FINANCIAL & BUSINESS SERVICES
THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH
MOMENTUM NEWSLETTER

Quarterly Newsletter

October—2011

NOTABLE CHANGES

New Controller Announced

contributed by Jeffrey West
Associate Vice President, FBS

During the past several months, Financial & Business Services conducted a search for a new Controller/Director of Financial Management, and has recently selected Laura Howat to fill this role. Laura has been with the University since 1997, and many of you have had the chance to interact with her over the years - first as our Manager of Tax Services & Payroll Accounting, and more recently as our Associate Director of Accounting Operations & Controls. She is a graduate of the U., earning both her bachelors and masters degrees here. Laura's selection brings continuity to the FBS organization and leadership consistency during this time when the University is changing in so many ways. Laura also brings to the position several new ideas that will help shape the services that the Controller's Office provides to the campus community.

Congratulations and best wishes to Laura Howat on this recognition and accomplishment! She officially begins as University Controller effective October 1, 2011.

Change to Application of University's Utah Lodging Sales Tax Exemption

contributed by Laura Howat
Controller, FBS

Effective July 1st, 2011, based on Utah H.B 82, the University is required to pay the sales tax on its ***direct*** payments of lodging and related purchases. The University is still exempt from this Utah sales tax but will need to apply for a refund subsequent to the payment. If your department has purchased Utah lodging using University funds since July 1, 2011, please forward invoice copies to Tax Services, 411 Park, so that the sales tax exemption refund application can be made. The Utah State Tax Commission has clarified that this change in sales tax application does not apply to conference rooms and catering purchased at hotels, which are still exempt at point of sale.

As a reminder, there is no sales tax exemption when individuals purchase lodging and are then reimbursed by the University. The University's sales tax exemption only applies when purchases are made for University business purposes, directly using University funds and either the purchaser presents the form TC-721G sales tax exemption certificate, or the hotel has the copy of the certificate on the file.

Recommended hotels listed on Travels "Visitors to the U" page have the required certificate on the file, so procedures for booking and payment lodging for visitors will not change. After the stay, however, departments will have to be sure to follow procedures to forward the final invoice or receipt to Tax Services.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact the Tax Services department.

PROCESS SPOTLIGHT

University State Contracts for Shipping

contributed by John Arlen
Manager, Strategic Sourcing & Contracts

Don't pay full price for shipping. The State of Utah has contracts with Federal Express and UPS that offer substantial savings on shipping.

Please contact University Print and Mail Services or e-mail contracts@purchasing.utah.edu for more details.

The Scoop on Airfare Contracts Airfare

contributed by Tia Meidell
Program Coordinator, Travel

What are State contract fares?

State contracted fares are negotiated by the State of Utah travel office for our most frequently traveled cities. These fares are available, in most instances, to the last available seat on the flight, and are changeable, refundable, and upgradable according to the traveler's airline status.

State contracted fares should always be used when they are less expensive than the non-refundable fares listed on travel web sites such as Delta.com or Expedia.com. Often, however, State contract fares are more expensive than the non-refundable fares listed on these web sites, but they still may be the most cost effective choice under certain circumstances. Consider the table of frequently traveled cities below:

City	Typical State Contracted Fare	Typical Non-Refundable Fare
Washington DC	689.40	890.40
San Diego	561.40	517.40
Denver	191.40	273.40
Phoenix	232.90	235.40

Phoenix and Denver, for example, are cities where the contracts should always be used. Washington D.C., however, is a city where the department should use some discretion and use the contract fare when purchasing a non-refundable ticket is risky.

When should I us a State contract rate?

State contracted fares are recommended when visitors or recruits are being brought to the University, as well as for University employees who anticipate flight changes or cancellations. By using the State contracted fare, any changes or cancellations that are made will result in either a full refund or a no-penalty exchange.

Considerations for non-refundable airfare:

Departments should consider the at-risk cost when booking non-refundable airfare. As a general rule, if the contract rate exceeds the non-refundable rate by more than $150, and the employee - traveler feels they are unlikely to change flight times or dates, then a non-refundable ticket is likely the better choice.

When a non-refundable ticket is cancelled, an airline credit is issued in the ***Traveler's name***, and there is no way for a university department to ensure the credit will be used toward future business travel. Additionally, there is no way to collect the value of an airline credit from visitors or recruits who cancel their trip. Exchanges for non-refundable round trip fares typically cost the university department an additional $150 change fee ($250 international) plus any fare increase.

Non-refundable Delta airfare booked by our on-site agents is discounted 2% - 7%, and while this usually saves only $8 - $10 per ticket, in the aggregate, the University saves over $65,000 each year. University departments are no longer charged a booking fee for non-refundable tickets in order to be sure our discounts remain meaningful to our campus customers.

If you are unsure which fare would be best to use when planning a trip, the Onsite Travel Agents are a great resource to ask.

Other Time Saving Airfare Tips

Remember to check out the recent Travel updates which feature an easier Step 1: Request AirSelect. Step 1 is now connected to data from travel numbers and helps save you time by retrieving the traveler information from a Register Trip. Similar changes are coming soon to Step 2: Request ON HOLD Reservation.

Changes to AP Procedures: P.O. Invoice Payment Processing

contributed by John Downing
Payables Production Manager, AP

An important aspect of Accounts Payable procedure is to notify departments that we have received Purchase Order (P.O.) invoices. Currently, when Accounts Payable receives a (P.O.) invoice directly from the vendor and the invoiced amount is greater than the $5,000 P.O. threshold, an invoice copy is sent via campus mail to the requisition originator for review. In order to expedite processing and avoid unnecessary mail and other delays, the following changes went into effect on September 19, 2011:

- **What does "Approval by Default" Mean?** If the vendor sends a P.O. invoice to Accounts Payable, the Accounts Payable processor will validate the invoice and email an image of the invoice, including any Central Administration approvals, to:

    1. the person who requested the P.O.,
    2. any forwarding names on the P.O. Header comments,
    3. and to the Activity/Project liaison.*

If anyone (including the PI or Co-PI) finds or has a valid reason to stop or prevent the payment process from going any further, they must respond to the email with a justification for the delay as soon as possible, but within ten business days. Otherwise, Payables will assume that the department has reviewed and "approved by default" the invoice and will release the voucher for payment.

    - This process will not apply to invoices outside of pre-approved P.O. terms which are resolved by other methods. The approval process for subcontracts within Central Administration (including Grant and Contract Accounting) will not change.
    - The PI has not lost any discretionary rights as a result of this change and is free to review the invoice and sign off on the expenditure, but the signature is not required for this process within accounts payable.
    - All requests to delay the payment must be justified in writing because Accounts Payable is in a predicament to respond directly to vendor questions regarding delinquent payments. Kindly let the processor know if you wish to have the vendor contact you directly to resolve payment issues.
    - See an example of the **email notification.**

- **Written Department Approval**. If the department is invoiced directly by the vendor, the invoice should be reviewed immediately against the authorizing P.O., approved and sent to Accounts Payable as soon as possible and in time to be recorded and paid within the vendor payment terms. The approval must include an original signature of the account executive for the chartfield. Payments are usually due within 30 days of the date of the invoice unless otherwise indicated on the invoice.

Based on feedback from the campus community, P.O. invoices over $50,000 still require written approval-to-pay by a person authorized to sign on the P.O. chartfields. The email notice appears similar to the mail discussed above; including the distribution, but the heading at the top of the mail will say "Important notice requiring your review and approval." These transactions will not be subject to the approval-by-default process. All aspects of the P.O. invoice approval process will be evaluated after six months to ensure it is functioning as intended. Your feedback or comments are welcome.

***** Please review the FBS News release related to '**Self Service Liaison Updates**'

Please **Ask Us** with any questions

YS - HAPPENINGS

Introducing PAM

contributed by Bob Turner
Project Manager, P.A.M.

The Project Administration and Management (PAM) project is a campus initiative to review the post-award accounting and management tools available to researchers, staff, and administrators with the primary goal of decreasing the administrative burden on researchers. The specific PAM initiative goals are to (1) provide **high quality support** to researchers; (2) facilitate and enable the **growth of research;** (3) evoke a **culture of compliance;** and (4) establish a means for **accurate decision-making.**

The PAM priorities are as follows:

- Provide customer-focused post-award services and manage the transformation of research services.
- Streamline and automate the business processes in order to provide more accurate and timely award information (i.e., Payroll Encumbrances, Cost Transfers, Payroll Reallocations, Effort Certification, etc.).
- Implement the PS Grants Suite modules to improve financial tracking and performance mechanisms, and further automate central post-award processes.
- Develop a longer-term solution to provide PIs with flexible report formats for tracking of award activities.

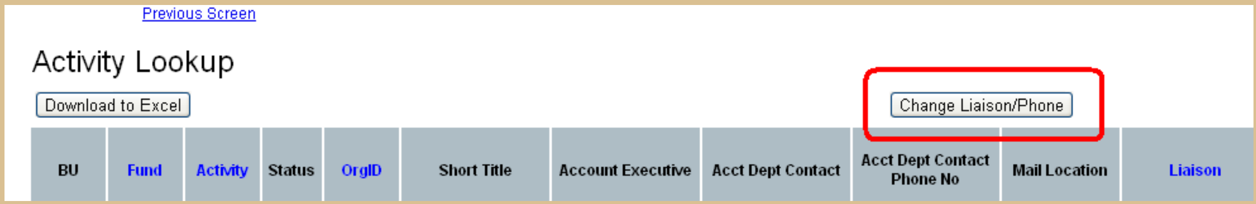
PAM Awareness meetings have started to introduce the initiative to various audiences, and currently a team of university business process and technical experts, along with consultants, have been assembled to move the initiative forward. They will begin in October to train on the new PeopleSoft grant modules as the implementation begins and will look at other universities that have been through this upgrade. The first business process change has been completed with the Self-Service Liaison Application. This allows departments to change the liaison on both projects and activities via CIS.

Watch for future updates and progress reports as we move forward with this initiative.

Liaison Change Application

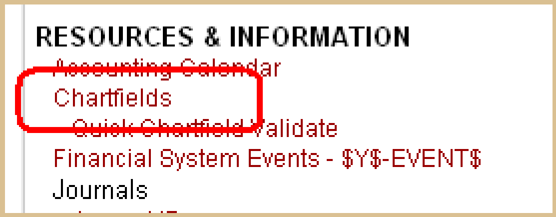
contributed by Jennifer Long-Pratt
Business Analyst, Financial Solutions

On August 12, Financial and Business Services introduced a new application to facilitate quick and easy changes to the "Liaison" for Activities and Projects. There is now a "Change Liaison/Phone" button on the results screen for both Activity Lookup and Project Lookup.

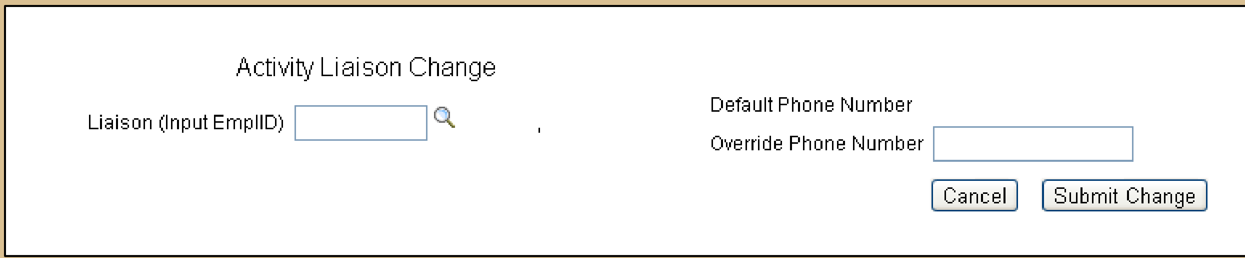


Clicking the new button allows those with Management Report security to change the Liaison and/or update the Liaison's phone number. This new application will make it much easier to manage contacts, and ensure that the information is correct.

To use the Liaison Change application, go to Activity or Project Lookup (under CIS/Financial & Business Services/Resources & Information/Chartfields) and enter the criteria for the results you wish to see.



Notice that there are new criteria fields, including a search for Liaison. After the results appear, click on the "Change Liaison/Phone" button. Select boxes for the Activities/Projects you need to change, and enter the new Liaison employee ID (there is a spyglass next to the input box to look up the employee number).


Activity Liaison Change

Liaison (Input EmplID)

Default Phone Number

Override Phone Number

Cancel

Submit Change

You can also use this application to simply update the phone number. Click “Submit Change”, and the information is instantly updated.

In its first month, people took advantage of this application to make over 2,000 changes! We expect that this tool will continue to help people keep their contacts up-to-date.

For more information, see our links to **Liaison Change**, or contact **Financial Solutions**.

Share your ideas for our next newsletter!

FBS Community

Keep it on Campus

Many campus departments are working together to encourage students, faculty and staff to keep budget dollars on campus by supporting local departments with their business. Their collective efforts have given rise to UKIC (U Keep it on Campus).

The University is facing difficult economic challenges today and on-campus departments are committed to offering good value and competitive pricing. Partnering with on-campus departments will help all of us by:

- Supporting the University community
- Reducing the U’s carbon footprint by reducing off-campus trips
- In many instances, saving campus dollars with available on-campus rates and discounts

Please visit the new **U Keep it on Campus** website to learn more about the on-campus services available to you, and why it’s important to keep campus dollars local.

Upcoming Events

Research Administration Training Series 2011 Fall Schedule

The Research Administration Training Series (RATS) is offered by the Office of the Vice-President for Research. FBS recommends these courses for those involved in the financial administration of University research.

Project Management: Implementing the Award Process	October 17, 2011	Registration is open
Grant Management Essentials	October 20, 2011	Registration is open
Fundamentals of Effort Reporting, Audits and Recharge Centers	November 10, 2011	Registration is open
Mandatory Effort Reporting (PAR) Training	November 29, 2011	Registration is open

For other training opportunities reference the Financial and Business Services Training list.

WACUBO Professional Development Workshops

The Western Association of College and University Business Officers (WACUBO) welcome you to register for low cost Higher Ed specific Professional Development! Participants will have an opportunity to network with peers from other institutions.

Bookmark www.wacubo.org to see when limited registration opens for these topics.

Phoenix, AZ	Academic & Unit Business Officers	November 7-8, 2011	Registration is open
Los Angeles, CA	Process Mapping	December 8-9, 2011	Registration not open
San Diego, CA	Accounting	Feb/March, 2012	Registration not open
Las Vegas, NV	Process Mapping	Feb/March, 2012	Registration not open
Pacific Northwest	Strategic Planning & Budgeting	April, 2012	Registration not open

Note: Our own Jeff West, Associate Vice President for Financial & Business Services is a part of a team of presenters for Academic and Unit Business Officers meant to enhance knowledge and skill sets for Business Officers in Acadamic or non-academic units throughout campus.

We would love to see you in Phoenix in November!