The Business Office Advisory contains new and updated policies and procedures from the Graduate Center’s Business Office, CUNY, and the New York State Comptroller’s Office. The information in this Advisory covers issues related to tax levy and non-tax levy entities, and it was prepared and submitted by members of the Business Office staff. Please refer to the directory at the end of this document and feel free to contact each department directly with any specific questions.

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1. Purchasing –

IMPORTANT –

Reminder:

In order for an expense to be accepted and charged to the FY 2014-2015 budget, the related goods or services must have been physically received in the College on or before June 30, 2015. Documentation must be accompanied by a bill of lading and/or packing slip to show proof that delivery took place on or before June 30, 2015. If a department receives any of these documents, they must be forwarded to Accounts Payable in room 8105 for processing. Goods/services received after June 30, 2015 will be charged to your fiscal year 2016 budget.

NEW: With the goal of significantly reducing the difficulties and problems that we all experienced last fiscal year resulting from CUNYfirst’s system of processing transactions paid with employee held Procurement cards (P-cards), the Business Office will replace all employee held P-cards with only a few P-cards held by members of the Purchasing department. Going forward, if your department plans to make a purchase that requires a credit card, you are to follow the procedure outlined below. The actual P-card transactions will now be handled by the Purchasing staff. This will eliminate the CUNYfirst requirement for you to reconcile, verify, and approve each of your credit card transactions. This will all be handled by Purchasing.

If your department requires a credit card transaction to be processed you will need to use the new P-card process with the following steps:

1. Submit a signed hard copy/paper requisition to Purchasing.
2. The requisition must include the Department name, contact person (including phone and email), description of goods/services requested.
3. Supporting documentation must be attached to substantiate the charge:
   a. Invoice
   b. Subscription notice
   c. Order form
   d. Any other documentation necessary to support the transaction.

Purchasing will not process a credit card transaction without the required supporting documentation. In light of this new P-card process, the Purchasing department will handle
the CUNYfirst requirement for reconciling, verifying and approval for all P-card transactions.

**Note:** The procurement credit card change will not affect the Travel or NET cards.

**NEW:** This is an announcement about the upcoming change in vendors from Staples to Proftech. Proftech is an authorized reseller for Staples as well as a Minority/Women Owned Business (MWBE). Below is information related to the change from Staples to Proftech. The site where orders will be placed will change to Proftech but is essentially the StaplesLink site with the Proftech name instead of Staples.

The major change that will be implemented in order to utilize the Proftech ordering site will require all tax-levy funded departments to generate a blanket requisition in CUNYfirst for Proftech. A requisition will be generated for the total amount that your department estimates they will spend on office supplies from Proftech for the entire fiscal year. Therefore, if you anticipate spending $750 for office supplies from Proftech for the new fiscal year you would create a requisition for $750 in CUNYfirst which will then be converted into a purchase order by Purchasing. As the fiscal year progresses and you place orders the expenses for orders will be reduced from the purchase order.

The purchase order generated can be increased or decreased to reflect your actual spending. If you require additional funds in the purchase order you will have to create a requisition in CUNYfirst requesting the increase and if you do not spend your entire purchase order balance you can send an email to the Purchasing Office to request a decrease. After you place an order and receive the goods you will have to sign the packing slip and forward it to Accounts Payable. You will also be required to generate a receipt for the amount of your order in CUNYfirst for each order received.

**Meal Allowance:**

The University Central Office has created new guidelines for meals provided during meetings. These guidelines have been reviewed and approved by the University and the NY State Comptroller’s Office, and they must be adhered to in order to pay for food provided during a meeting from tax levy funds. A summary document created by the University outlining the new requirements is available on the Purchasing Department webpage. The highlights of the new guidelines are as follows:
Office of Finance and Administration

- Light Refreshments: the maximum State allowable amount is $8.00 per person
- Modest Meal: the maximum State allowable amount is $15.00 per person

Please note that these rates include all tips, delivery charges and incidentals.

The following documentation must be submitted to Accounts Payable for all events when food has been provided:

- An original agenda indicating the date and duration of meeting
- A printed attendee’s sheet signed by each attendee. If that is not possible, the meeting organizer must submit a signed list of all of the attendees.

In order to be in compliance with the guidelines any meeting where food is provided must be a minimum of two (2) hours in length.

These food limitation costs have been shared with Restaurant Associates as well so they are aware of the new guidelines.

If the per person cost as indicated in the new guidelines is exceeded an alternative funding source will be required to pay the difference.

If you require a transaction to be processed with a credit card please contact the Purchasing Office, provide the supporting documentation and if approved Purchasing will process the transaction with a Purchasing-held credit card.

The travel and NET credit cards will remain available as faculty and staff are still traveling. Keep in mind that for an expense to be charged to FY ’15 the travel must have been completed no later than June 30, 2015. Any travel expense from July 1, 2015 on will be charged to your fiscal year 2016 funds.

Travel and NET- card holders must adhere to NY State purchasing rules and regulations, which require that cardholders submit their monthly reconciliation to Accounts Payable on a timely basis. Failure to comply with those rules and regulations or failure to submit your reconciliation will result in the suspension of credit card privileges. If you are not using your Travel card or do not want to hold a College credit card please turn the card in to Deborah Molina in the Purchasing Office so it can be canceled.
Travel Card Reconciliation Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Billing Period</th>
<th>Reconciliation Due Date</th>
</tr>
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</table>

This is an approximate date; the actual date may vary depending upon when the credit card statement is loaded into CUNYfirst. All credit card holders who have transactions during each monthly period will receive an email from CUNYfirst notifying them that their credit card statement has been loaded into the system. Credit card holders have **FIVE (5) BUSINESS DAYS** upon receiving this notification to reconcile their credit card and have the transactions and reconciliation approved by their supervisor in CUNYfirst. Failure to adhere to this deadline will result in the suspension of the credit card holders credit card privileges.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Ronald Paynter, Director of Purchasing and Contracts at Ext. 7609 or rpaynter@gc.cuny.edu.

2. Accounts Payable (Tax Levy funds)

In order for an expense to be accepted and charged to the FY 2014-2015 budget, the related goods or services must have been physically received in the College on or before June 30, 2015. Documentation must be accompanied by a bill of lading and/or packing slip to show proof that delivery took place on or before June 30, 2015. If a department receives any of these documents, they must be forwarded to Accounts Payable in room 8105 for processing. **Goods/services received after June 30, 2015 will be charged to your fiscal year 2016 budget.**

Make sure that all invoices, receiving reports, and packing slips for goods/services are approved for payment and submitted to Accounts Payable for processing. For goods or services received at the College prior to July 1, 2015, invoices and required documents must be delivered to Accounts Payable by July 15. Any invoices and required documents received in Accounts Payable after July 15 will be returned to the department and should be paid with Soft Funds.
CUNYfirst Travel Authorizations must be created and approved prior to the first date of travel. Once travel has taken place, copy/convert the travel authorization into an expense report and upload all supporting documents in CUNYfirst. In order to charge any expense reimbursement against fiscal year 2015, the Expense Report must be created and approved no later than July 15 for travel that took place by June 30. All the supporting documents and justification letters, when needed, must be submitted to Accounts Payable to complete your payment request.

Travel Authorizations for travel in FY 2016 must be created in CUNYfirst after the budget has been loaded for FY’16, which is expected to become available online by mid-July. For travel dates that begin in FY 2015 and end in 2016, but no later than mid-July, please contact Angella Bowley for instructions.

For information about the new guidelines for On-Site Business Meals, with regards to the use of tax-levy funds, see the Purchasing section of the Business Advisory. The information has also been posted on the Accounts Payable web page for your convenience.

Accounts Payable Webpage Redesigned
Please take a moment to visit the newly redesigned Accounts Payable web page. The new layout showcases the different modules in use and offers step-by-step guidance for all the business processes and procedures in accordance with their respective modules. This new web page is more user-friendly and it provides detailed instructions for most “How-To” questions. PDF manuals and guidelines with illustrative screenshots, PDF writable forms and other useful links are examples of the new tools available on the Accounts Payable Webpage.

NY State Contracts
CUNY employees must use the available NYS contracts for air travel, lodging and vehicle rentals when planning or executing official CUNY business travels. The NYS contracts/agreements can be accessed through the Graduate Center’s Accounts Payable web page by clicking on “Useful Links.” These contracts can also be found on the following links: 
http://www.ogs.ny.gov/bu/ss/trav/ and
Travel and Expense Reimbursements

All reimbursement requests for expenses must be processed using the Travel and Expense module in CUNYfirst, which allows CUNY employees and their proxies to create travel authorizations and expense reports for travel-related and non-travel expenses alike. This online self-service application has replaced all other travel and expense reimbursement procedures. The current CUNY and State regulations regarding travel and expense are still in effect.

Employees who request approval to travel (Travel Authorization) and expense reimbursements (Expense Reports) will enter their information into the CUNYfirst application. Approvals will also be done directly in CUNYfirst by the department approvers.

In some instances, the college administration has identified “proxies” who have the ability to enter travel authorizations and expense reimbursement requests (Expense Reports) on behalf of other T&E users.

Employees who are traveling are required to provide the Dates and Times of Travel, Destination and Business Purpose on their expense reports in the CUNYfirst Travel and Expense module:

- For non-travel reimbursements, employees should also indicate in the Comment field the time the expense was incurred (for expenses associated with an event, use the time of the event and for general office acquisitions, use the time on the receipt)
- For Out of Town travel, the departure and arrival times should also be included
- The Default Location field should reflect the location/county where the employee incurred the expense (change SEARCH by Criteria to Description and type in the name of the city of destination to look up the corresponding county)
- All expense types must have a corresponding Business Purpose associated with them. For all reimbursements not associated with an Out of Town Travel, use the Non-Travel Expense option in the drop down menu.

Expense Reports will be rejected for Users who do not comply with the above requirements. Expense Reports for Out of Town travel without an accompanying
CUNYfirst Travel Authorization will be rejected and will not be paid through Tax Levy OTPS funds.

The Central Office has provided an alternative method of paying non-GC faculty through the Travel and Expense Module. If you are creating an expense report or a travel authorization for someone whose home college is not the Graduate Center (a professor whose home college is another CUNY college) and you need to charge the expenditure to a Graduate Center tax levy account, contact Angella Bowley immediately at abowley@gc.cuny.edu or 212-817-7668.

CUNYfirst has also revised and simplified the procedure for senior colleges to process travel reimbursements for non-CUNY employees. A Vendor Registration Form is no longer required for individuals who are not CUNY employees in order to pay for their travel and travel-related expenses associated with CUNY’s business. Instead, submit the request (Standard Voucher, GD-11, original receipts and business purpose document) directly to Accounts Payable for processing. A State-issued Single-Pay Vendor ID will be used in lieu of a CUNYfirst ID to pay/reimburse the non-CUNY employees travel expenses.

The payee must not be a CUNY employee during the period of travel. The payee can be a U.S. citizen, U.S. Permanent Resident, U.S. resident alien for tax purposes, or non-U.S. resident alien (visitor from outside the U.S.). Non-employees include, but are not limited to consultants, independent contractors, prospective students, individuals for employment interviews, etc. CUNY employees include:

- CUNY’s State employees (senior colleges)
- City employees (community colleges)
- Research Foundation employees
- Or anyone who works for CUNY regardless of:
  - Part time or full time employment status
  - Leave status: Active, Leave of Absence, Leave with Pay, etc.

T-Card/ NET-Card Reconciliations

Cardholders will receive an email notification from CUNYfirst when the monthly credit card statements are loaded into the system. Upon receiving the email they will use the online process to review transactions for accuracy, provide the business purpose for each transaction and attach the appropriate receipts in the system. Approval of the
reconciliations will also be done in CUNYfirst by the department approvers and ultimately by the Accounts Payable Pre-Pay Auditors.

In some instances, the College administration has identified proxies and designees who have the ability to reconcile and approve credit card transactions on behalf of other users.

If you have questions regarding the payment process, please contact Angella Bowley, Director of Accounts Payable at Ext. 7668 or abowley@gc.cuny.edu.

3. Non-Tax Levy Entities –

**REMEMBER:**

For expenses incurred in fiscal year 2015, fund managers are required to submit payment request forms, invoices and supporting documentation immediately so that these expenses can be accrued and booked against the correct fiscal year.

For any questions regarding the Non-Tax Levy entities, please refer to the chart below.

**Contact Persons by Entity:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entity</th>
<th>Documents should be submitted to:</th>
<th>Ext.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>7662</td>
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<tr>
<td>GC Auxiliary Enterprise, Inc.</td>
<td>Althea Harewood/David Tse</td>
<td>7662/7667</td>
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<td>GC Child Care, Inc.</td>
<td>Althea Harewood/David Tse</td>
<td>7662/7667</td>
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<td>Doctoral Student Council</td>
<td>Ab Abraham</td>
<td>7611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GC General Fund</td>
<td>Mario Benitez</td>
<td>7671</td>
</tr>
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</table>

4. Payment Request Procedure (Tax levy and Non-Tax Levy) –

To improve internal control, Payment Requests should not be signed by the same person to whom the payment will be issued. For instance, if a Fund Administrator is submitting a payment request to reimburse her/himself for an out of pocket expense, s/he should not
sign the payment request. Instead, the payment request should be signed by an associate who can verify the expense.

A processing time of approximately 3 – 5 business days will be required for Non-Tax payments. This means 3 – 5 days from the date when all the completed required paperwork is received in the Business Office. If payment is to a new vendor, then please allow 3 additional business days for processing.

**Grant Funds**

Although the paperwork associated with contracts and grants often seems involved, all reports and other accounting documents need to be handled promptly and properly. These records are crucial to the Graduate Center, to the granting agency, and to each department involved with administering the grants. Accountability, making sure that money is spent correctly and on time, is essential in managing grants.

All grants must be carried out within budgetary and other guidelines that the funding agency and the Graduate Center have agreed upon. Expenditures need to be closely monitored and well documented.

To ensure that the Graduate Center’s grant activities are communicated to and coordinated with Principal Investigator, Project Directors, Development Office, Alumni Relations Office and the Business Office, we have established the attached grant process and procedures. Please click on [GCF Grants Process and Procedures](#) for more details.

**REQUEST FOR WIRE TRANSFER FORM**

All wire transfers must be requested on the updated PDF fillable [Request for Wire Transfer Form](#). To ensure legibility and accuracy, complete the PDF fillable form before printing. All of the required fields (including Memo Information) must be completed and must be clear and legible. The form must also include the Fund Manager’s signature. Incorrect information may delay the processing of a wire transfer.

**When is it appropriate to request a wire transfer?**

Wire transfers are generally issued to foreign (international) payees only. Domestic (U.S.) payees are generally paid via check, unless extenuating circumstances exist. A wire transfer may be the best payment method when:
Office of Finance and Administration

- The vendor will have difficulty cashing a check drawn on a U.S. bank account or issued in U.S. dollars;
- There is risk, if mailed overseas, the payment will be delayed or check may be lost in the mail.

**Processing a wire transfer is manual and costly, so this payment method should be used only when it makes good business sense.**

For **Domestic Wires** the following is needed: Beneficiary Information and Beneficiary Bank Information, including account number, ABA number/Routing number.

For **International Wires** the following is needed: Beneficiary Information and Beneficiary Bank Information, including SWIFT / BIC code. Additional information may be required for some countries, but that will be requested as needed. If the Payee bank is part of the European Community, the IBAN and SWIFT / BIC are required as well.

**What is the IBAN?**

The IBAN (International Bank Account Number) is a series of alphanumeric characters which uniquely identify an account held at a bank. It can be up to 34 characters long and contains a two-character country code, two check digits, and the basic bank account number. The basic bank account number identifies the bank as well as the account holder. In printed format, spaces are inserted for readability (i.e. DE16 5003 3300 0532 0130 00).

**What is the BIC?**

The BIC (Bank Identifier Code) is an 8-character code also known as the SWIFT address and is uniquely assigned to banks. Branch codes can be added to the BIC to further designate which branch of a bank should receive the SWIFT message. When a branch code is added, the BIC has 11 characters (i.e. BARCGB22 or DEUTDE3B400).

Please note that additional fees may be deducted by the beneficiary bank from the final amount sent to the payee. The Business Office has no control over those fees.

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5. Accessing Financial Manager Reports using Argos

**IMPORTANT** - All faculty and staff, who are authorized to review the financial reports for their specific non-tax levy funds, have access to those financial reports using a web based reporting tool named Argos. With Argos, you can access your reports at any time during the month, and it will include your entire fund’s financial activity; even the most recent transactions. The benefits of Argos are:

- Easier to access financial reports;
- All reports can access current financial activity. This includes transactions that were recorded right before you order your report;
- Flexibility in choosing the reporting period.

For step-by-step instructions on how to access those financial reports, click on the following PowerPoint file:

Argos Guide

Be aware that you must have a Banner account in order to access Argos. If you do not have a Banner account, you can request one by filling out the PDF form using the link below, and submit it to the IT Helpdesk:

Banner Account Request Form

If you have any questions about accessing Argos or regarding authorization to access a particular department, organization, and/or fund please contact Mario Benitez at Ext. 7671 or mbenitez@gc.cuny.edu.

Payment and Deposit Request Forms

For your convenience, blank Payment Request and Deposit Request forms for Graduate Center non-tax levy funds can be downloaded using the web-based tool, Argos.

- Please print, complete and submit Payment Request forms with appropriate backup documentation to the Business Office.
- Please print and complete Deposit Request forms:
Office of Finance and Administration

- Checks representing gifts to The Graduate Center Foundation, Inc. in support of Program, Centers and Institutes should be submitted to the Development and Alumni Relations Office, Suite 8204.
- All other checks should be submitted to the Business Office.

Visit the Business Office web page at –
http://www.gc.cuny.edu/About-the-GC/Resource-Services/Business-Finance

Business Office Directory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Department</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ab Abraham</td>
<td><a href="mailto:aabraham@gc.cuny.edu">aabraham@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7611</td>
<td>Bursar, Payroll, Doctoral Student Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allan Tsang</td>
<td><a href="mailto:atsang@gc.cuny.edu">atsang@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7610</td>
<td>Bursar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Althea Harewood</td>
<td><a href="mailto:aharewood@gc.cuny.edu">aharewood@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7662</td>
<td>GC Foundation/Aux. Enterprise/Child Care</td>
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<tr>
<td>Angella Bowley</td>
<td><a href="mailto:abowley@gc.cuny.edu">abowley@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
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<td>Carmen Ortiz</td>
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<td>Cheryl Whyte-Weiss</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:dtse@gc.cuny.edu">dtse@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
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<td><a href="mailto:dmolina@gc.cuny.edu">dmolina@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
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<td>Emily Liu</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Eliu2@gc.cuny.edu">Eliu2@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
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<td>Finney Joshua</td>
<td><a href="mailto:fjoshua@gc.cuny.edu">fjoshua@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
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<td>Guy Gerald Fabre</td>
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<td>Hing Ying Lei (Tracy)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:hlei@gc.cuny.edu">hlei@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
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<td>Juan Plazas</td>
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<td>Maribel Rodriguez</td>
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<td>Mario Benitez</td>
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<td>Maurice Wynter</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:wtandrian@gc.cuny.edu">wtandrian@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7634</td>
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