Dear Colleagues,

As we wrap up another budget preparation season at SEAS, we are confronted with the same challenges. We are committed to the teaching and research aspirations expressed in our academic plan. However, our income base was reduced following the financial crisis and, although we managed to reduce some expense categories at that time, others continue to grow.

This set of realities forces us more than ever to optimize the use of our resources. Budget managers across SEAS have engaged in this exercise in recent months. We thank them for their effort. Please see the Budget section of this newsletter to find out about where we are with the FY12 budget process.

Meanwhile, we continue to try to simplify access to services offered by SEAS’ Finance through small process improvements such as submitting invoices electronically, submitting corporate card expenses on one form, and moving from a paper-based to an electronic sponsored research approval form.

IT has engaged in similar efforts to enhance customer service. Please read about them in the IT section of the newsletter.

The transition to Exchange 2010 as an email and calendaring system is almost complete. All staff and graduate students, and all but four faculty members have been migrated to the new environment. One of the main benefits of this transition for users has been a more integrated and faster webmail experience.

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

David Gipstein transferred from SEAS IT to a position with Harvard's Central IT, effective February 18. A search for a new Director of IT has begun.

Announcement of the New Travel Website and Travel Portal

We are pleased to announce the launch of a new website and travel portal for University travelers and visitors to our campus.

The new travel website, www.travel.harvard.edu contains policy information and resources for convenient, safe, cost effective travel.

Accounting

Payroll

A couple of tax changes effective in 2011:

Effective January 1st, 2011, a 2% payroll tax cut was put into place by the Federal Government. Specifically, the Social Security (FED OASDI) tax rate has been reduced from 6.2% to 4.2%. This reduction may increase net pay, but will have no effect on future Social Security benefits.

New calendar year 2011 Federal tax withholding tables were loaded into PeopleSoft on 1/22/11. Due to the expiration of the Making Work Pay Tax Credit, employees may have seen an increase in federal taxes beginning with check date 1/28/11.

Restricted Gift and Endowment Funds

The University is enhancing their compliance measures for all schools and tubs regarding expenses on restricted gift and endowment funds. If you have restricted gift funds, you may be receiving more questions from the Accounting team as they review spending to ensure that it respects the terms established by the donor.

Budget

SEAS Budget Office has submitted the School’s FY12 proposed budget to Harvard’s Central Budget Office. The next step in setting up the FY12 Budget includes reviewing and analyzing SEAS’ Budget submission with Harvard’s Central Administration at their request. Once that process is completed, notification to SEAS' Budget Managers about their Final FY12 Budget will be given. Budget managers should expect that their FY12 budgets will be officially confirmed in June and spending against their budgets can start as of July 1st.

We also recently completed the FY11 second quarter forecast budget. This is a process where we work closely with budget managers to forecast our projected financial position at the end of the fiscal year, June 30, 2011. The second forecast shows that in general, SEAS is spending according to the budget. Kudos to all budget managers. Let us continue to monitor spending in these financially challenging times.

Both the FY12 budget and the FY11 Forecast budget were a huge undertaking and were made a success by the great efforts of all the SEAS Budget Managers. A big thank you to all who helped to make this a smooth and relatively pain free budget season. We welcome any suggestions or comments on ways to improve the budget process going forward.

Procurement & Payables

Airgas East is the preferred vendor for all your gases and dry ice purchases – and is now available as a punchout site! What could be easier?

Purchasing all of your gases and dry ice just got easier. Airgas East, the preferred vendor partner of SEAS and Harvard University, is now available as a punchout vendor in iProcurement. All of the gases and mixtures you need are listed on their site along with pricing. For useful tips on using this new punchout site, visit our intranet site:

https://intranet.seas.harvard.edu/finance/Procurement%20and%20Payables/airgas-east-punchout

Did the vendor call you directly about your order?

Please let your Sr. Procurement Specialist know if a vendor has contacted you directly about cancelling an order or to discuss back orders. We watch all of your orders and contact the vendor when we see something has not arrived timely. If you know an update, please keep us in the loop. Also, do not add items to an order verbally with a vendor once the purchase order has been fully executed. A new requisition must be submitted for all additional items.
Did you know you can submit all your travel receipts and corporate card expenses on one form?

Want to save time when submitting your travel expenses? By selecting your Oracle/WebVoucher Reimbursement/Create Combined Reimbursement/JPMC Direct Pay responsibility you can create one form that captures both expenses and corporate card charges from your trip on one easy to use form.

Use Attachments to submit your invoices or quotations electronically - NO paper copies required

iProcurement provides you the option of attaching documents to your requisitions and payment requests to be sent electronically to our team for processing. There is no need to send us the paper copy once you send it electronically via iProcurement. Documents are stored electronically with the requisition or payment request and are readily available to us for processing. Using attachments helps speed up processing time and saves on the cost and effort associated with printing and storing historical documents. See our intranet site for instructions on how to attach a document to your payment request or requisition: https://intranet.seas.harvard.edu/finance/Procurement%20and%20Payables/files/Attachments%20How-To%20doc.docx.

Research Administration

Changing from paper-based to electronic Dean’s Approval Form

Since February 1, 2011, SEAS has become the first pilot school to roll out an electronic Dean’s Approval Form (a.k.a. "Request") in Harvard's grants management system (GMAS). All actions ranging from new proposals, continuations, no-cost extensions, to pre-award spending, etc. are now entered directly by SEAS Research Administration team. Signatures are made electronically to the maximum extent and the UPAS form has officially been retired. Clear advantages of an electronic process include a quicker turnaround time, less paper waste, and less travel time from Northwest to Pierce to Holyoke Center.

This improvement does not change your proposal submission process in any way. It just makes it easier for us to comply with the University's five-day proposal submission requirement.

New University Cost Sharing Policy

The university has implemented a new cost sharing policy, http://vpf-web.harvard.edu/osp/ effective 3/1/11. There are FAQs to help demystify cost sharing, and to explain how to live with one if it is required by Sponsor. Most important, perhaps, is how to avoid cost sharing. Please be advised that starting January 1st, 2011 NSF prohibits voluntary cost sharing. NSF mandatory cost sharing is required only when explicitly authorized by NSF Director.

“Can I put this expense on my federal grant?”

The Guidelines for Federal Sponsored Expenditure can help you with this question. They are posted to the OSP website at http://vpf-web.harvard.edu/osp/quick_links/policies/#ExpenditureGuidelines. The guidelines intend to clarify the federal constraints and Harvard’s policies for costs that are confusing or controversial. If the goods or services you wish to purchase with federal funds are not listed, please consult your portfolio manager or any members of the SEAS Research Administration.

Remember the 5-Day proposal submission
The new policy on proposal submission, [http://vpf-web.harvard.edu/osp/quick_links/policies/#ProposalSubmission](http://vpf-web.harvard.edu/osp/quick_links/policies/#ProposalSubmission) requires that a full, complete proposal must be submitted to SEAS Research Administration as well as to OSP at least 5 business days before the Sponsor deadline.

Overhead rates for non-federal sponsor


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