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 –

**Fiscal Year 2016 Cut-off Date**

The cut-off date for the submission of requisitions against the current fiscal year will be **April 15, 2016**. We urge you to immediately begin planning your purchases for the second half of this fiscal year and to make sure that all requisitions are submitted prior to the deadline. The Purchasing Department is here to assist you with any bids that may be required. To this end, Purchasing has bid-documentation provided by CUNY Legal that will protect you and the University in the procurement process. Feel free to contact Purchasing so we can provide guidance and obtain pricing for your requests.

**Restaurant Associates Requisitions**

When creating a requisition for services provided by Restaurant Associates please include the following description and information:

**Description information required for requisition:**

1. Catering for (short description of the meeting)
2. Include the time the meeting begins and ends. (Meal guidelines require a meeting to last a minimum of two hours).
3. Include the date of the meeting
4. The number of individuals who attended the meeting

**Attachments required:**

1. Meeting agenda
2. Attendee sign-in sheet
3. Order form or invoice from Restaurant Associates

There are numerous requisitions held from processing and payment because the supporting documentation has not been supplied. Please follow these steps and the Meeting Guidelines provided so your requisitions can be processed promptly.

**Credit Card - Transactions Posting Weekly**

You may have noticed that you are receiving additional emails from CUNYfirst in reference to the reconciliation of credit card transactions. There is a new process initiated for credit card transactions posted in CUNYfirst. The University is posting transactions on a weekly basis and an email is sent out weekly if you have any new or existing charges that have not been reconciled in CUNYfirst.
Credit Card – P-card

If your department requires a credit card to process a transaction for goods you must complete the following steps:

1. Submit a signed hard copy/paper requisition to Purchasing. The requisition form is available on the following link: Purchase Requisition Form

2. The requisition must include the Department name, contact person (including phone number and email address), description of goods/services requested

3. The following documents must be attached to substantiate the charge: subscription notice, invoice, order form, any other documentation necessary to support the transaction.

Purchasing will not process a credit card transaction without the required supporting documentation. With the new P-card process, the Purchasing department will handle the CUNYfirst requirement for reconciliation, verification and approval of all P-card transactions. 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.

All credit card holders who have transactions during each monthly period will receive an email notifying them that their credit card transactions have been loaded into CUNYfirst. Credit card holders have FIVE (5) BUSINESS DAYS upon receipt of this notification to reconcile their credit card and have their transactions verified/approved by their supervisor in CUNYFirst. Failure to adhere to this deadline will result in the suspension of the card holders’ credit card privileges.

Office Supplies vendor

The College Office Supply vendor has changed from Staples to Proftech. Proftech is an authorized reseller for Staples as well as a Minority Owned Business (MBE). The site where orders will be placed has changed to Proftech but it is essentially the StaplesLink site with the Proftech name instead of Staples. Your previous StaplesLink ID and password will now be used to log into the Proftech site.

The major change implemented is in order to utilize the Proftech ordering site all tax-levy funded departments are required to generate a blanket requisition in CUNYfirst for Proftech. A requisition must be generated for the total amount your department estimates they will spend on office supplies from Proftech for the entire fiscal year. Therefore, if you anticipate spending $750.00 for office supplies from Proftech for the new fiscal year you would create a requisition for $750.00 in CUNYfirst which will then
be converted into a purchase order. As the fiscal year progresses and you place orders the expenses for orders are reduced from the purchase order and your budget balance in Proftech.

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.

In an effort to meet the NYS Governor’s goal the College is striving to utilize more MWBE vendors. When you are ready to procure goods or services keep in mind any MWBE vendors who may be able to provide you with your requirements. The following link contains a directory of the NYS certified MWBE vendors, which you can access by business name or business description, to assist in identifying potential MWBE vendors: https://ny.newnycontracts.com/FrontEnd/VendorSearchPublic.asp?TN=ny&XID=4687.

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 web page. The highlights of the new guidelines are as follows:

- **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 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.**

**HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY**

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

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**2. Accounts Payable (Tax Levy funds)**

- **Travel and Expense Reimbursements:**
  
  a. **NY State Contracts:**

     CUNY employees must use the available New York State contracts for air travel, lodging and vehicle rentals when planning and/or executing official CUNY business travels. The New York State contracts/agreements can be accessed through the Graduate Center’s [Accounts Payable](http://www.ogs.ny.gov/bu/ss/trav/) webpage by clicking on “Useful Links.” These contracts and agreements can also be found on the following links: [http://www.ogs.ny.gov/bu/ss/trav/](http://www.ogs.ny.gov/bu/ss/trav/) and [http://www.ogs.ny.gov/purchase/snt/awardnotes/7200122273pm.pdf](http://www.ogs.ny.gov/purchase/snt/awardnotes/7200122273pm.pdf)

  b. **Travel Authorizations:**

     Travel Authorizations (TA, an estimate of travel expenses) **must** be created AND approved in CUNYfirst prior to the first day of travel. Employees who are traveling are required to provide the dates and times of travel, destination and business purpose on their TA and on their Expense Report in the CUNYfirst T&E module:

     - For Out of Town travel, the departure and arrival times should also be included;
     - The **Default Location** should reflect the county where the expense was/will be incurred. Change ‘SEARCH by Criteria’ to ‘Description’ and type the percentage symbol (%) followed by the name of the destination city to look up the corresponding county;
     - All expense types must have a corresponding **Business Purpose** associated with them.

  c. **Travel Reimbursement:**

     Tax levy employees who have a CUNY travel card (T-Card) may use the travel card exclusively for their own expenses related to CUNY business when they are traveling. Allowable expenses include local transportation, conference fees, airfares, per diem meal, etc. The card may **not** be used to cover travel expenses for any other person – tax levy or non-tax levy, **nor** may it be used for non-tax levy expenses. Once travel has taken place,
convert the Travel Authorization into an Expense Report and upload all the supporting documents in CUNYfirst. Supporting documents and justification letters must also be submitted to Accounts Payable to complete your payment request. In addition to reconciling the travel card on a timely basis, a business purpose and original receipts are required. 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 current CUNY and State regulations regarding travel and expenses are still in effect. Approvals will also be done directly in CUNYfirst by the department managers or their delegate approvers.

d. Non-travel (Personal) Reimbursement:

Again, all reimbursement requests must be submitted using the T&E 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 and it must be used even if you are not claiming reimbursement for the expense, in which case the expense type should be identified as non-reimbursable. For all reimbursements not associated with an Out of Town Travel, use the Non-Travel Expense option. For non-travel expenses, employees should indicate in the Comment field the date and time the expense was incurred: use the date/time of the event for expenses associated with an event, or the date/time on the receipt for general office acquisitions. Expense Reports that do not meet those requirements will be rejected.

- **T&E Reimbursement for CUNY Non-GC Faculty:**

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

- **Travel Reimbursement for Non-CUNY Employees:**

  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 for/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, Permanent Resident, Resident Alien for tax purposes, or a non-U.S. Resident Alien. Non-employees include,
but are not limited to consultants, independent contractors, prospective students, or individuals for employment interviews. CUNY employees include:

- CUNY State employees (senior colleges) and CUNY 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.

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. Payroll –

For the year 2016, the maximum amount of earnings subject to social security tax (taxable maximum) will remain the same: $118,500.

The State will be mailing employee’s W-2 forms in January 2016. To ensure your W-2 is received timely, please make sure the Payroll Office has your current address. To update your address, submit the “Notification of Address Change Form” to the Payroll Office no later than Friday December 4, 2015. We ask that you notify the Payroll Office whenever you change your address. Click here for the Notification of Address Change form.

If you have any questions, contact the Payroll office at 212-817-7630 or payroll@gc.cuny.edu.

4. Non-Tax Levy Entities –

Wire Transfers and ACH Transfers:

All transfers must be requested on the updated ACH/Wire Transfer Request Form. The requestor must select one of two options: Wire Transfer or ACH Transfer. To ensure legibility and accuracy, complete the PDF fillable form before printing. All of the required fields (including Memo Information) must be completed. The form must also include the Fund Manager’s signature. Incorrect information may delay the processing of a transfer request.
**When is it appropriate to request a wire transfer?**

Wire transfers are generally issued to foreign (international) payees only. Domestic payees (U.S.-based) are generally paid via check or ACH transfer, 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 or issued in USD;
- There is risk the payment will be delayed or the check may be lost if mailed overseas.

Recently, our bank decided to charge the College a fee for each wire transfer. As a result, all Departments/Funds that request to have their funds wire transferred will be charged as follows:

- $10 for domestic wire transfers
- $20 for international wire transfers

For **domestic transfers**, you have the option of having your funds transferred using the ACH Network, instead of a wire transfer. The ACH Network takes one to two business days to settle and it is **free of charge**. The following is needed for **domestic wires**: Beneficiary Information and Beneficiary Bank Information, including account number, ABA number or Routing number.

For **international wires** the following is needed: Beneficiary Information and Beneficiary Bank Information, including SWIFT or BIC code. Additional information may be required for some countries, but that will be requested as needed. If the payee’s bank is part of the European Community, the IBAN and SWIFT or BIC are required as well.

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**5. Accessing Financial Manager Reports using Argos**

Please visit the [General Fund](http://www.gc.cuny.edu/About-the-GC/Resource-Services/Business-Finance) web page for information regarding grants and financial reports.

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](mailto:mbenitez@gc.cuny.edu).

Visit the Business Office web page at:
## 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>Abraham, Ab</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>Benitez, Mario</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mbenitez@gc.cuny.edu">mbenitez@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7671</td>
<td>General Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bowley, Angella</td>
<td><a href="mailto:abowley@gc.cuny.edu">abowley@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7668</td>
<td>Accounts Payable</td>
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<td>Brydson, Nadine</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nbrydson@gc.cuny.edu">nbrydson@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7632</td>
<td>Payroll</td>
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<td>Daniel, Catherine</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cdaniel@gc.cuny.edu">cdaniel@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7663</td>
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<td>Fabre, Guy Gerald</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gfabre@gc.cuny.edu">gfabre@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7672</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harewood, Althea</td>
<td><a href="mailto:aharewood@gc.cuny.edu">aharewood@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
<td>212-817-7662</td>
<td>GC Foundation/Aux. Enterpr./Child Care</td>
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<td>Joshua, Finney</td>
<td><a href="mailto:fjoshua@gc.cuny.edu">fjoshua@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
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<td>Lei, Hing Ying (Tracy)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:hlei@gc.cuny.edu">hlei@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
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<td>Liu, Emily</td>
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<td>Molina, Deborah</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dmolina@gc.cuny.edu">dmolina@gc.cuny.edu</a></td>
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<td>Paynter, Ronald</td>
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<td>Shor, Stuart</td>
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<td>212-817-7667</td>
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<td>Wynter, Maurice</td>
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## Departmental Webpages:

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<td>Doctoral Students’ Council</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dsc@cunydsc.org">dsc@cunydsc.org</a></td>
<td>212-817-7888</td>
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