Dear Colleagues,

The new Office of Information Security has been hard at work establishing a program to ensure the security of electronic and physical data in SEAS. Please read the efforts that have been made to date in that regard in the Information Security section of this newsletter.

In this issue, we also want to inform the community about the various audits through which SEAS goes on a regular basis and what to expect if your lab is selected for an audit. This information can be found in the Research Admin section. Also in the Research Administration section are some important guidelines on the distinction between gifts and grants, receiving awards from the European Union, along with some current funding opportunities.

Finally, as we wish a Happy Retirement to Susan, we want to take a quick look back at the progress that we have made together in the way we buy, receive, and pay for goods and services in the Procure-to-Pay section and provide contact information while we search for a Procure-to-Pay Manager.

Please keep letting us know how we can serve you better.

Harry Dumay, PhD MBA
Chief Financial Officer/
Associate Dean for Finance and IT Operations

Staffing Announcement

Susan Jones has decided to take an early retirement and will leave her position of Director of Procure-to-Pay on Friday September 30th.

We wish Susan all the best and thank her for her dedicated service to SEAS.

We have begun a search for a Procure-to-Pay Manager who will supervise the day-to-day function of the procurement and payables unit. At the same time, we will also search for a Controller who will oversee accounting and financial services (payroll, receivables, procurement and payables).

Reminder

Susan’s Farewell Party
Friday, September 30th
3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m., MD Lobby

Information Security

October is National Cyber Security Awareness Month

During the month of October, SEAS Information Security Office will be joining a number of universities and corporate entities throughout the country in observing National Cyber Security Awareness month. National Cyber Security Awareness Month (NCSAM) began in 2004 as an annual event to raise the awareness of individuals and organizations to protect their computers, information systems and our nation’s critical infrastructure. Lead by the National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA) with support from the Department of Homeland Security and other organizations, NCSAM has matured into a comprehensive grassroots program complete with a whole range of information and resources for use at home, higher education, and business.

Look for the following events and resources, which are part of SEAS Information Security Office’s educational campaign about information security for the SEAS community:

http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~donnelli/finance/fall11.html
SEAS Information Security Auditing

After we have successfully established SEAS Information Security Risk Management Committee that includes representatives from all SEAS units, we started SEAS Information Security Audit, as our first project. The purpose of the SEAS Information Security Audit project is to evaluate information security risks of the data managed by individual Harvard SEAS units. This audit will allow the Information Security Office (ISO) to assess and recommend the appropriate security measures and compliance procedures to ensure all SEAS units dealing with high risk confidential information (HRCI) are doing so in accordance with Harvard Enterprise Information Security Policy.

SEAS data audit is being implemented in the following phases:

1. A Harvard SEAS Information Security Questionnaire has been provided to SEAS Information Security Risk Management Committee members and they will work with their units to fill out this questionnaire and return it to Information Security Office. This phase is almost done.
2. The next phase, that will begin in the second week of October, is an initial follow-up meeting between the Information Security Office and all individual SEAS units. After all questionnaires are returned, the SEAS Information Security Office will develop a Unit Profile and prioritize follow-up meetings to address units with critical level concerns first. The goal is to review and discuss the results of the questionnaire and better understand the current security posture of the unit.
3. A second set of follow-up meetings with the Information Security Office and individual SEAS units is planned for December 2011. The purpose of these meetings is for ISO to provide information security recommendations to individual SEAS units and start development of individual security implementation improvement plans as needed.

The major goals of the SEAS Information Security Audit are:

1. Achieve initial information security posture assessment of all SEAS units
2. Classify data managed by SEAS units according to sensitivity and criticality
3. Identify data owners, custodians, and stewards across SEAS
4. Provide security recommendations for individual SEAS units to protect HRCI and confidential data and meet Harvard, state, and federal compliance standards.

If you have any questions about the SEAS Information Security Risk Management Committee or SEAS Information Security Audit project please contact SEAS Information Security Office by telephone at 617-496-3502 or by email at security@seas.harvard.edu.

Accounting

Update on University Accounting

In recent years, Harvard has been making steady progress in introducing better accounting standards across all units. The most recent initiative, introduced by the Office of the Controller during the current fiscal year, aims at producing a more robust financial quarterly reporting process that will meet the needs of both internal (Harvard University senior leadership and the JCI, etc.) and external constituents (donors and grantors). A lot of these accounting process changes only affect the Finance Office staff. To the extent the
community is impacted—especially through changes that may be seen in the monthly financial reports—the Accounting staff will keep you informed.

These past and future changes reflect an effort on the part of the University to have internal accounting processes align more closely with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and the standards recommended for internal control procedures.

It is also in this spirit that SEAS is re-organizing all accounting-related functions under the office of a Controller, who will oversee the implementation of these changes within our School.

Payroll

Review of Federal Marital Status & Allowances

This is a reminder that marital status and allowances often change from one year to the next affecting your personal tax obligations. Changes such as marriage, divorce, an additional child, a child who can no longer be claimed, obtaining or refinancing a mortgage or additional income not subjected to withholding will likely affect your taxes due at the end of the year.

Having too little tax withheld can result in a tax penalty. A large refund means you’re having more taxes deducted than is required.

To review or change your current marital status and allowances, go to PeopleSoft self service and follow the links to Payroll and Compensation >W-4 Tax information. Here you can change just your Federal or your Federal and Massachusetts tax withholding.

Additional information about your withholding status can be found at the IRS web site in Publication 505.

Payroll - Behind the Scenes

Beginning August 1st, 2011, the SEAS payroll office took over direct entry of SEAS' monthly payroll (for faculty and other academic appointments) formerly handled by the FAS payroll office.

SEAS Payroll anticipates being able to process Faculty and other Academic payroll more effectively and efficiently moving forward with this change.

Budget

SEAS Office of Budget has worked with the school’s CFO, Harry Dumay, during early September on updating the School’s Multi Year Financial Plan. This five-year plan has been submitted to Harvard’s central Office of Budget and Financial Planning and encompasses a detailed financial plan for the school as it strives to meet the exciting objectives set by the Dean and the faculty in the academic plan. The purpose of the plan is to identify what resources the School will need over the next five years and to suggest strategies for marshalling those resources.

SEAS Office of Budget continues to create monthly budget reports for SEAS’ Budget Managers. As the month of September, and therefore the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2012 is coming to a close, we will have a detailed look at how units are performing against their budgets at first quarter. This will involve meetings or check-ins with all budget managers, ultimately leading to an overall forecast for SEAS performance against its FY12 budget. To help Budget Managers prepare for this exercise, Q1 budget reports should be available by October 17th.

Procurement & Payables

A quick retrospective on the new functionalities introduced at SEAS by Procurement and Payables in the past 3 years:

- Deploy HCOM/iProcurement as the electronic tool for initiating purchases
- Automate outgoing mail-through HU Mail Services Labeling process
- Roll out Online receiving process
- Deploy Arrival Package Tracking system and hand held signature capture, thereby reducing to almost zero the instances of lost or misplaced packages
- Implement an online process for the SEAS community to add new vendors
- Deploy the HCOM Payment request process for invoice payment
- Implement a ‘Standing Order’ for repetitive services, making it easier for the community to make recurrent purchases
- Developed better standards for:
  - Equipment management
  - Complying with federal requirements (i.e. Debarment requests)
  - Managing PCard purchases

For Assistance:

While the search for the new Purchasing Manager is ongoing, please direct questions that you may have to the Procure-to-Pay staff as follows:

General Procurement questions: Joanna Curry at Procurementhelp@seas.harvard.edu

Travel and Reimbursement/ PCard/ Corporate Card questions: Noemis Ortiz at nortiz@seas.harvard.edu or Hera Daldalian at hera@seas.harvard.edu

Equipment purchasing (tagging) questions: Thomas Bourgeois at Thomas@seas.harvard.edu

Research Administration

Audit

The general assumption for all entities, like Harvard (and by extension SEAS) receiving sponsor funds is that they take to heart their fiduciary responsibility and expend funds for the purposes for which they were given and in accordance with any terms and conditions set forth in the award document.

To test that assumption, however, sponsors generally reserve the right to audit the University’s financial records for sponsor awards. In addition, the University engages outside auditing firms to validate its financial statements or its compliance with applicable regulations. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-133 requires an annual external audit of non-profits receiving federal funds. As a result, the University goes through an A-133 audit each year.

In that audit, approximately 15-20 grants throughout the university (two of which from SEAS) are randomly selected for testing to determine that expenditures and procedures were appropriate, allowable, and allocable to the award. Harvard hires an external auditing firm, PriceWaterhouse Cooper (PWC), to conduct the A-133 audit. The A-133 audit is treated as a "report card" of how Harvard spends its money. Audit findings are reported to the federal government and become public record.

Typically, the SEAS Office of Research Administration will inform you if your award was selected for an audit. If you are contacted directly regarding any type of audit, please inform SEAS Research Administration immediately. We will work with OSP and the Sponsor to manage the scope of the audit request.

The areas that PWC looks into during the audit are whether the costs associated with a project are legitimate and whether appropriate supporting documentation for each transaction selected can be found. PWC also looks for consistency in the treatment of costs. Typical audit items are effort reporting, cost transfer, internal control testing, and equipment management.

Funding opportunities

http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~donnelli/finance/fall11.html
ONR's Summer Faculty Research Program
The application for the 2012 program is now open for U.S. citizens who hold teaching and research appointments at U.S. colleges and universities. Application deadline: December 5, 2011

NIH Director's New Innovator Award Program (DP2)
The NIH Director’s New Innovator (DP2) Award program supports early stage investigators of exceptional creativity who propose bold and highly innovative new research approaches that have the potential to produce a major impact on broad, important problems in biomedical and behavioral research. Application deadline: Friday, October 14, 2011

Gates Grand Challenges in Global Health
The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is now accepting grant proposals for Round 8 of Grand Challenges Explorations, an initiative to encourage innovative and unconventional global health and development solutions in the following topics:

- NEW – Protecting Crop Plants from Biotic Stresses From Field to Market
- NEW - Designing New Approaches to Optimize Immunization Systems
- NEW – Exploration of New Solutions in Global Health Priority Areas
- Exploration of Nutrition for Healthy Growth of Infants and Children
- Application of Synthetic Biology to Global Health Challenges.

Initial funding round of grants will be US $100,000 each. In Round II, projects showing promise will have the opportunity to apply for additional funding of up to US $1 million. Please note that while the PI will submit his/her proposal electronically, the proposal still needs to be reviewed and approved by SEAS and OSP prior to on-line submission. Deadline: November 17, 2011

Challenges Related to Research with the European Union Under FP7 (e.g., Marie Curie Fellowship)
The Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7) is the European Union’s main instrument for funding research in Europe. Recently, programs under FP7 have been made accessible to non-EU participants, and OSP has seen proposal applications for both Marie Curie Fellowships and other collaborative programs under this program. However, please be aware that Harvard reserves the right to negotiate terms and conditions of awards made under FP7 and cannot guarantee acceptance of awards through this program at the time of proposal submission. SEAS Research Administration office and OSP should be alerted about any upcoming FP7 proposal submissions. Please contact Seedang for specific guidance on Marie Curie Outgoing Fellowship.

Gifts vs. Sponsored Awards
The distinction between gifts and sponsored awards can be clear or it can be subtle. Harvard’s recently revised policy on Gifts vs. Sponsored Awards is intended to facilitate appropriate categorization of external funds received. Although classification is made first at SEAS, the ultimately determination is made by OSP in consultation with RSO, OGC, or OTD as appropriate. This policy impacts everyone involved in the receipt of external funding to support research at Harvard. The following documents provide PIs with guidance to determine funding type and the accounting classification once the determination is made: Gifts vs. Grants Table and a Framework for thinking about Gifts vs. Grants.