PeopleSoft Questions & Answers

With the transition still not being complete, PeopleSoft is often frustrating to those trying to manage spending on their grant accounts. At the June 12, 2002 meeting of the Grants and Contracts Support Group, Jennifer Jones, an OSPA senior accountant, gave a presentation including some of the most common questions. A few are included here.

**Which reports do you use?** Probably the most common is the Budget Variance Report #8 as it has project to date information and detail capabilities through the linked income statement 9. Income Statement #3 is also helpful.

**How do I find the balance on my grant?** Start with Budget Variance #8. To see all amounts related to a project, it is important to only enter the Project ID and to choose current for the month. By doing this, you can see all amounts spent on the grant, funded and cost-shared as of valid entries made the day before. On Budget Variance #8, the far left column under “Project to Date” (PTD) will be your budget. The second column under PTD is the “Actual” for the costs incurred to date. The difference between the two will be your balance available. This can be found in the column called “Budget Variance.” If you would like to know the Total Direct Costs, they are shown as a row and a subtotal of the various columns.

**My senior accountant has told me that my grant is overspent, but I don’t know where they see that. . .** Budget Variance #8 is once again the best place to look for overdrafts in grant accounts. Generally, the amount that you will be responsible for is the amount of direct costs that exceed the budget for the direct costs. To determine what costs need to be moved off the account, enter the Dept ID and drill down to the detail of what is charged to the account to see what to move. Sometimes grants end up with overdrafts because charges are hitting the grant after the end date. By drilling down, you will be able to tell what these charges are. Please note, the account can be overspent even though the Total Direct Costs are equal to budget because when F&A is calculated, the Total Expenditures can be over budget. This happens when the expenditures for excludable items such as equipment, rent, tuition, etc. are under budget and expenditures for items on which F&A is calculated are over budget.

**How do I know if a certain invoice has been paid to a subcontractor?**

Budget Variance #8 wins again! Enter both Project and Dept ID. Drill down to Income Statement 9 or go straight there. If you click the voucher number, you can see if the voucher has been paid yet. If you don’t see the entry there, it means that as of yesterday, the voucher has not been entered or paid.

**Can I use the grant to pay for this?**

This is probably one of the most common questions and is best answered on an individual basis by the OSPA senior accountant. You should have a copy of the detailed budget for the grant. If it is in the awarded and approved budget, you can spend it. If it is a necessary expense not specially budgeted for, different sponsors have different rules about re-budgeting that will need to be addressed with the OSPA senior accountant.

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**E Docs**

As some may have noticed, the Office of Sponsored Program Administration has now cut down on the paper flow (and tree killing) of previous times. Instead of receiving a hard copy of the cover letters and other documents via campus mail, the PI and the Departmental Grants Manager should be receiving an electronic copy via email for your files. The electronic notices reduce operating costs and provide a more-timely means of keeping you informed.
Cost Sharing 101

Cost sharing is the term used to describe the sharing of the total costs on a project that is not paid by the sponsor or granting agency. Most often, this means that the University uses its resources to help fund the cost of a project with a sponsor although it could also involve a third party helping to share the cost as well. If we have agreed to share in the project costs, then there is a legal obligation to record that cost share under federal law and the OMB Circulars A-21 and A-110.

The cost share is said to be mandatory cost share when it is a written requirement of the sponsor and that the ability to apply for and receive an award is contingent upon the campus’ willingness to comply with this requirement. Mandatory cost sharing must be documented and can be audited.

Voluntary committed cost sharing is cost sharing that is submitted in the proposal text, budget, budget justification or scope of work that state more work will be done than the sponsor is paying for and is not required by the sponsor. Even though this is a voluntary contribution, including it in the proposal commits those resources and is binding. This type of committed cost sharing is also produced when a proposal is funded at less than the amount requested and the scope of work is not adjusted accordingly. Voluntary committed cost sharing must be documented by the same mechanisms as mandatory cost sharing; and is auditable.

Voluntary non-committed cost sharing occurs when nothing in the award or proposal mentions cost sharing, but we are expending resources toward a project. This type of cost sharing is a non-binding commitment. PIs should charge all costs for the project to funds available from the sponsor whenever possible, and avoid cost sharing in their projects unless cost sharing is mandated by sponsor guidelines. Cost sharing uses the PI and departmental resources, which are limited. Tracking of cost sharing requires significant extra work for PI's, departmental staff, and OSPA.

Fiscal year closing

With the fiscal year’s close, many of us must consider the closing calendar and deadlines featured on the Controller’s website at http://www.system.missouri.edu/acct/ under the GL Monthly Closing Calendar. Dates to note include:

- **Tuesday, July 2:** Last day feeders may send June transactions
- **Wednesday, July 10:** June Preliminary closes
- **Friday, July 12:** Dept Web JE cutoff date
- **Friday, August 2:** June Web JE cutoff for Accounting
- **Monday, August, 12:** June Final closes

Need help? Call us!

Need to contact someone in the Office of Research? The Office of Research Computer Services web site now hosts an up-to-date phone list for everyone’s convenience. Please go to http://orcs.missouri.edu/cgi-bin/contactdb/phonelist.pl and look up who you need to talk with in the Office of Sponsored Program Administration, the Office of Technology and Special Projects, Institutional Review Board, Animal Care Quality Assurance, and others in the Office of Research.