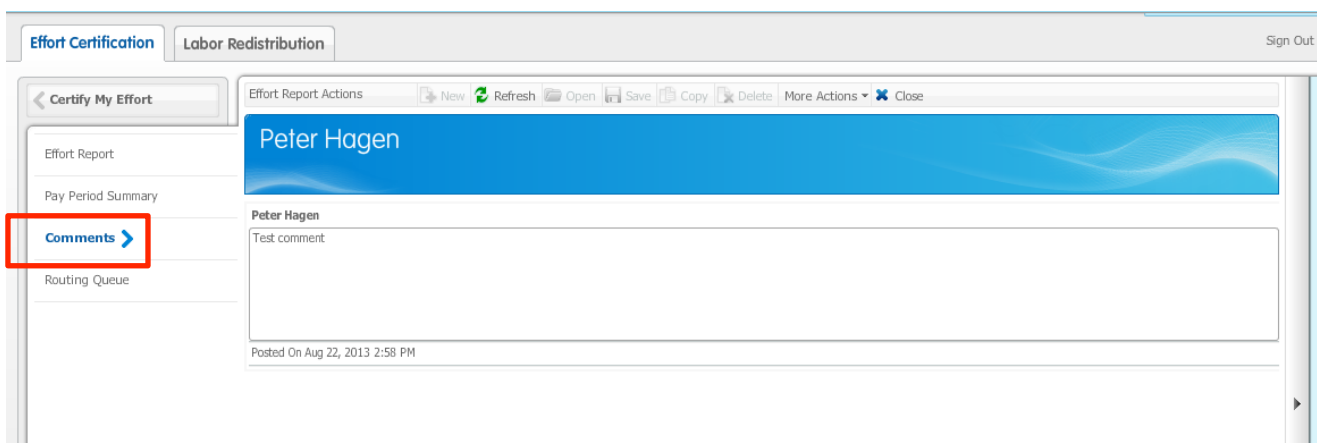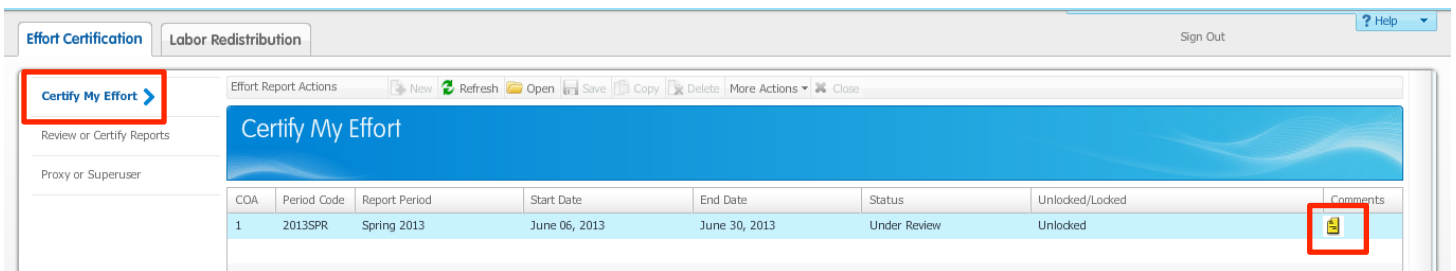
Questions?

If you have any questions or concerns about the online Effort Reporting System, please contact the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at your earliest convenience.

Telephone: (609) 652-4844
E-mail: grants@stockton.edu