TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER™ EL PASO

EFFORT CERTIFICATION AND REPORTING TECHNOLOGY

Effort Certification and Reporting Technology, or eCRT, is designed to help you comply with the provisions of TTUHSC El Paso's effort reporting policies, federal policy OMB Circular A-21 section J.10., NIH Salary Limitation on Grants and other relevant agency policies that govern the need to provide certification of an individual's effort pursuant to his/her sponsored and non-sponsored programs. TTUHSC El Paso's effort certification process is simplified and standardized as a result of this technology.

As part of federal requirements regarding the use of grants and other sponsored funds, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso must report 100 percent of the salary earnings used during the sponsored project. The ecrt system is a software tool used to facilitate the Effort Certification and Reporting Technology process.

COMPENSATION REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The process by which the salary charged to a sponsored project is reviewed **after-the-fact** to assure such charges **reasonably reflect** the work expended on that project.

Effective Dec. 26, 2014, the OMB Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (the Uniform Guidance) regulates the compensation reporting requirements for recipients of federal funding. Like Circular A-21, the Uniform Guidance requires an **after-the-fact review of charges** made to Federal awards **that were based on budget estimates.**

EFFORT REPORTING: THE BASIC IDEA

IN A GRANT PROPOSAL:

- We offer effort.
- At award time, we make a commitment of effort.
- Throughout the project, we charge salary to the sponsor.

PERIODICALLY,

SPONSORS WANT TO KNOW:

- Have we devoted enough effort to justify the salary charges?
- Even in cases where we are not charging salary to the sponsor, have we fulfilled our commitments?

WHAT IS A COMMITMENT?

A statement in the proposal or project application

- Specific and quantified
- Effort for a PI regardless of whether salary is charged

An obligation that the university must fulfill:

- Example – Professor Jones proposes 30 percent of her effort for 12 months and requests 10 percent salary support:
  - Professor Jones has committed 30 percent of her effort for that 12 month period, regardless of the entity that pays for it.

RISKS OF NONCOMPLIANCE

Risks of not complying with Circular A-21's effort reporting requirements:

- In recent years, federal auditors have become much more active in their review of effort reporting requirements, and a number of universities have received large audit disallowances that have resulted in serious financial penalties. Institutional 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.
- Audit disallowances have also resulted in criminal charges brought against university personnel. Individual disallowances can result if:
  - The effort report certified by the individual is found to be falsified.
  - The levels of effort reported do not appear reasonable, given the responsibilities of the individual.

EFFORT REPORTING ROLES

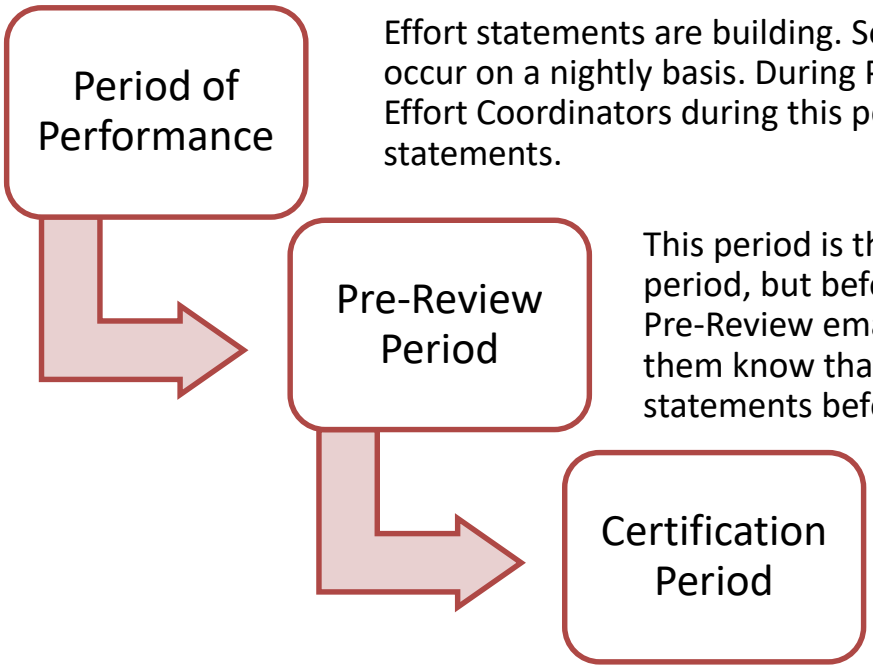
Effort Coordinator – Distributes effort reports in a timely manner. Provides assistance to Principal Investigators, faculty and staff as they certify efforts and ensure reviews in a timely manner. Effort Coordinators also coordinate labor distribution adjustments that are necessary based upon discrepancies by those certifying effort reports.

Principal Investigator – Held accountable for the proper fiscal management and conduct of the project. The PI is also responsible for:

- Completing the effort reporting program
- Certifying his/her effort in accordance with the guidelines established by TTUHSC El Paso.
- Management of the project within the funding limitations and to ensure the accuracy of all salary and wages charged to the project.

EFFORT REPORTING TIMELINE

Effort Reporting for Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso is done quarterly, based on the Fiscal Year for all individuals paid through a sponsored project.

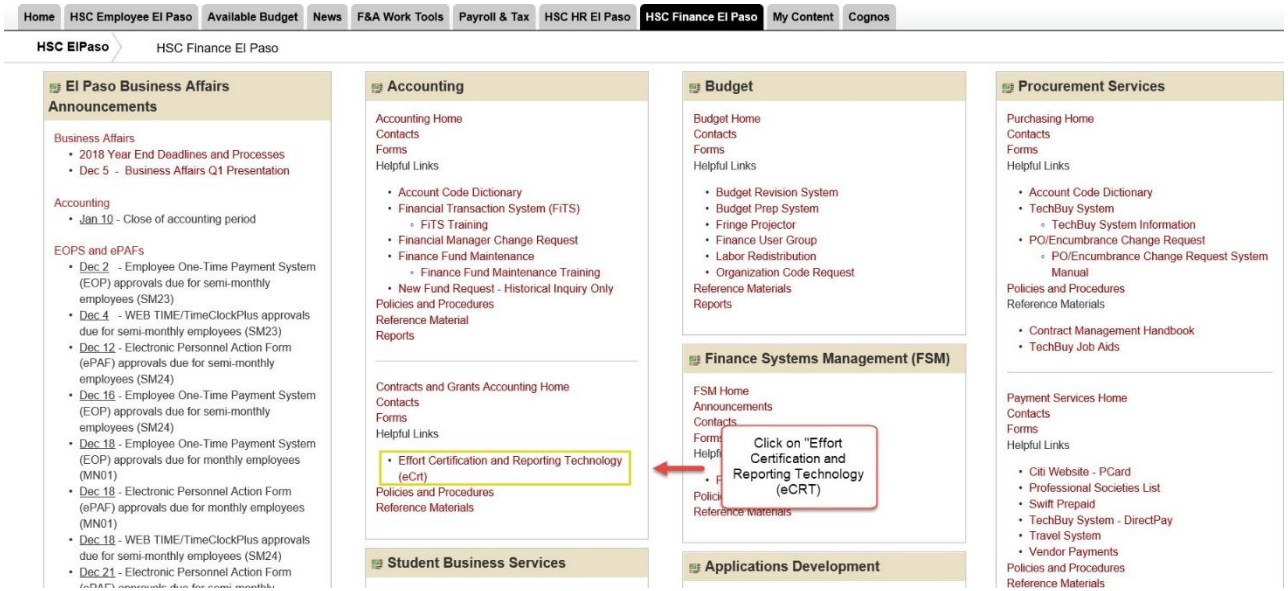


Effort statements are building. Source systems send data directly to ecrt. Data loads occur on a nightly basis. During Period of Performance email – an email is sent to all Effort Coordinators during this period to remind them to review their effort statements.

This period is the time after the final payroll has been loaded for a period, but before the actual Certification Period has started.
Pre-Review email: an email is sent out to all Effort Coordinators to let them know that the Pre-Review Period is open and to review their statements before any certification activities take place.

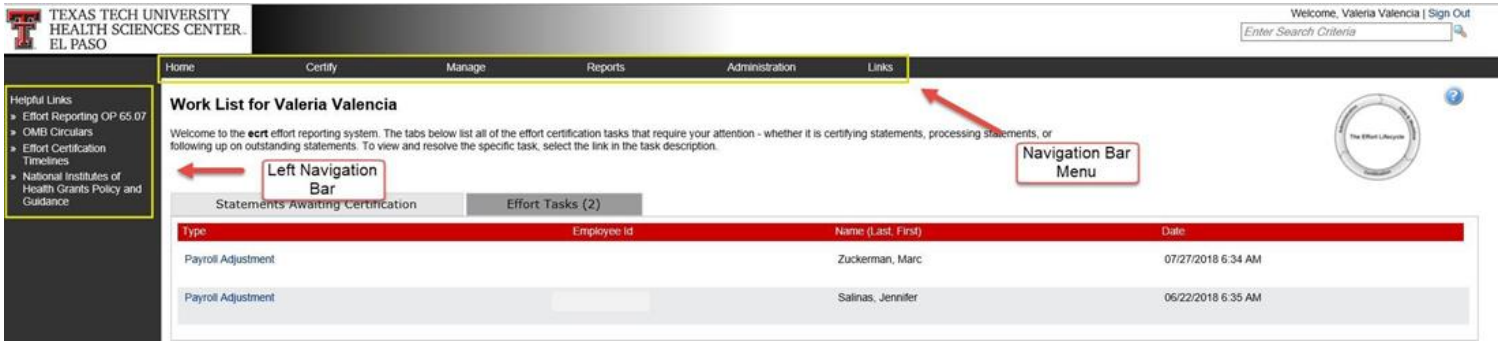
Final effort statements are ready for certification. Start Effort Certification email: an email is sent on the first day of the certification period and notifies all individuals in the system who must certify effort statements.

Ecrt can be accessed from the WebRaider Portal, under the HSC Finance El Paso tab. Click on the Effort Certification and Reporting Technology (ecrt) link found under Accounting > Contracts and Grants Accounting.



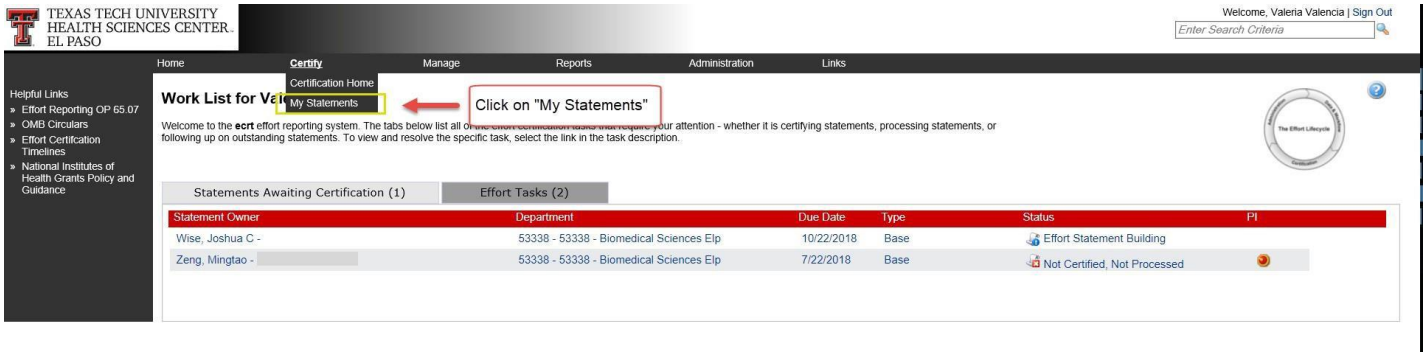
The Welcome page is displayed. Click on **Continue**.

LOGIN SCREEN NAVIGATION



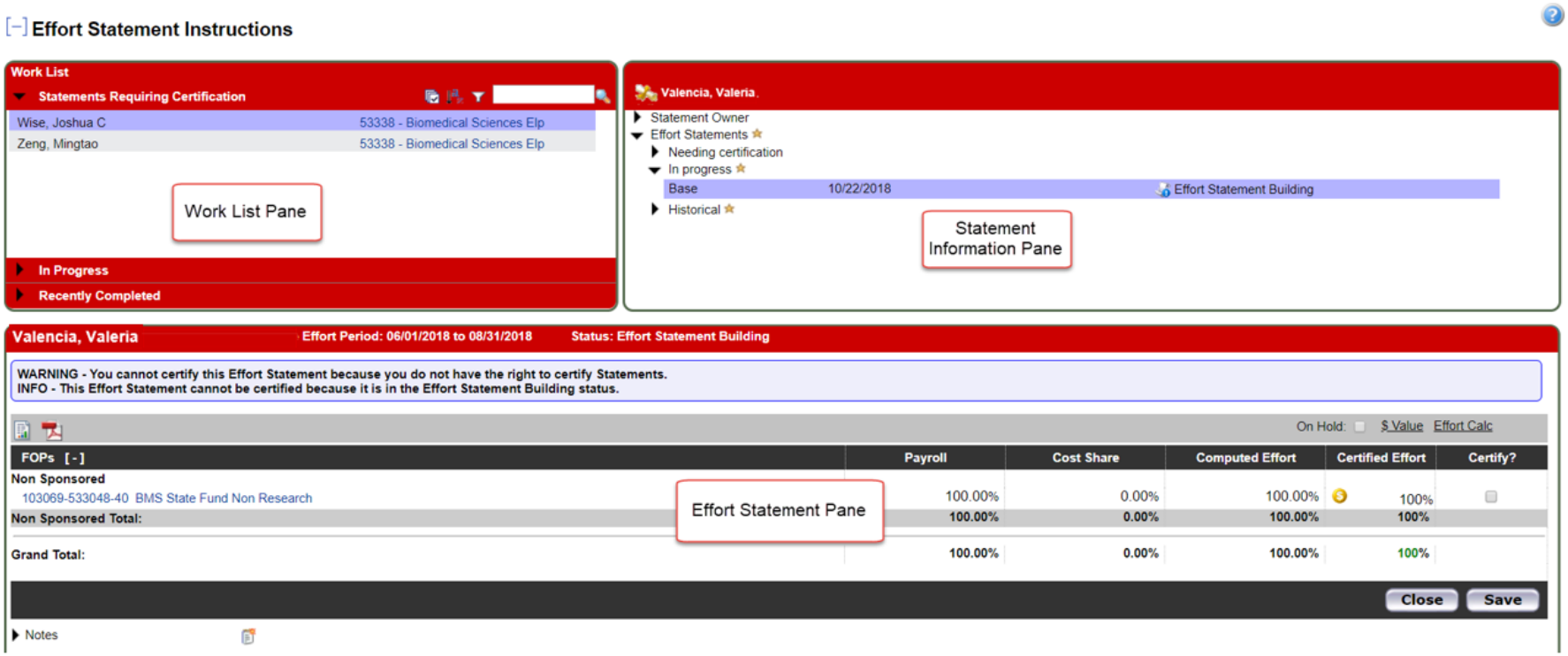
The primary method of navigating within the system is using the navigation menu bar along the top of the screen. The Left Navigation Bar that is available on the Work List page contains useful links to training documents and other reference material. The Home menu on the far left returns the user to the Work List from anywhere in the application.

You may also access your statement by clicking **My Statements** from the **Certify** navigation menu located in the navigation menu bar along the top of the screen.



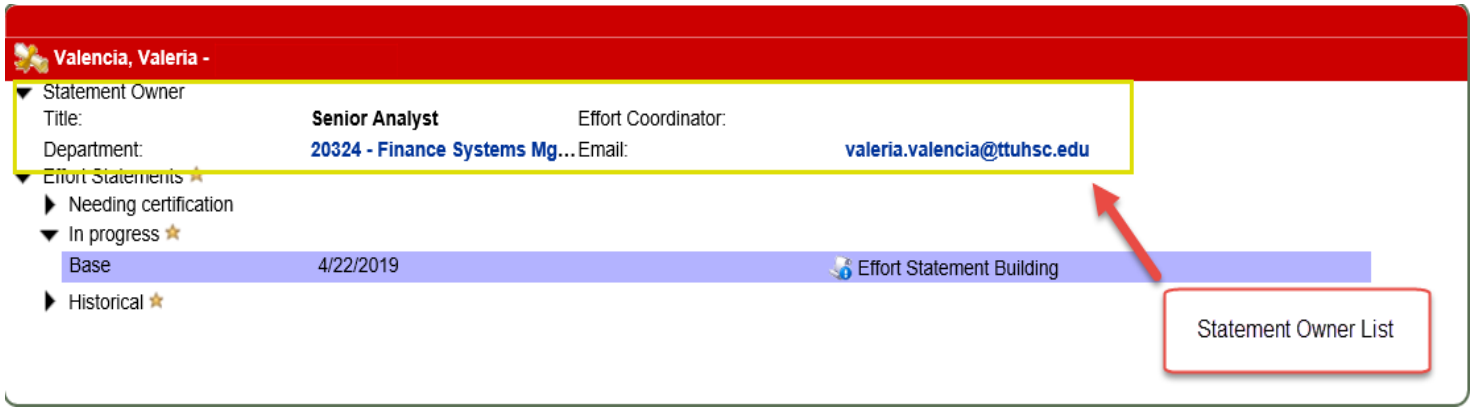
CERTIFY MY STATEMENT

The **Effort Statement** page displays three panes containing information relevant to the certification process: **Work List** pane, **Statement Information** and the **Effort Statement** pane.



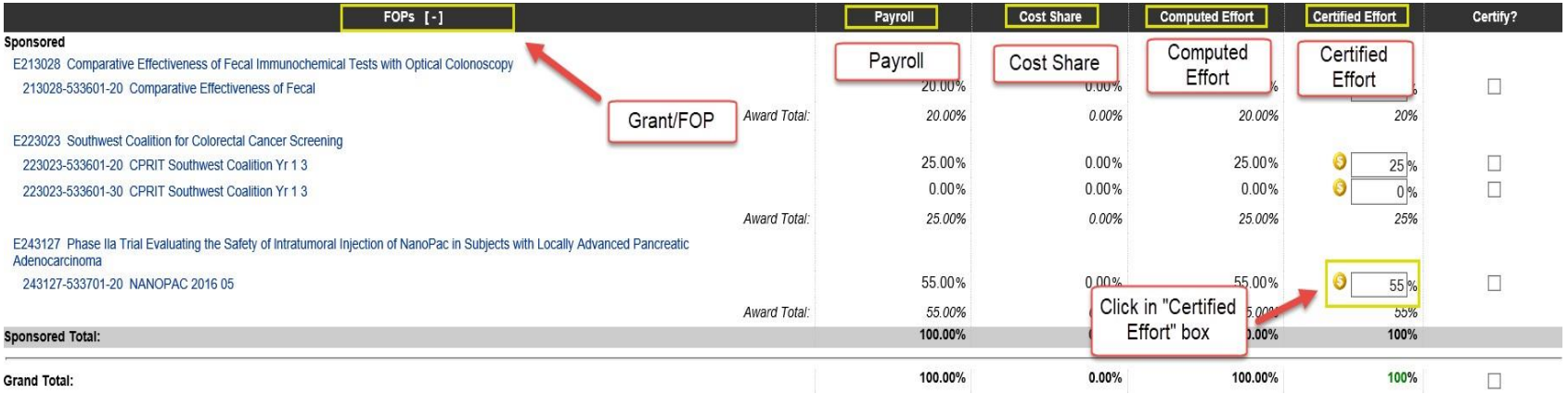
The **Work List** is subdivided into three groupings: In Progress, Statements Requiring Certification and Recently Completed.

The **Statement Information** pane has multiple expandable/collapsible lists.



The third pane displays your Effort Statement. The Effort Statement Header displays your name and R number, the employee type, statement type, Period of Performance dates, the due date and the status of the statement. The body of the effort statement contains the data that is critical to the certification:

- **Grant/FOP** column displays a list of all the Grants/FOPS that the certifier was paid from.
- The **Payroll** column shows the percentage that the certifier was paid from a FOP for the period.
- The **Cost Share** column shows the total cost share recorded for the certifier for that FOP for the period.
- The **Computed Effort** column shows the sum of the **Payroll** and **Cost Share** columns. This is the total effort for the period.
- The **Certified Effort** column is where the certifier can make adjustments to their effort. It is prepopulated with a best guess based on their payroll distribution, but the certifier should certify based on how they actually spent their time. To change a percentage, click in the **Certified Effort** box and type the percentage of effort spent working on the sponsored project related to the FOP.

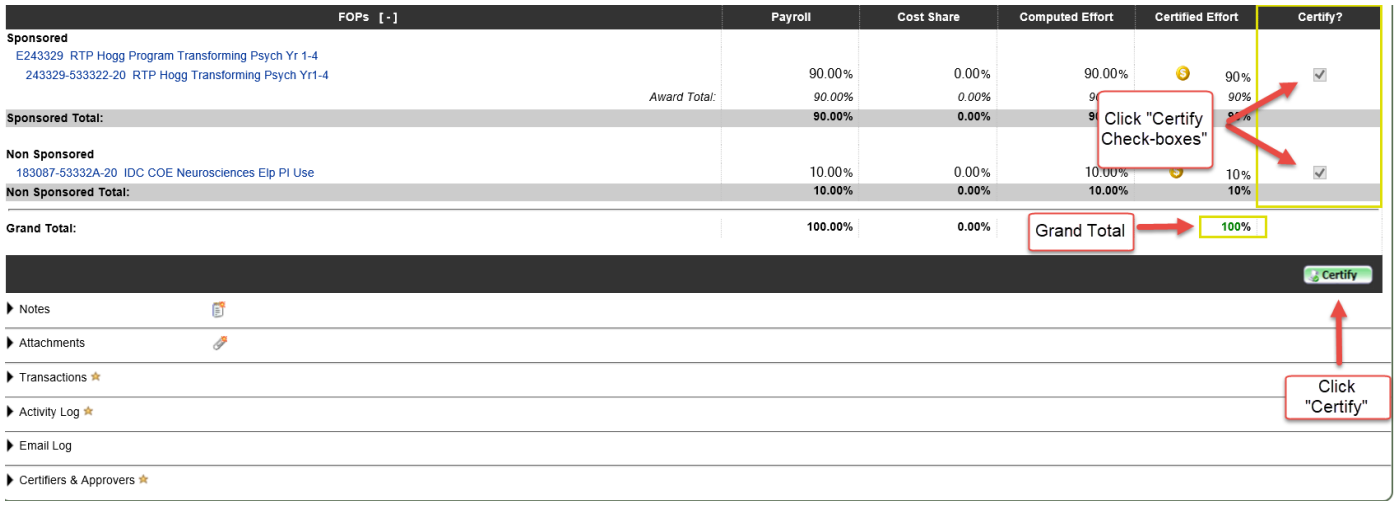


COMPLETE CERTIFICATION

To complete the certification of an effort statement, the certifier should review the percentages in the **Certified Effort** column and make adjustments as necessary.

The **Grand Total** of the **Certified Effort** column must be between 99 percent and 101 percent.

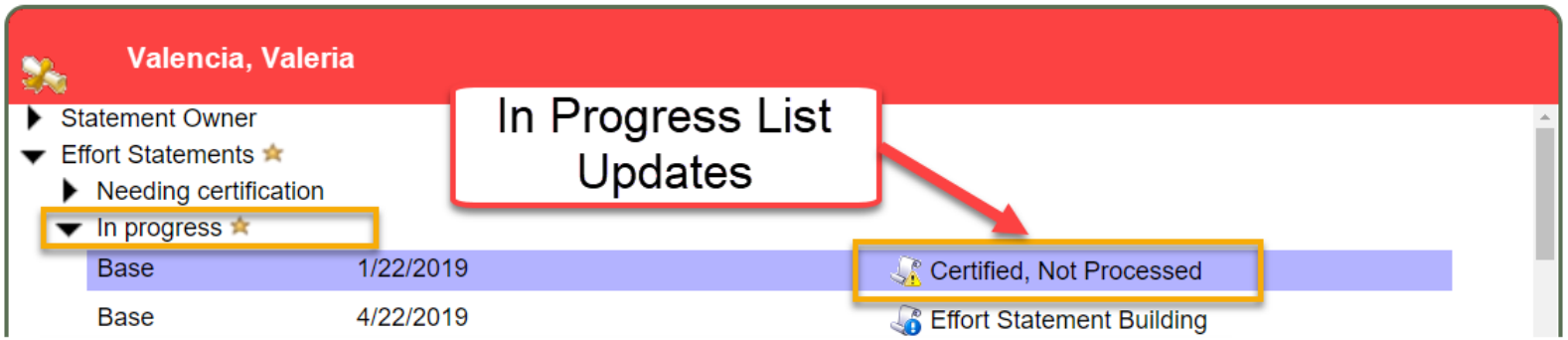
The **Certify Checkboxes** must be checked in order to certify that line of the effort statement. Click the **Certify** button to complete the process. An error message displays if the total certified effort in the percent of Effort column is either less than 99 percent or greater than 101 percent.



The certifier must review the Legal Attestation text and consider the effort that they are certifying. If they agree with the statement, they must click the **I Agree** button.

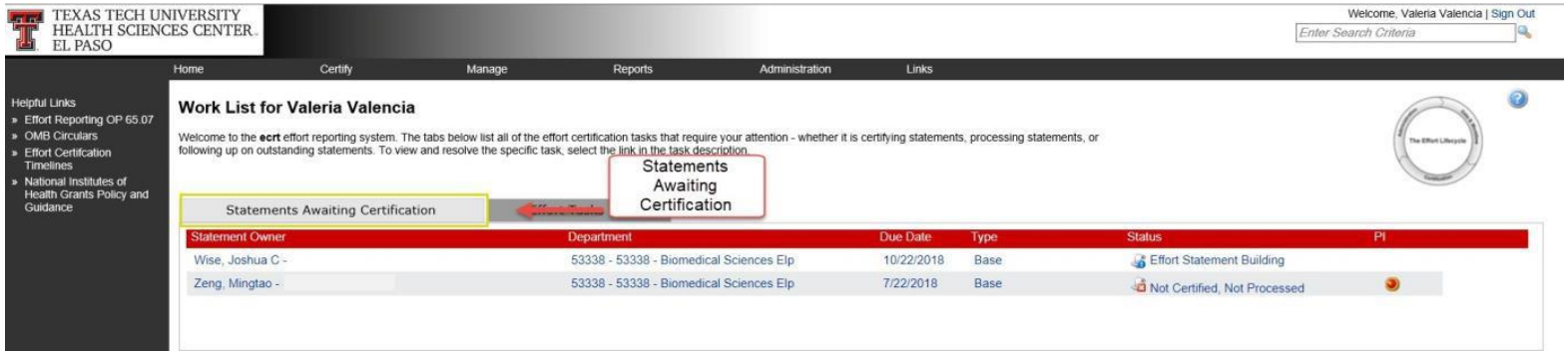
The certifier will receive a confirmation message that the certification is complete. They must click the **OK** button to complete the certification process.

After the certifier has certified, the **In Progress** list will update the status of their statement to Certified, Not Processed. The effort statement has been routed to the effort coordinator for processing. If there are no other obligations to complete in the system, the certifier can logout by clicking on the **Sign Out** button in the upper right corner.

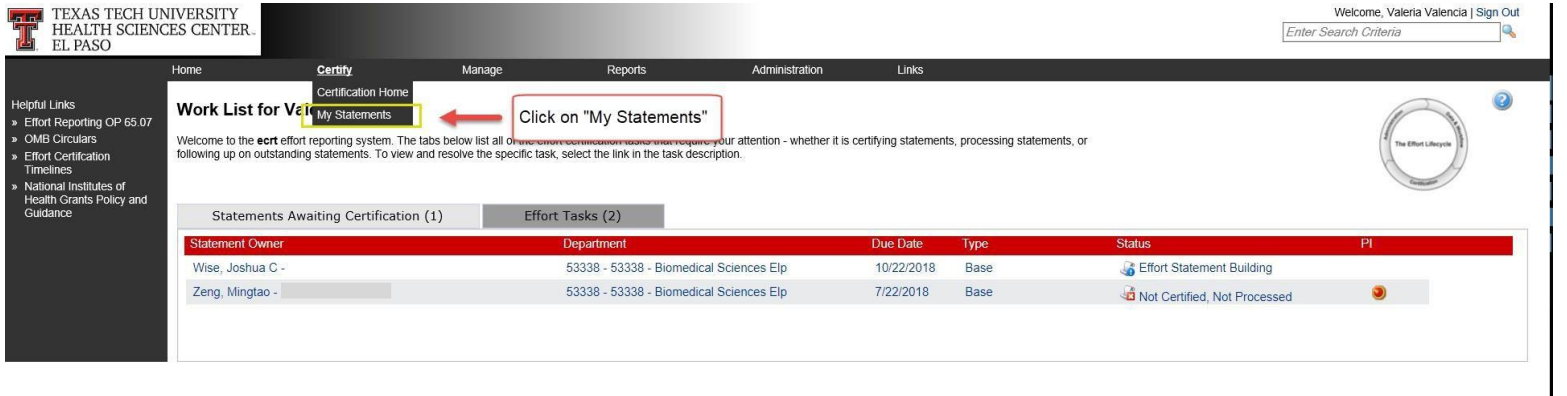


CERTIFY MY PI's PERSPECTIVE

To access a statement from the list, select **your name** from the Statement Owner column which will direct you to your effort statement page. Selecting the Due Date, statement **Type**, or **Status** of a specific statement will also direct you to your effort statement.

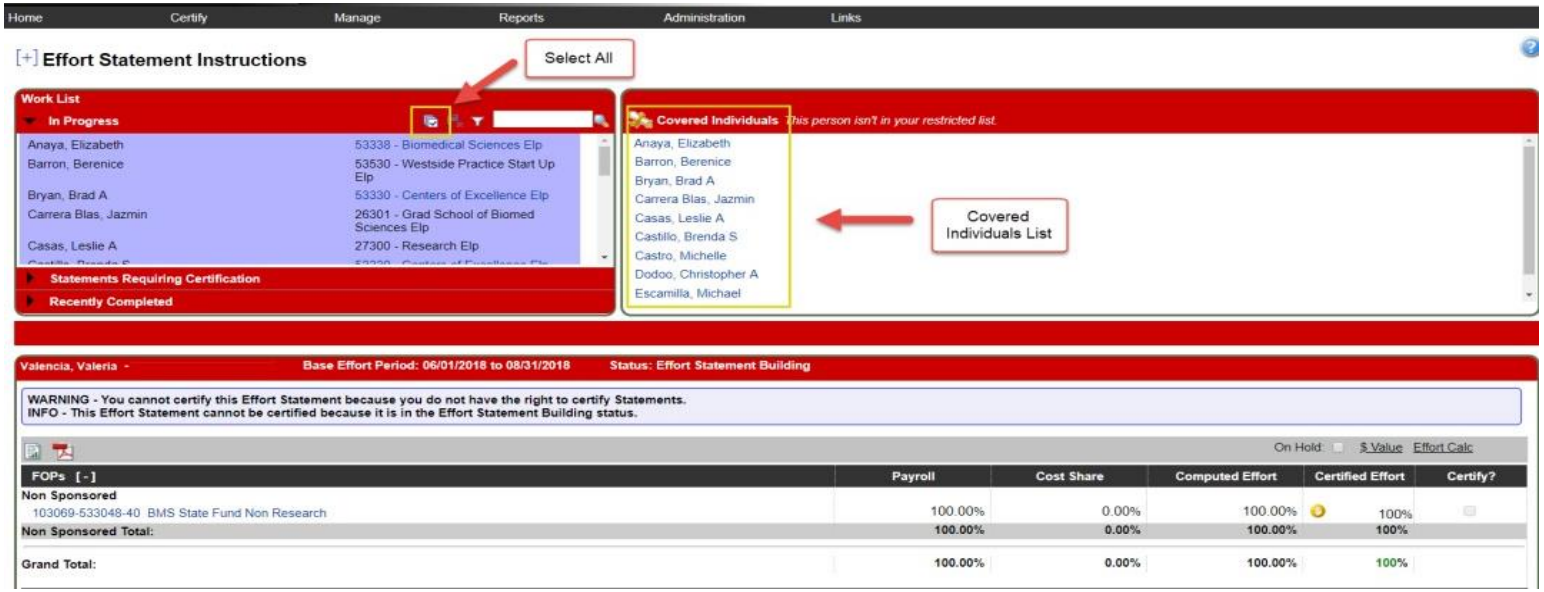


You may also access your statement by clicking **My Statements** from the **Certify** navigation menu located in the navigation menu bar along the top of the screen.

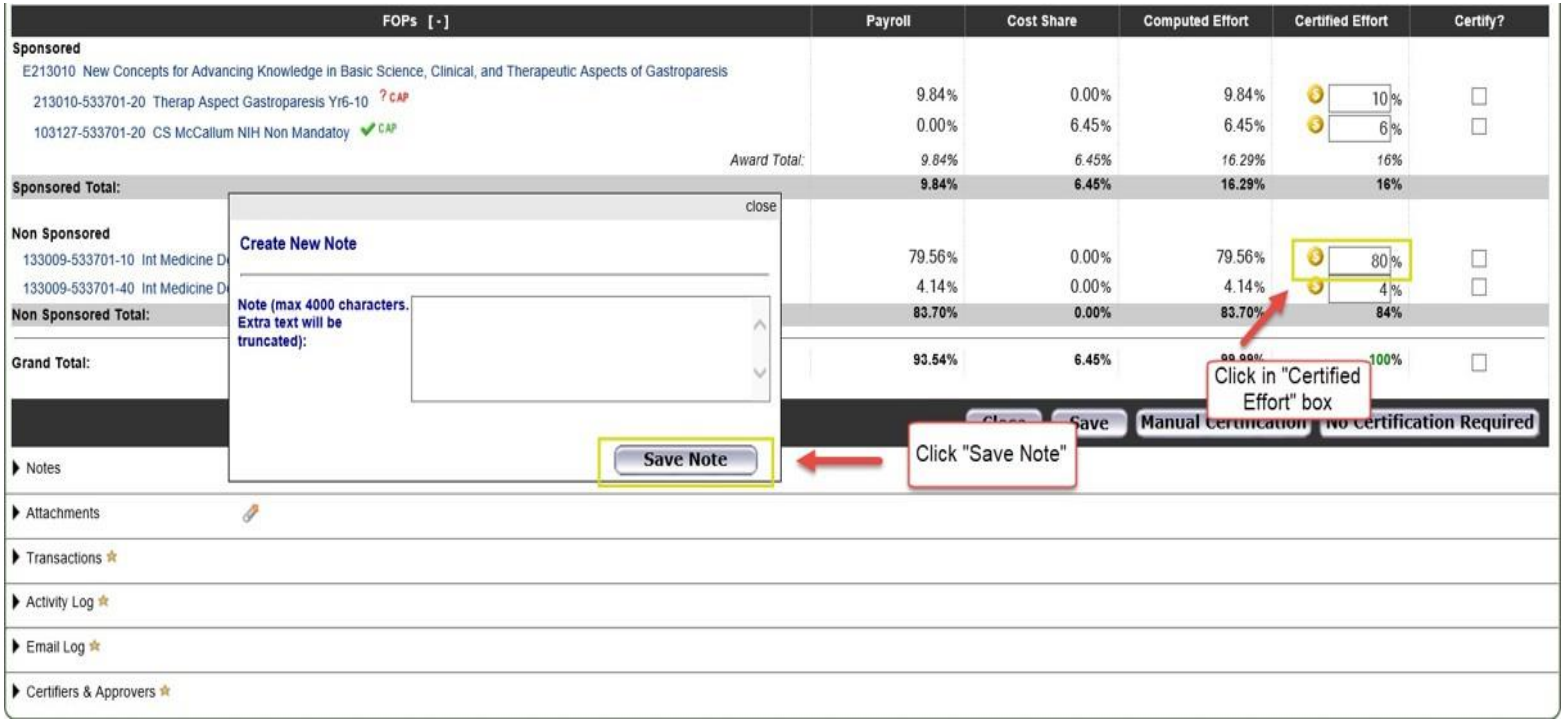


The PI has the ability to select all the related people in the Statements Requiring Certification list at one time. This tool is most useful when the PI wishes to review and/or certify multiple statements at one time. The Select All icon is the first icon to the right of the Active label.

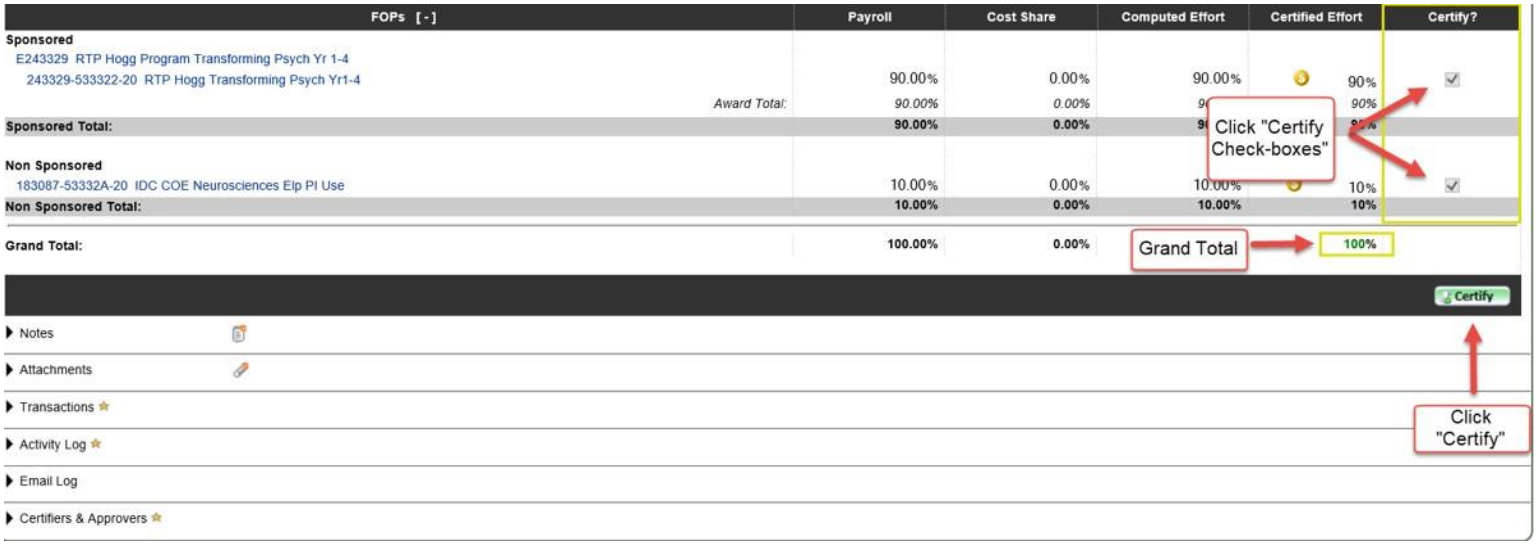
Selecting this icon highlights all the people in the Active list that have statements that are in a Not Certified status. The selected individuals are loaded in the Covered Individuals list in the top right pane. The PI can review and certify all available lines on the Not Certified statements, which includes their own statement and those for related individuals.



If during this review, you need to change a percentage, select the Certified Effort box and enter the percentage of effort that was actually spent on the FOP. When you do make changes to your effort, it is helpful to leave a note describing your changes in the Notes section. To leave a note, click the Add a Note icon. Enter your note in the **Create New Note** text box and click **Save Note**.



The Grand Total of the Certified Effort Column must be between 99 percent and 101 percent for each effort statement you are reviewing. When you are comfortable with how the effort percentages are documented, click the **Certify Checkbox** for each line or select the **checkbox for all** located at the bottom of the certification lines. The Certify Checkboxes must be checked in order to certify that line of the effort statement. After you have reviewed all lines of all the statements and are ready to certify, click the **Certify** button.



Review the Legal Attestation text and consider the effort that you are certifying. If you agree with the statement, click the I Agree button.

After you have certified, the In Progress List will update the status of your statement to Certified, Not Processed. Your effort statement has been routed to the effort coordinator for processing.

EFFORT TASKS

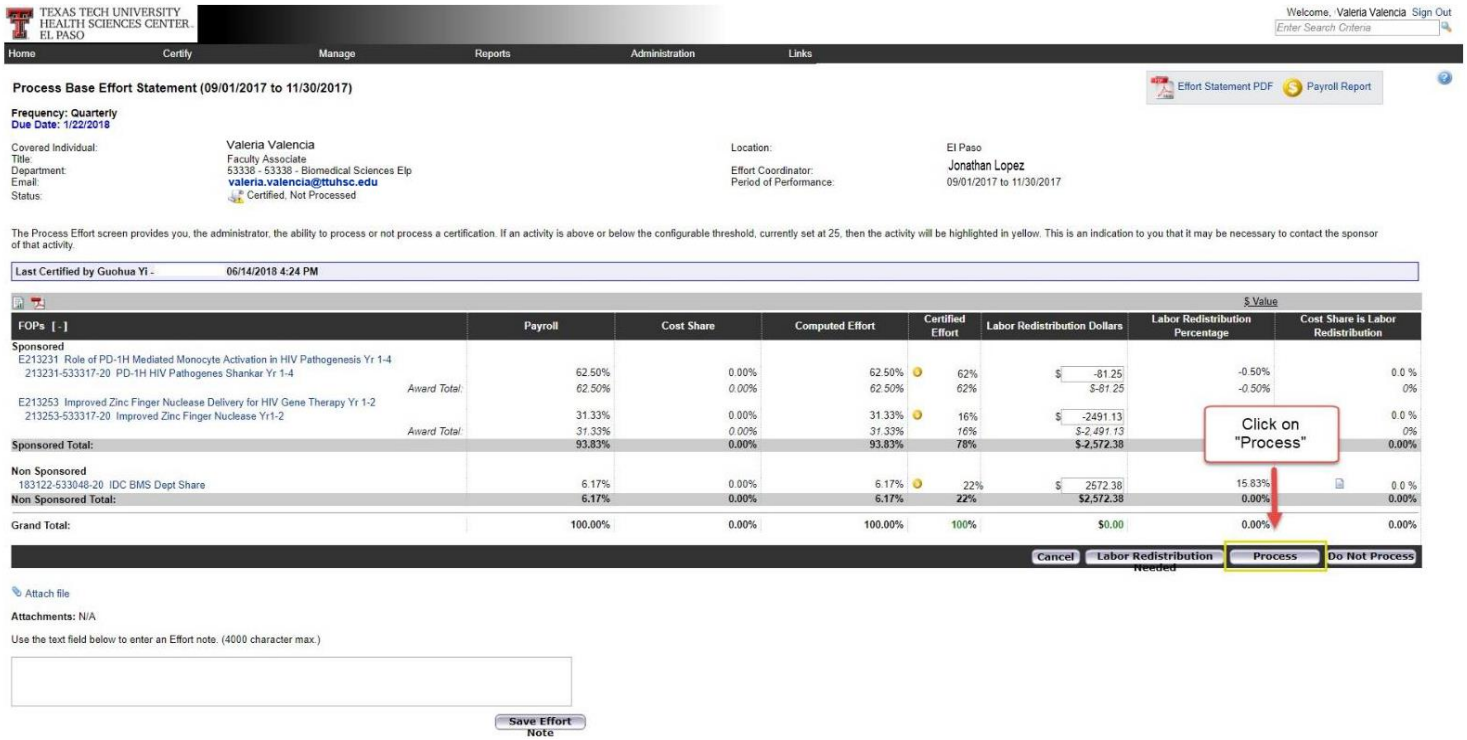
The Effort Coordinator will have a number of effort tasks that need to be performed based on actions taken during the certification period.

To review an effort statement waiting to be processed, click on the task from the **Effort Task** list and be taken to the appropriate page for action.

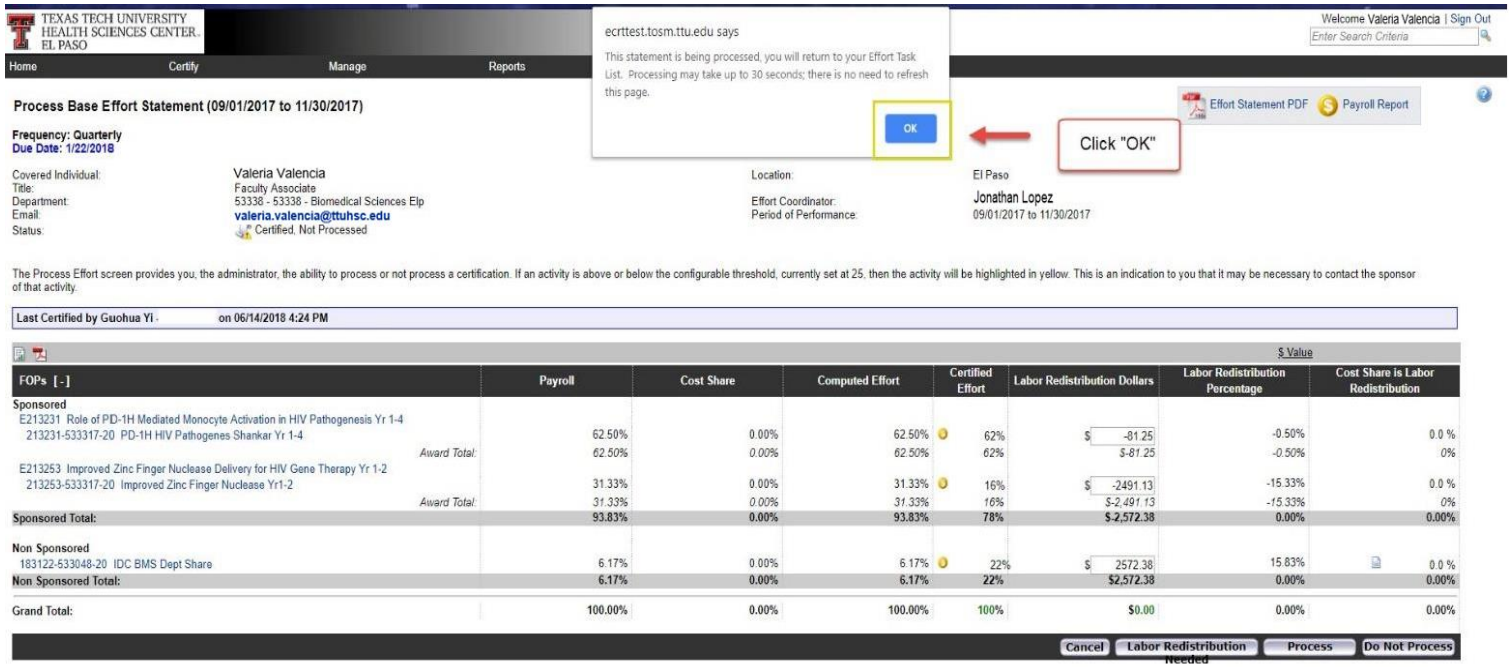
It is the Effort Coordinator's responsibility to review the appropriateness of the effort that has been certified. If you disagree with how the statement was certified click on **Do Not Process**. This will return the statement to the individual and the status of the statement will change back to Not Certified, Not Processed. It is important to leave a note in the **Effort Note** section to explain why you took this action.

If you want to stop your review click the **Cancel** button – this cancels any action you have taken and returns you to the **Work List** page.

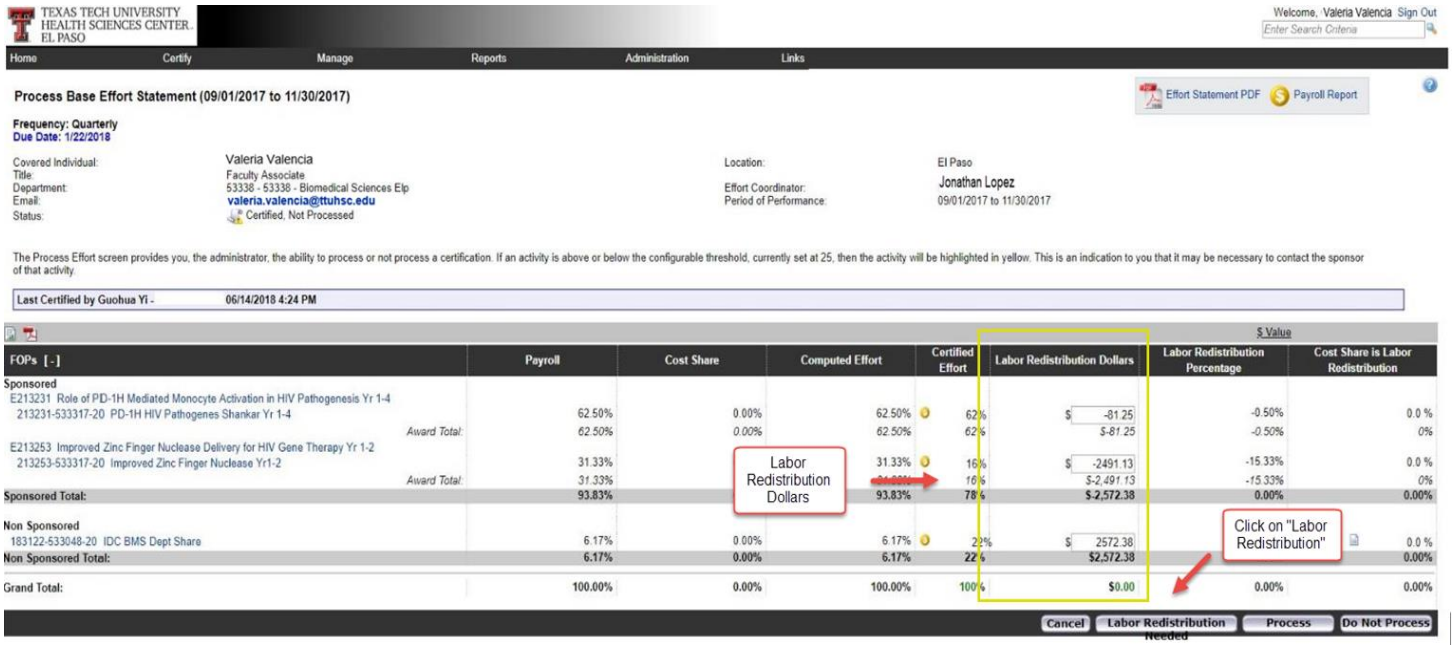
If you agree with how the statement was certified, click on the **Process** button to finalize the statement and move it into Certified, Processed status.



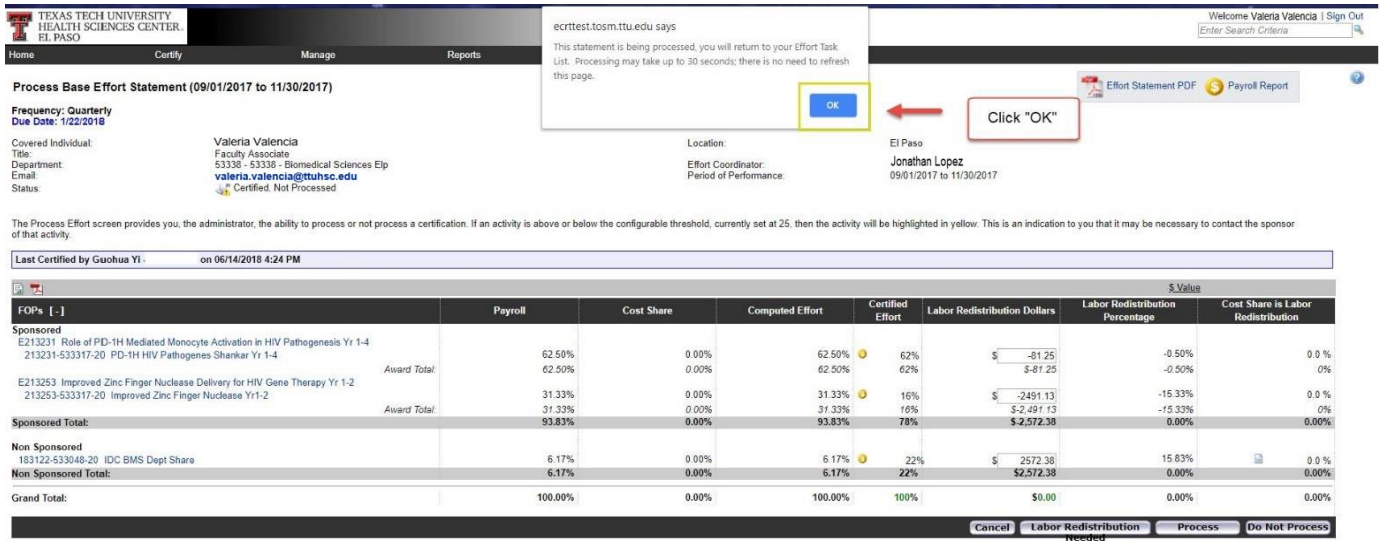
You will be presented with this processing message. Click on **OK**. You will be returned to the **Work List** page.



If the individual correctly certifies to a percentage that is different than the computed percentages, ecrt calculates the dollars related to the changes and shows them in the **Labor Redistribution** column. Click on the **Labor Redistribution** button because a Labor Redistribution needs to be processed. This will move the status of the statement to Certified, Labor Redistribution Required or Pending. A **Labor Redistribution Notice** is created in the **Manage Effort Notifications** tab. This serves as a reminder to process a Labor Redistribution in Banner based on the review that you just performed. This is simply a list of tasks that can be manually deleted (using the Red X) at any time.

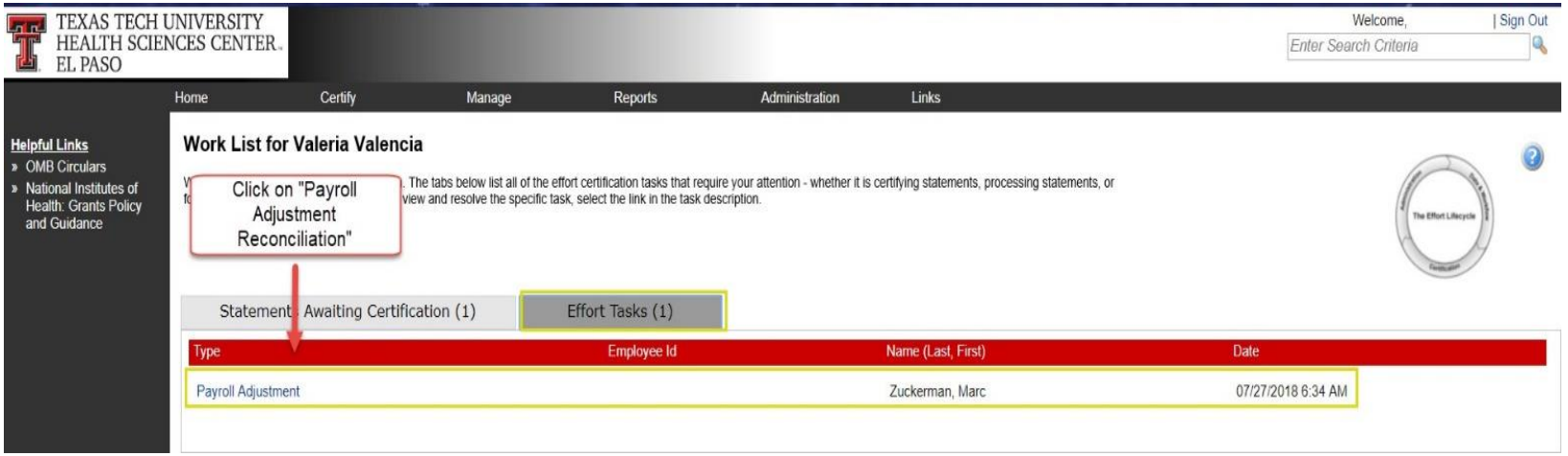


You will be presented with a processing screen. Click **OK**.



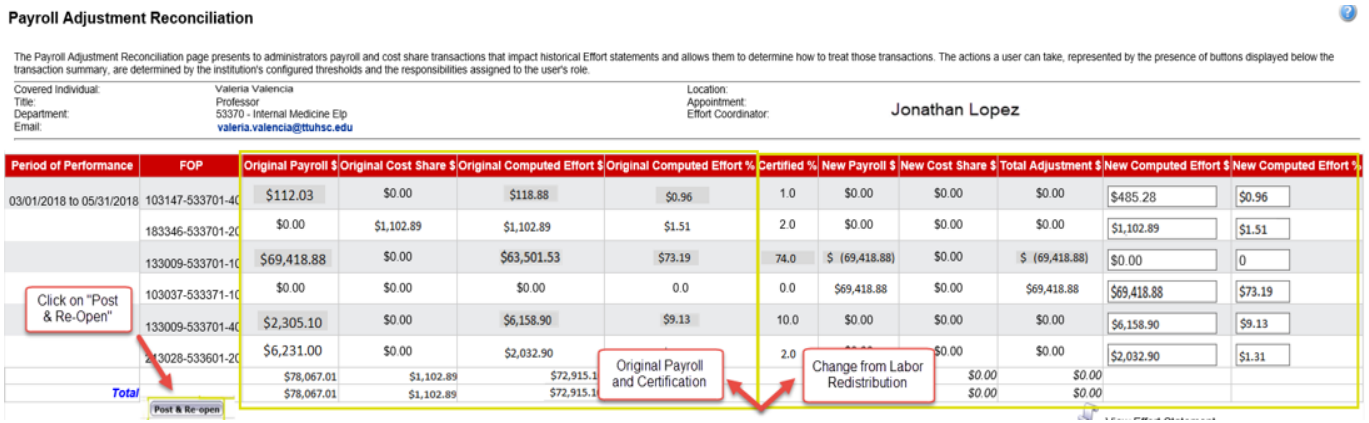
Once the Labor Redistribution is processed in Banner, it will be picked up by ecrt the next day. If it brings computed and certified effort within our 2 percent threshold – it will automatically apply to the statement and update the statement status to Certified, Processed. If the labor redistribution does not bring the computed and certified effort within 2 percent, a **Payroll Adjustment Reconciliation** task will be created in the **Effort Tasks** tab of the **Work List** page.

Click on the **Payroll Adjustment Reconciliation** link to review and resolve the task.

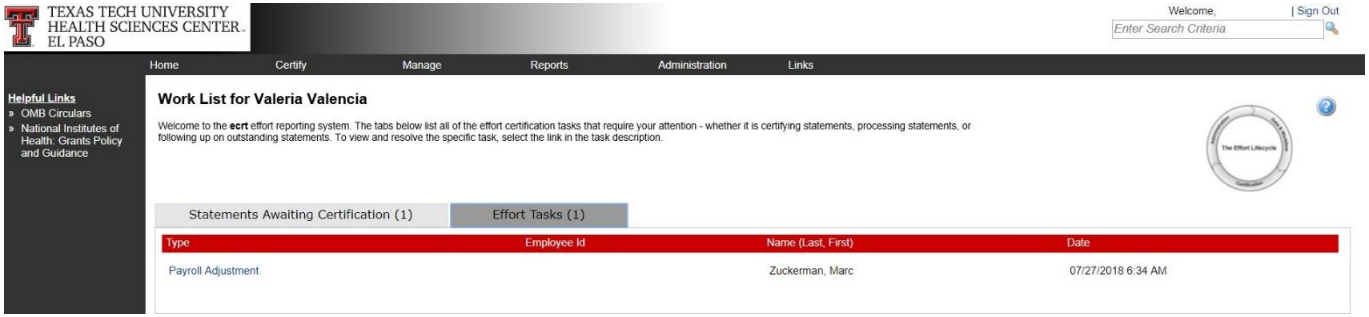


The **Payroll Adjustment Reconciliation** screen displays the details of the Labor Redistribution and also the effects it has on the effort statement. The Effort Coordinator can review how much the individual originally was paid and certified on each FOP – and then review how the current Labor Redistribution will change those numbers.

The only option an Effort Coordinator has in this screen is to click on **Post and Re-open.** (Because computed and certified effort are not appropriately aligned). The statement status is updated to Not Certified, Not Processed, and Reopened by Labor Redistribution, and the individual will need to recertify this statement.

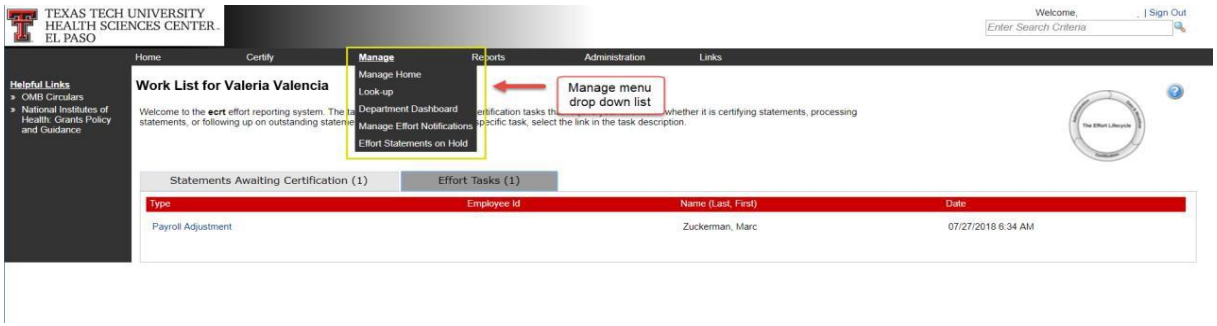


You will be returned to the **Work List** page, and the **Payroll Adjustment Reconciliation** task is removed from the list.

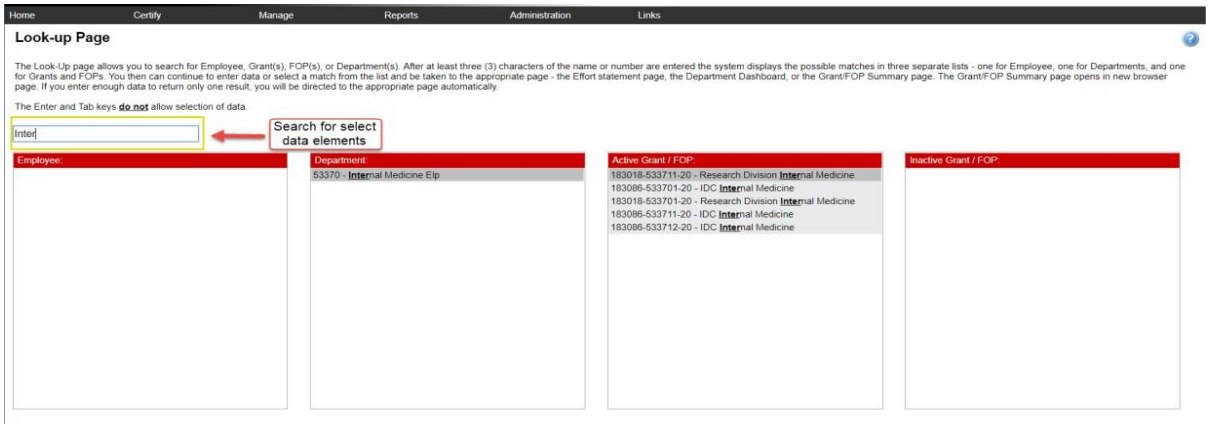


MANAGE

There are five links available in the menu drop-down list for the **Manage** label on the navigation menu bar: **Manage Home**, **Look-up**, **Department Dashboard**, **Manage Effort Notifications** and **Effort Statements on Hold**.

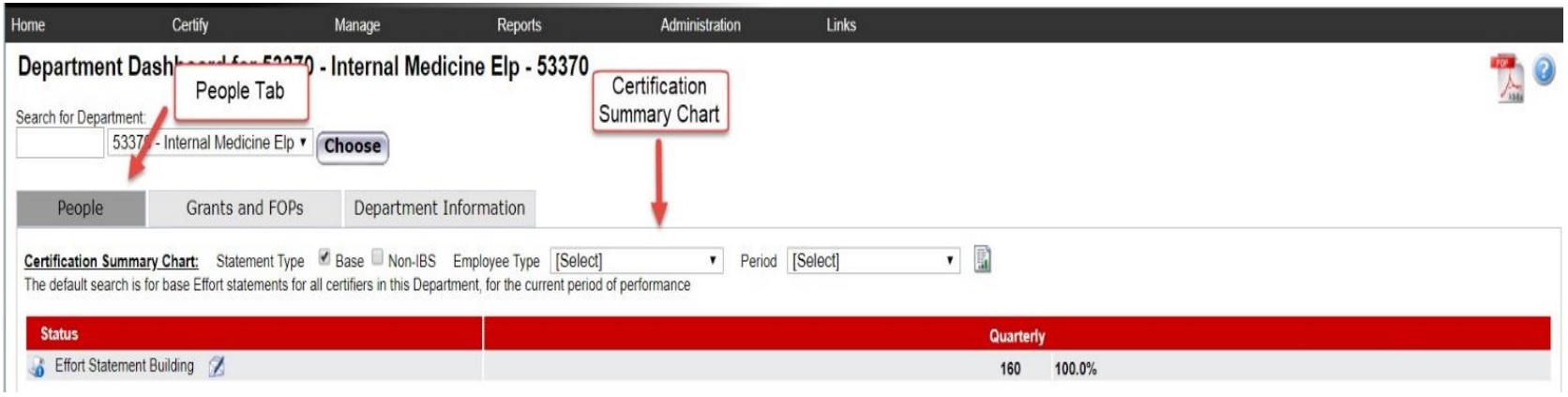


Look-Up page - The **Look-up** page allows you to search for select data elements in the system, specifically people, departments, active and inactive Grants/FOPs. Users can enter employee name, employee R number, department name, department number, grant/FOP name, or grant/FOP number to see results.



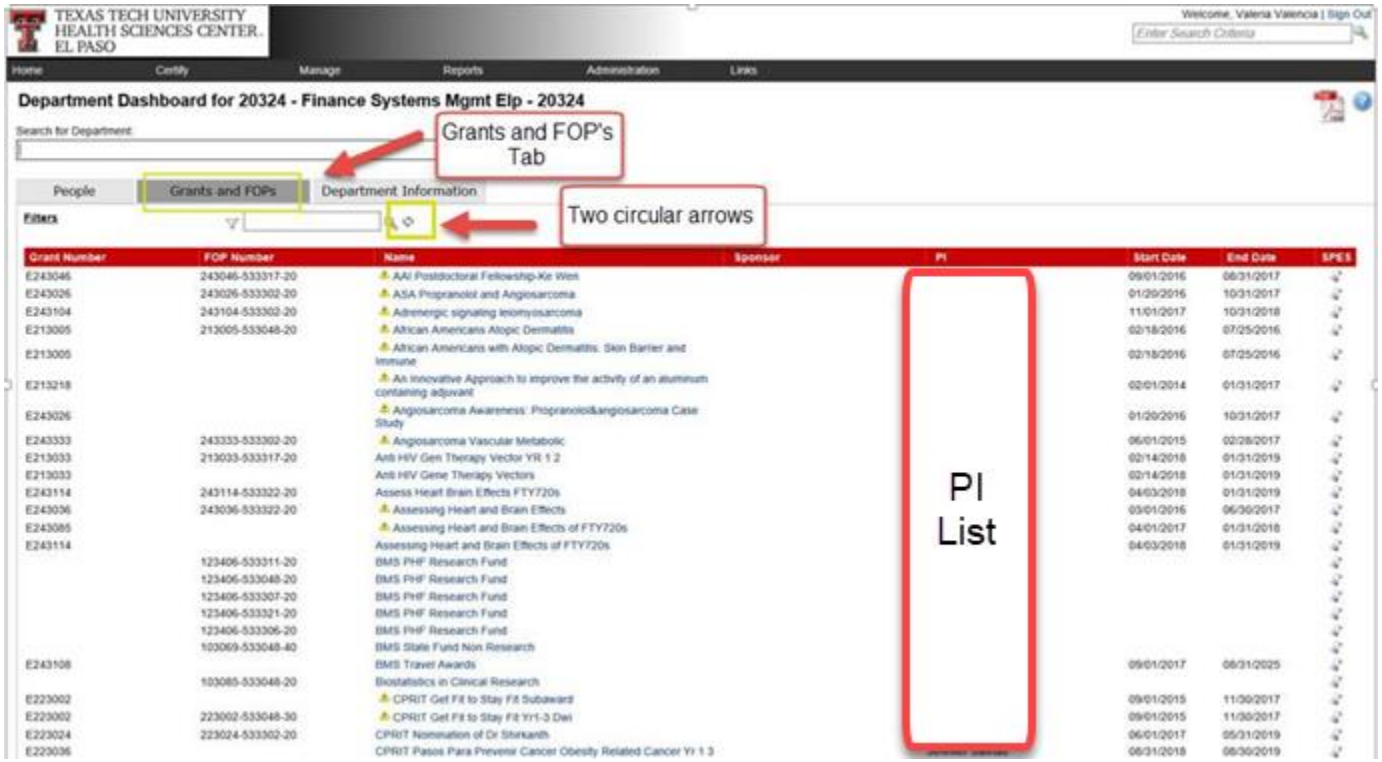
The **Department Dashboard** page is broken into three tabs: People, Grants and FOPs and Department Information.

People – Contains information about all of the institution's employees with a relationship to the department. The Certification Summary Chart allows you to define the statistics to review.



Grants and FOPs – Contains all of the Grants and FOPs that are assigned to the department. The Grant/FOP Number for each are shown along with Sponsor R Number, PI of the grant, and the Start/End Date.

The **two circular arrows** icon next to **magnifying glass** allows you to refresh the list to show only the active Grants and FOPs. You can reset the page by clicking on the **magnifying glass**.

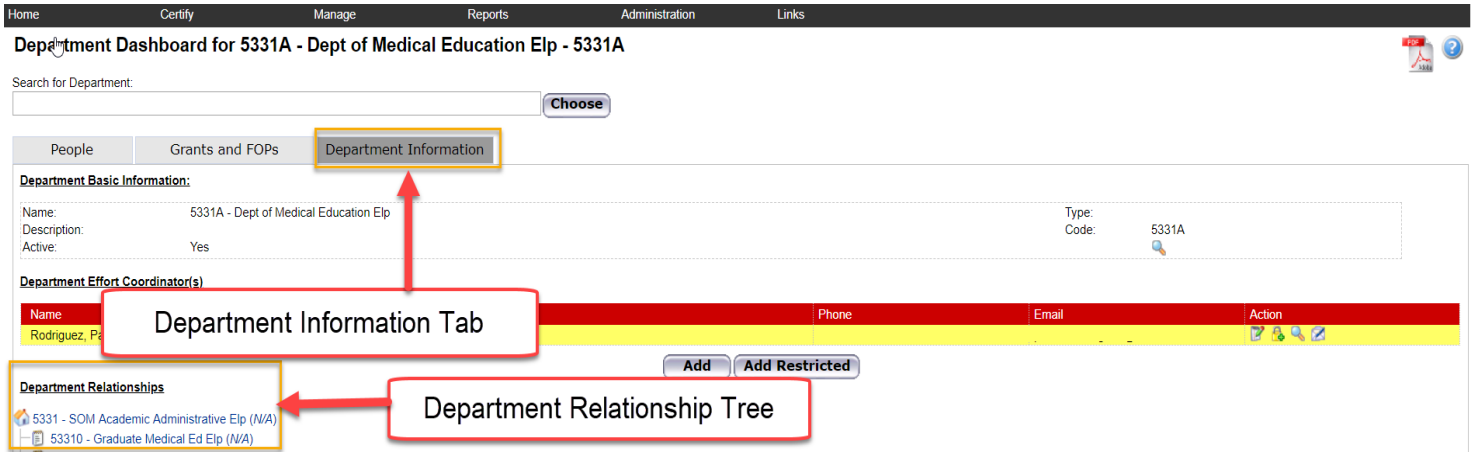


Department Information – Contains information about the departments effort coordinators and the department relationship tree.

The names, phone numbers and email addresses of the department's effort coordinators are shown. The Primary Effort Coordinator is highlighted in yellow.

The **Action** column in the Effort Coordinators list allows you to go to the **Manage Users** page for the coordinator by clicking on the **magnifying glass** icon and email the effort coordinator by clicking on the **pen and envelope** icon.

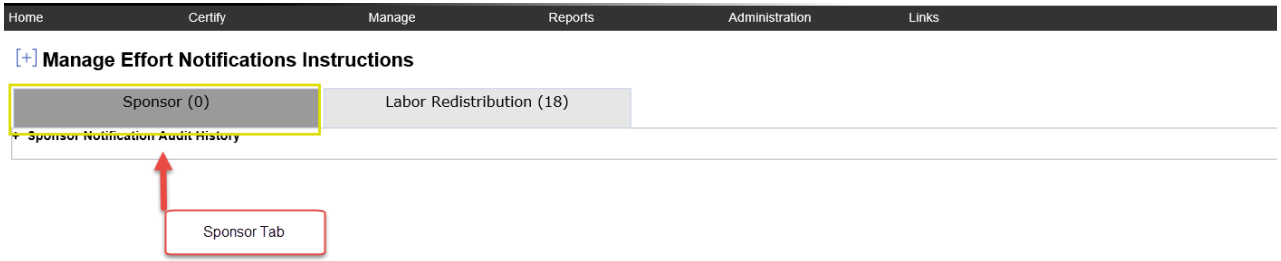
The **Department Relationships** tree shows the department's position in the organization structure.



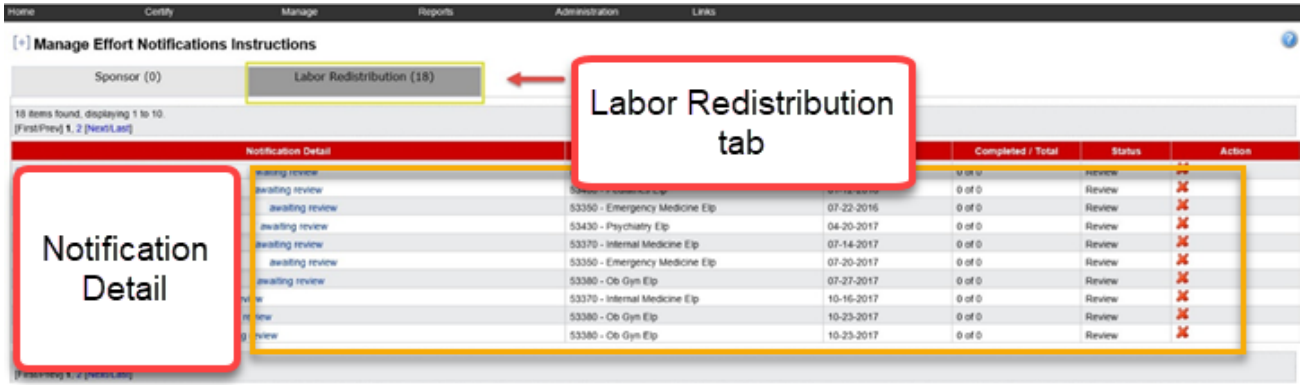
MANAGE EFFORT NOTIFICATIONS

The **Manage Effort Notifications** page contains two tabs: **Sponsor** tab and **Labor Redistribution** tab. Each tab contains a list of notifications that require your attention. To resolve an item on the list, select the link in the **Notification Detail** column to be directed to the review page.

The **Sponsor** tab list is populated with tasks when an Effort Coordinator processes a statement where the individual certified at 25 percent less than their commitment for that period.

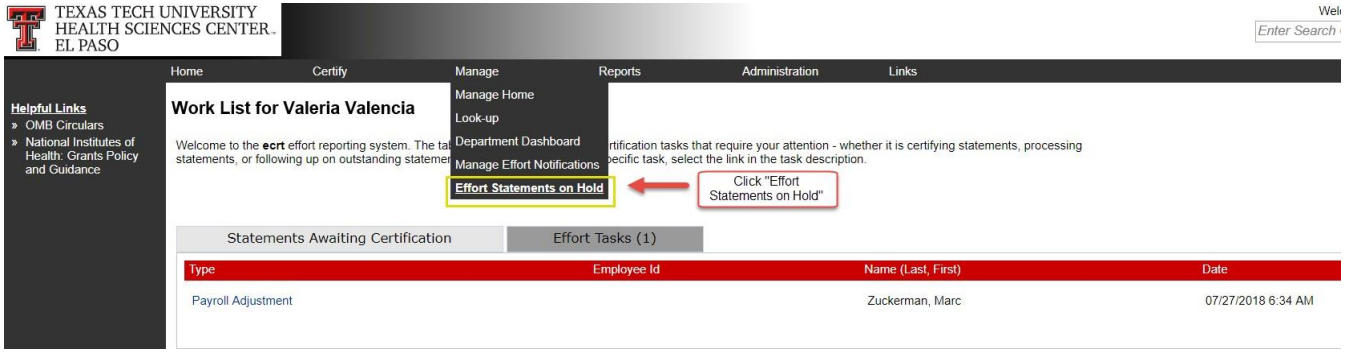


The **Labor Redistribution** tab list is populated with tasks when an Effort Coordinator selects the **Cost Transfer Needed** button when reviewing an effort statement.

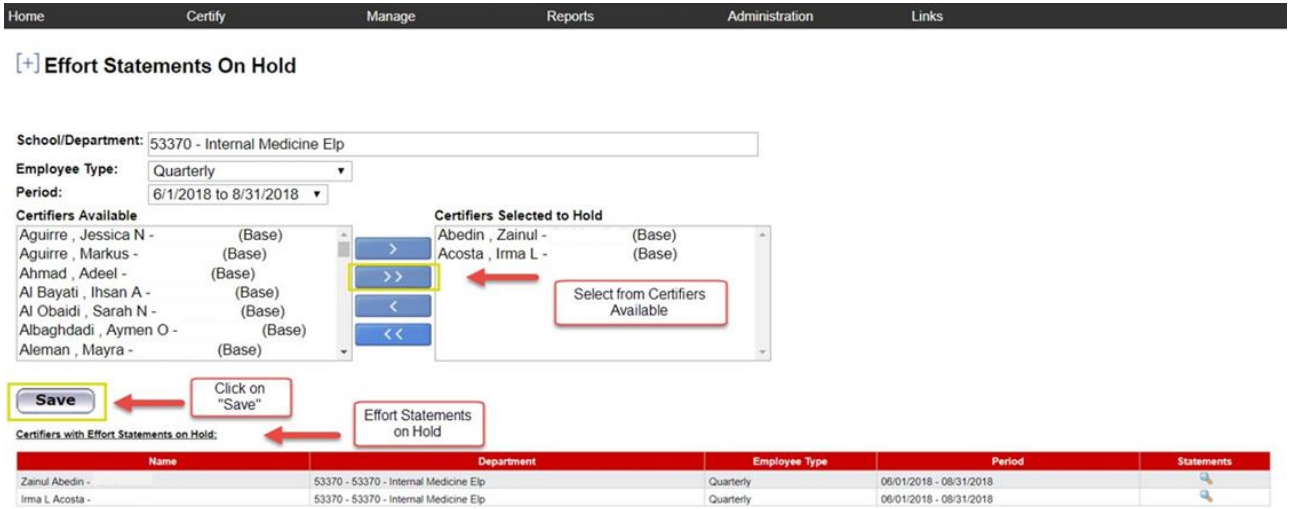


EFFORT STATEMENTS ON HOLD

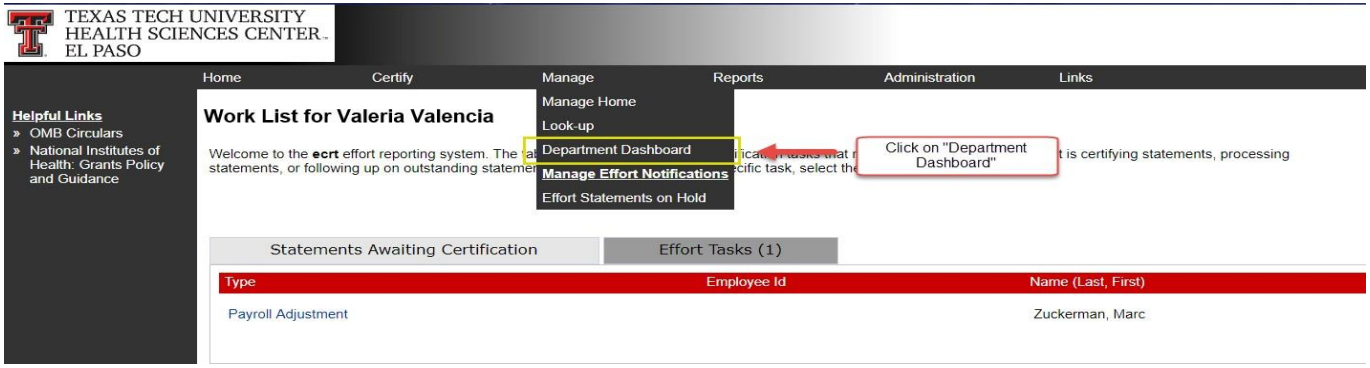
The **Effort Statements on Hold** page allows you to select multiple certifiers and then place them all On Hold at one time rather than having to navigate to each statement individually.

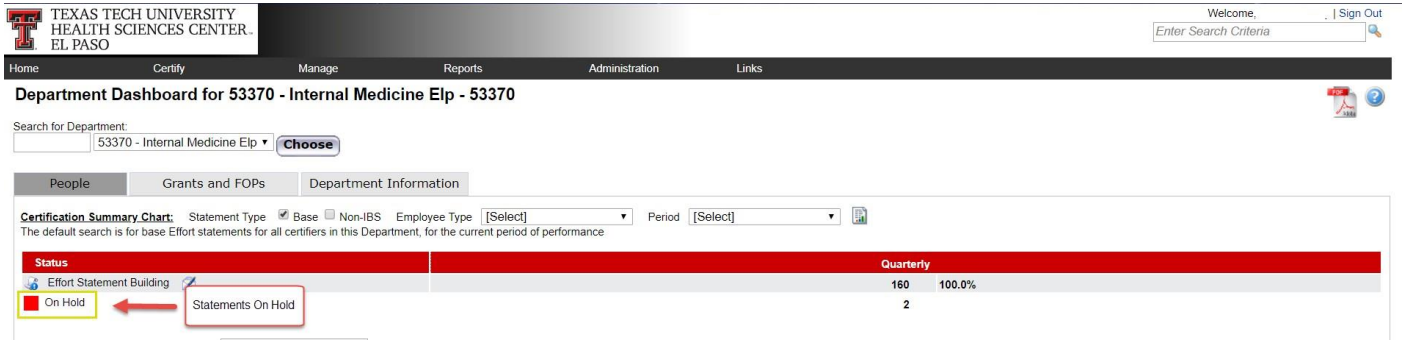


When you click on **Save**, each of the certifiers will be listed at the bottom screen in the **Certifiers with Effort Statements on Hold** section. In order to take an effort statement off Hold, you will have to go to the individual's effort statement and uncheck the **On Hold** checkbox. You are able to navigate to the individual's effort statement from the **Effort Statements on Hold** page, by selecting the **magnifying glass** icon in the **Statements** column.

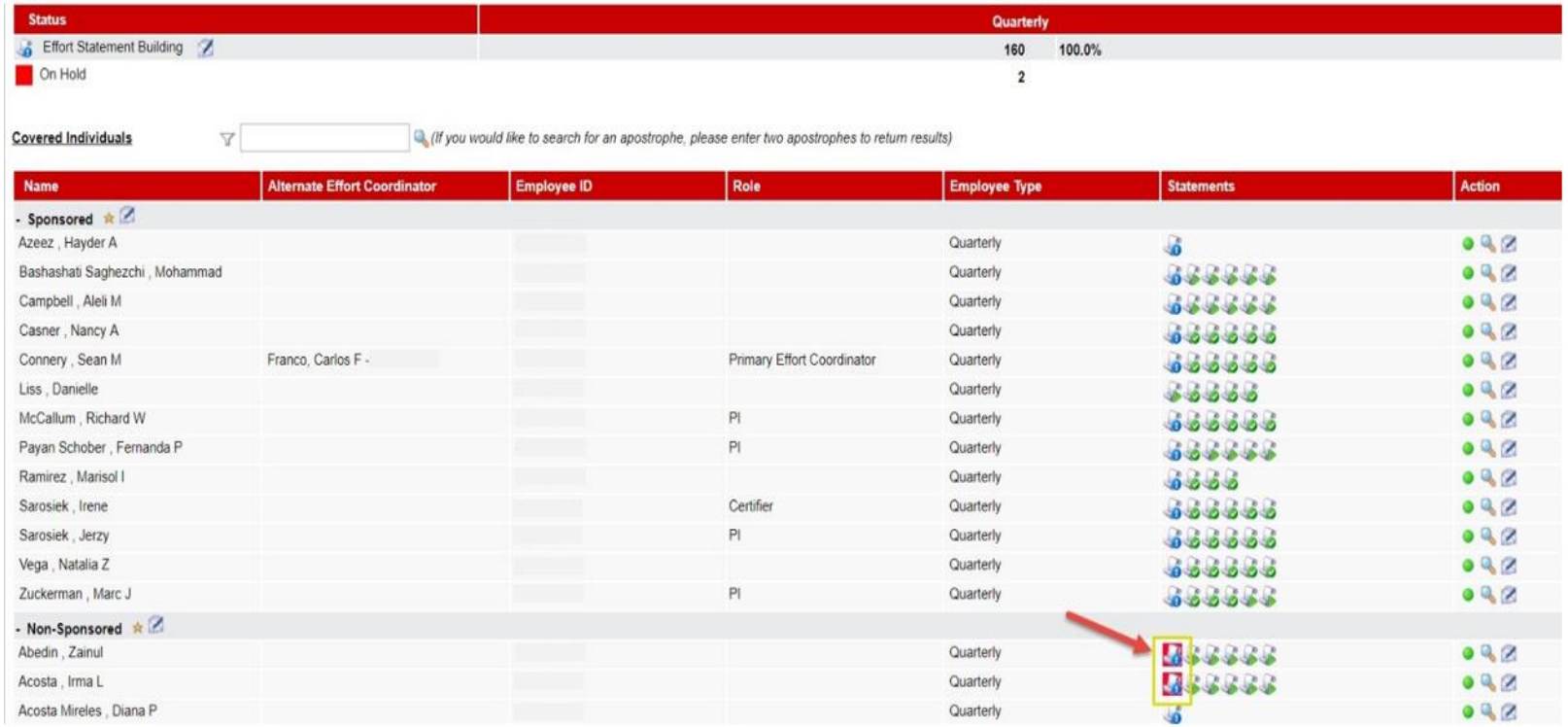


To reference the total number of effort statements **On Hold,** review the **Certification Summary** on the **Department Dashboard** page.





The statement icon of an effort statement that has been placed **On Hold** is highlighted in **RED** as a visual indicator to the Effort Coordinator. This can be seen in the **Statements** column of the **Covered Individuals** list on the **Department Dashboard** page.



Status	Quarterly	
Effort Statement Building	160	100.0%
On Hold	2	

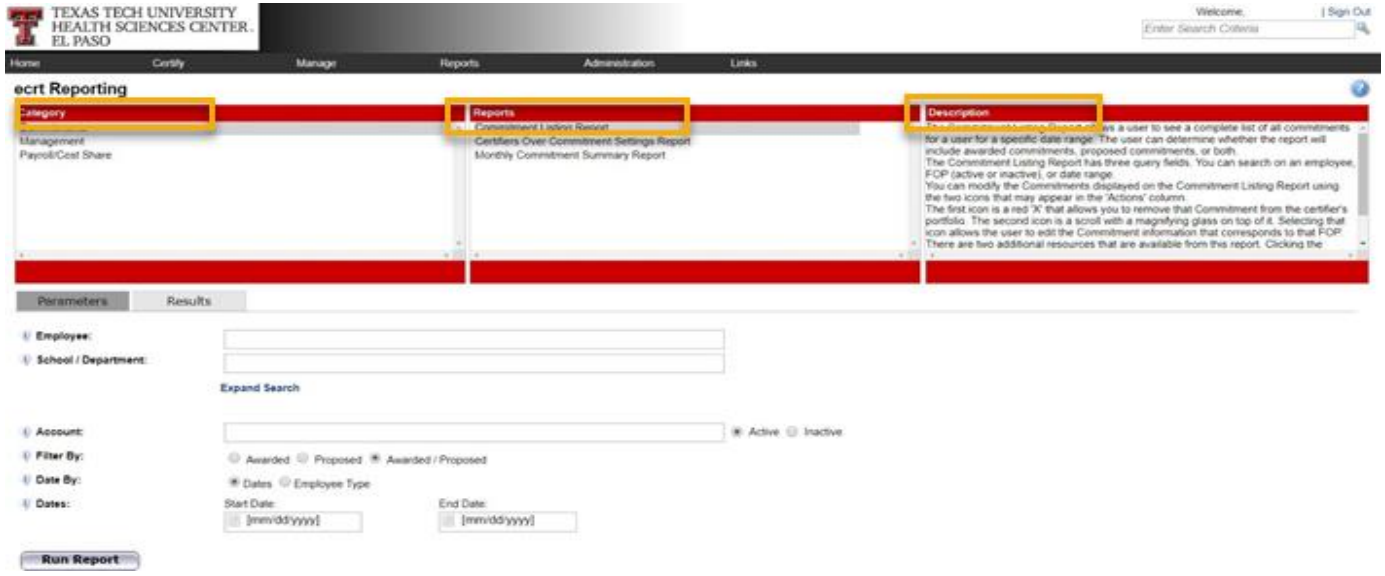
Covered Individuals (If you would like to search for an apostrophe, please enter two apostrophes to return results)

Name	Alternate Effort Coordinator	Employee ID	Role	Employee Type	Statements	Action
- Sponsored						
Azeez , Hayder A				Quarterly		
Bashashati Saghezchi , Mohammad				Quarterly		
Campbell , Aleli M				Quarterly		
Casner , Nancy A				Quarterly		
Connery , Sean M	Franco, Carlos F -		Primary Effort Coordinator	Quarterly		
Liss , Danielle				Quarterly		
McCallum , Richard W			PI	Quarterly		
Payan Schober , Fernanda P			PI	Quarterly		
Ramirez , Marisol I				Quarterly		
Sarosiek , Irene			Certifier	Quarterly		
Sarosiek , Jerzy			PI	Quarterly		
Vega , Natalia Z				Quarterly		
Zuckerman , Marc J			PI	Quarterly		
- Non-Sponsored						
Abedin , Zainul				Quarterly		
Acosta , Irma L				Quarterly		
Acosta Mireles , Diana P				Quarterly		

REPORTS

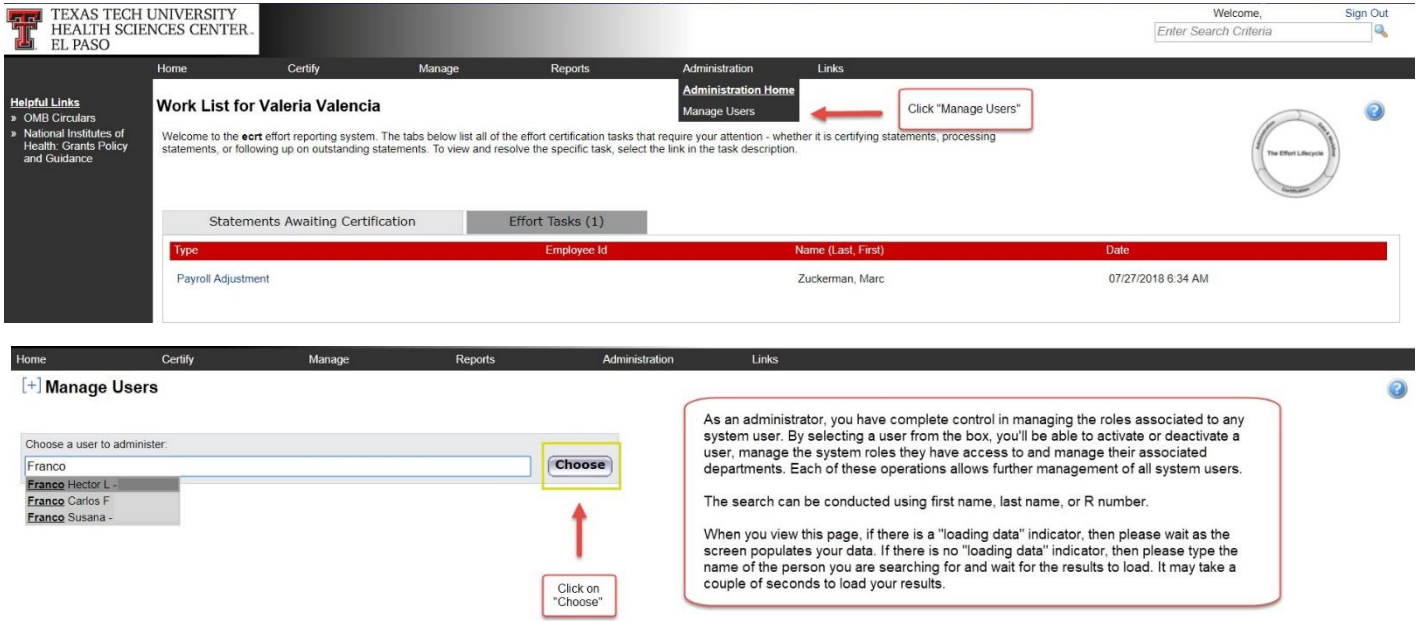
The **ecrt Reporting** page is accessed by clicking on the **Reports** menu label on the navigation menu bar. To access the report, click on the report name in the **Reports** pane.

The page contains three window panes across the top that show the report **Category** the list of **Reports** associated to the selected category, and a **Description** of the selected report.

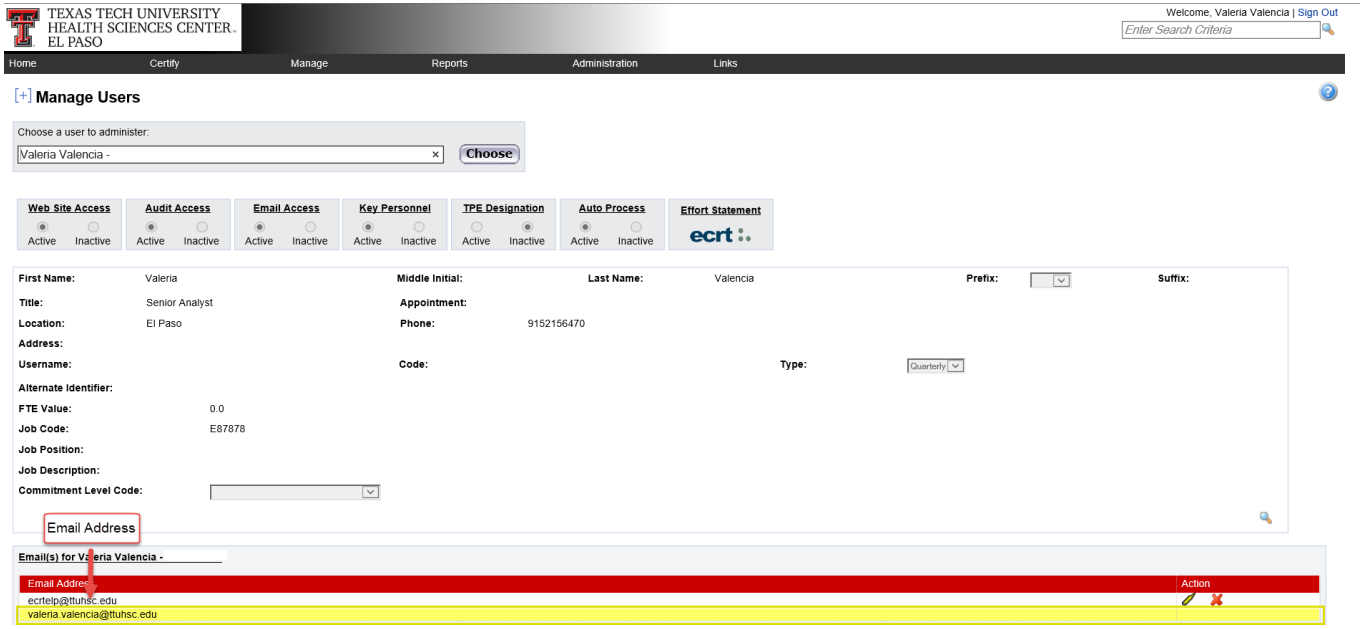


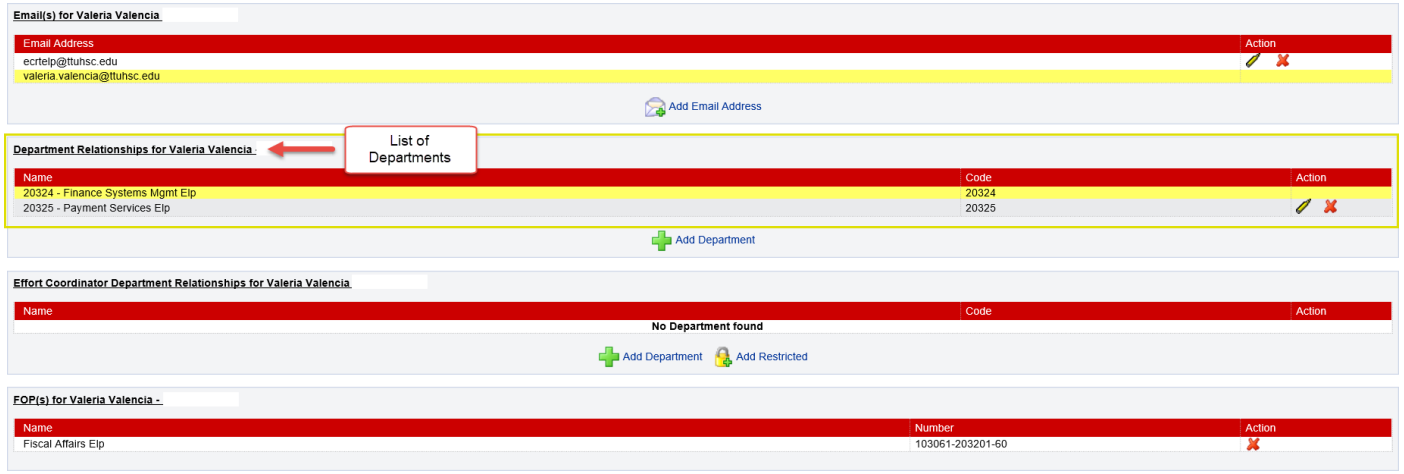
ADMINISTRATION

The **Manage Users** link is the only link available to the effort coordinator in the menu drop down list for the **Administration** label. The page presents a data entry search box. You must search by last name only, first name only, ID number only or by last name then first name. Type in a minimum of three characters from the intended result, and then pause for a few seconds. The program will query the database and download a list of matches to the search text, which appears in a blue box under the search box. Put the cursor on the intended result, click the mouse or hit the enter key and then click on **Choose**.



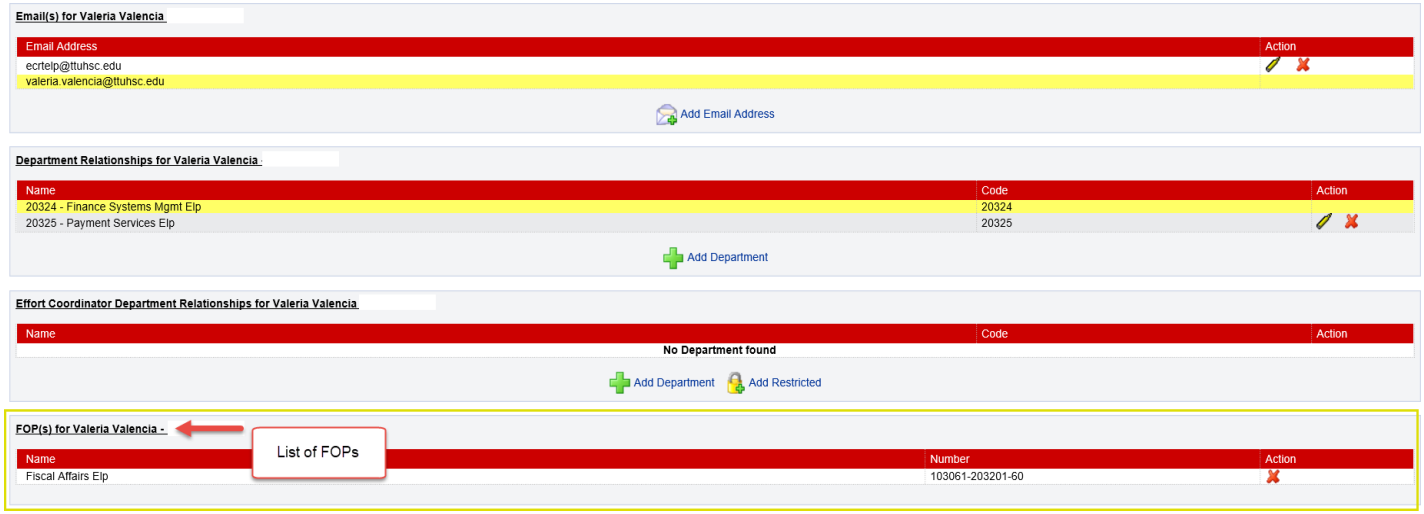
In the top section you can see the basic user demographic information and their email address. If any of this data is not correct, a change needs to be made in Banner. All ecrt data is fed directly from Banner.

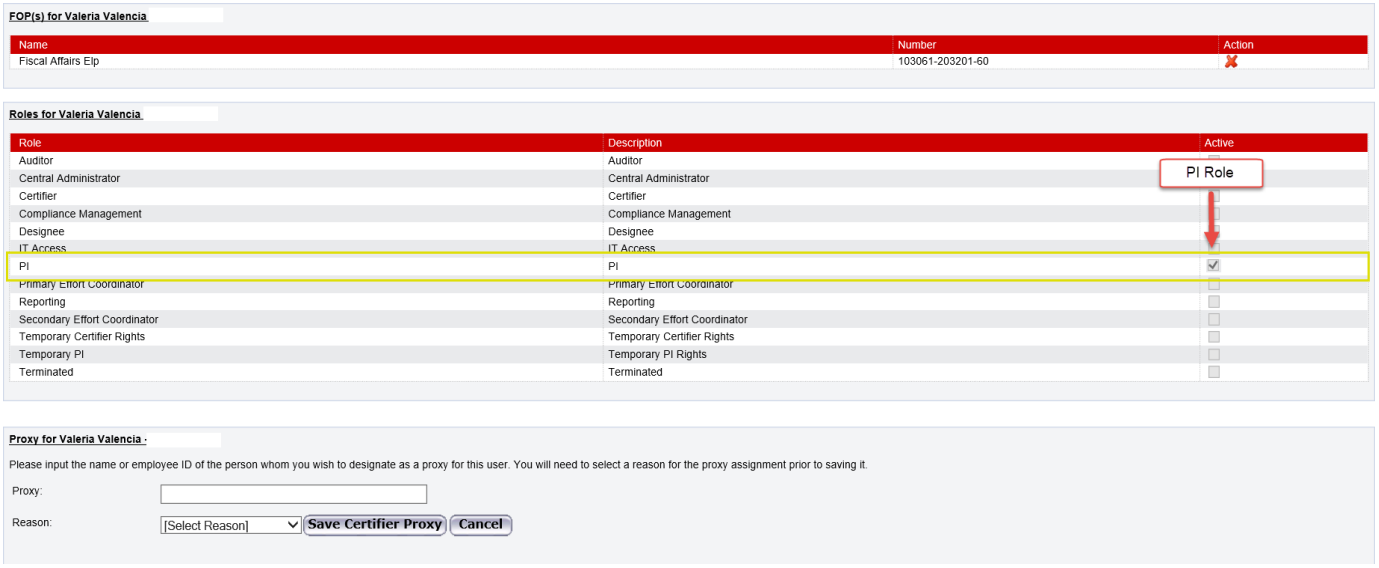




A list of the departments that the user is associated to is displayed in the next section. If the user is an Effort Coordinator for a department it will be listed in the Effort Coordinator Department Relationship section.

The next section lists the FOPs that the individual has been paid from or has a commitment to and associated grant numbers.





The last section lists the user's role. Users can be assigned to as many roles as determined appropriate. Roles govern access security and will be assigned by the Central Administrator.

ecrt SYSTEM

https://ecrt.texastech.edu/ecrt/redirectLogin.do?ecrtAction=init

Reference Training Material:

http://elpaso.ttuhsc.edu/fiscal/businessaffairs/grantaccounting/trainings.aspx

For help with the ecrt system navigation or questions regarding this training, please contact ECRTElp@ttuhsc.edu.