Eliminating Hard-Copy Activity and Project Monthly Management Reports

Financial & Business Services has been tasked with creating a workable model for eliminating the hard-copy activity and project monthly management reports by January, 2013 (i.e. the last printed reports will be November, 2012 statements).
Institutional costs to print and distribute the hard copy reports were presented. The PAM Program is the driver for the short timeline in which to come up with a workable solution. Specifically, the implementation of new PeopleSoft modules for grants management, planned for December 2012, includes data changes that will impact the project management reports. The effort required to make the changes to the hard-copy reports is too high given available resources and time.

Departments must continue to have a means to evidence the monthly review of accounts has occurred. Laura Howat discussed the review and approval Policy 3-003 requirements for Management Reports. An early prototype of a web application for signifying this evidence was demonstrated.

There was a lively discussion, with several supportive comments, questions, and concerns raised, including:

- Eliminating printing is compatible with U sustainability goals.
- Providing for online approval will make it easier for faculty that are away from their desks most of the time to evidence review.
- It will be much quicker and easier for small departments or simple activities/projects to be signed off.
- Many of us don’t use the hard copy reports anyway because we use the online reports or our shadow systems.
- The proposed phase 1 solution does not readily provide a means for tracking detail lines reviewed and leaving notes. Departments may have to spend significant time running and manipulating reports to make them printable or usable in Excel to track items reviewed and take notes.
- Will multiple people be able to evidence review? – Answer: Yes.
- Can there be multiple levels or types of review? Such as Admin Review and Account Executive Review.
- Will data (particularly encumbrances) always reflect the balance as of a point in time? – Answer: Yes.
- How will we know review has occurred, and by whom? How will it be tracked and displayed?
- Reviewed is different than resolved.
- PI’s are not always employees. How can the PI carryout and show evidence of review in these cases? (This is a problem today).
- Clear and consistent instructions on what is acceptable as evidence of review would be very helpful. Documentation of best practices/procedures for carrying out review would also be valuable.
• Can we attach supporting documentation, receipts, etc? Today we attach supporting documentation to the hard-copy report before distributing to the Account Executive, and then subsequently store all of the supporting documentation with the Management Reports in order by month. How should we manage and share backup in the future?
• Will there be a committed date for phase 2 enhancements, addressing the problems or burdens phase 1 may be creating or shifting to departments?

It was mentioned that Management Report Training is now available. Todd Kapos is the instructor. Read the Momentum Newsletter announcement for more information:

Next BPAG Meeting – July 13, 2012