Office of Finance and Administration

The Graduate Center
BUSINESS OFFICE ADVISORY
June 2015

Contents: (Click on any title below to view content directly)

1. Purchasing
2. Accounts Payable
3. Non-Tax Levy Entities
4. Payment Request Procedure
5. Financial Manager Reports: Argos

***

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.

Business Office Advisory – June 2015
1. Purchasing –

IMPORTANT – The last day Purchasing accepted requests for new orders of goods or services for the current fiscal year was April 30, 2015. Effective May 1, 2015 the only requisitions that will be processed in CUNYfirst will be for orders that receive prior approval from Purchasing and the Business Office.

Reminder: in order for an expense to be accepted and charged to the FY 2014-2015 budget, the related goods or services must be 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. If goods/services are received after June 30, 2015 the related expense will have to be charged to your fiscal year 2016 budget.

The University Central Office has created 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 web page. The highlights of the new guidelines are as follows:

Meal Allowance:

- 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.

April 30\textsuperscript{th} was the last day to process transactions with a P-card. Effective May 1\textsuperscript{st} all credit cards have been suspended for the balance of the fiscal year. Beginning May 1\textsuperscript{st} 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. Credit cards will be reinstated on July 9\textsuperscript{th} for the new fiscal year.

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 the current fiscal year the travel must be completed no later than June 30, 2015. Any travel expense from July 1, 2015 on will be charged to your fiscal year 2016 funds.

StaplesLink orders have been suspended as of May 1\textsuperscript{st} until the new fiscal year begins on July 1\textsuperscript{st}. Effective May 1\textsuperscript{st} if you require a StaplesLink transaction to be processed please contact the Purchasing Office, provide the supporting justification and if approved Purchasing will process the transaction.

The Procurement, Travel and NET Credit Card as well as the Travel and Expense modules have been implemented for fiscal year 2015 in CUNYFirst. These modules require all Procurement, Travel and NET Card holders to reconcile their monthly statements in the CUNYfirst system.

To assist the College community with the new module a step-by-step guide was developed which illustrates the Credit Card Reconciliation process. Please contact Purchasing to request a copy of the credit card training manual.

Procurement, Travel and NET credit card holders must adhere to New York 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 credit 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 cancelled. The schedule for submission of the monthly reconciliation is as follows:

**Procurement and NET Card Reconciliation Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Billing Period</th>
<th>Reconciliation Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5/7/15 – 6/6/15</td>
<td>June 12, 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/7/15 – 7/6/15</td>
<td>July 13, 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Travel Card Reconciliation Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Billing Period</th>
<th>Reconciliation Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4/20/15 – 5/19/15</td>
<td>May 26, 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/20/15 – 6/1/15</td>
<td>June 26, 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These are all approximate dates and actual dates may vary depending upon when the credit card statements are 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** after receipt of 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 goods and services to be charged against Fiscal Year 2015, items must be received at the college no later than June 30, 2015.

As we approach the end of Fiscal Year 2015, continue to run the CUNYfirst Budget Report and review your department’s encumbrances and account balances. Ensure that all invoices, receiving reports, and packing slips for goods/services are approved for payment then submitted to Accounts Payable for processing. The CUNYfirst system receipt and inspection, when needed, are also required for payments to be completed. Any invoice and required documents that are not received by July 15 in Accounts Payable 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 occur between FY 2015 and 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 webpage for your convenience.

Accounts Payable Webpage Redesigned

Please take a moment to visit the newly redesigned Accounts Payable webpage. 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 http://www.ogs.ny.gov/purchase/snt/awardnotes/7200122273pm.pdf

Travel and Expense Reimbursements
All reimbursement requests for expenses incurred in Fiscal Year 2015 must be processed using the new 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. Effective January 2015, 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 that belongs to 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.** You are no longer required to submit a Vendor Registration Form 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 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.

**P-Card/ T-Card/ NET-Card Reconciliations**

The reconciliation of credit card type transactions for all CUNY-issued credit cards are now being performed online in CUNYfirst. CUNY-issued Credit Cards include all P-Cards, T-Cards and NET-Cards. This online process has replaced our previous manual reconciliation process.

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.

Please be advised that all credit card posting of transactions to department accounts (posting of Procurement-, Travel- and NET-cards alike) are on hold due to the new CUNYfirst process. Therefore, some recent expenses may not have been charged against your department’s budget yet, nor may they be reflected in your most recent department expenditure report. This simply means that your available budget balance may be overstated. You will be required and responsible to keep track of these types of expenses until the CUNYfirst reconciliation process is completed.

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 –

**REMINDER:**

ALL EFFORTS MUST BE MADE PRIOR TO THE END OF FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015 TO RECORD ALL EXPENSES FALLING WITHIN THE FISCAL YEAR. THEREFORE, FUND MANAGERS ARE REQUIRED TO SUBMIT PAYMENT REQUEST FORMS AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION ON OR BEFORE JUNE 30 FOR EXPENSES INCURRED IN FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015 SO THAT THESE EXPENSES CAN BE ACCRUED AND BOOKED AGAINST THE CURRENT/CORRECT FISCAL YEAR.

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

**Contact Persons by Entity:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entity</th>
<th>Documents should be submitted to</th>
<th>Ext.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GC Foundation</td>
<td>Althea Harewood</td>
<td>7662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GC Auxiliary Enterprise, Inc.</td>
<td>Althea Harewood/David Tse</td>
<td>7662/7667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GC Child Care, Inc.</td>
<td>Althea Harewood/David Tse</td>
<td>7662/7667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<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>
</tbody>
</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:

- The vendor will have difficulty cashing a check drawn on a U.S. bank account or issued in U.S. dollars;
Office of Finance and Administration

- 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.
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>
</thead>
<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>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>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angella Bowley</td>
<td><a href="mailto:abowley@gc.cuny.edu">abowley@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7668</td>
<td>Accounts Payable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carmen Ortiz</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cortiz@gc.cuny.edu">cortiz@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7665</td>
<td>Accounts Payable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catherine Daniel</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cdaniel@gc.cuny.edu">cdaniel@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7663</td>
<td>General Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheryl Whyte-Weiss</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cwhyte-weiss@gc.cuny.edu">cwhyte-weiss@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7664</td>
<td>Accounts Payable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Tse</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dtse@gc.cuny.edu">dtse@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7667</td>
<td>Auxiliary Enterprise/Child Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deborah Molina</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dmolina@gc.cuny.edu">dmolina@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7621</td>
<td>Purchasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily Liu</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Eliu2@gc.cuny.edu">Eliu2@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7666</td>
<td>Budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finney Joshua</td>
<td><a href="mailto:fjoshua@gc.cuny.edu">fjoshua@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7661</td>
<td>Budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guy Gerald Fabre</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gfabre@gc.cuny.edu">gfabre@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7672</td>
<td>Business Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hing Ying Lei (Tracy)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:hlei@gc.cuny.edu">hlei@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7633</td>
<td>Payroll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Plazas</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jplazas@gc.cuny.edu">jplazas@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7670</td>
<td>General Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maribel Rodriguez</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mrodriguez@gc.cuny.edu">mrodriguez@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7683</td>
<td>Bursar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mario Benitez</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mbenitez@gc.cuny.edu">mbenitez@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7671</td>
<td>General Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maurice Wynter</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mwynter@gc.cuny.edu">mwynter@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7652</td>
<td>Purchasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nadine Brydson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nbrydson@gc.cuny.edu">nbrydson@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7632</td>
<td>Payroll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ronald Paynter</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rpaynter@gc.cuny.edu">rpaynter@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7609</td>
<td>Purchasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stuart Shor</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sshor@gc.cuny.edu">sshor@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7604</td>
<td>Business Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendy Eng</td>
<td><a href="mailto:weng@gc.cuny.edu">weng@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7328</td>
<td>Bursar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willima Tandrian</td>
<td><a href="mailto:wtandrian@gc.cuny.edu">wtandrian@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7634</td>
<td>Payroll</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>