2022 3rd Quarter Newsletter

Next GCA Forum
Thursday, November 17 11 a.m. – Noon
Zoom info will be sent prior to event.
If you would like to suggest a topic please email gcahelp@uw.edu.
Recording and slides from past forums can be found here.

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Updates and Important Reminders

Useful Websites
Please bookmark these sites as your go-to sources for sponsored project administration questions at UW:

- Grant & Contract Accounting
- Post Award Fiscal Compliance
- CORE (Collaborative for Research Education)
- Office of Research
- Office of Sponsored Programs

GCA Intro

If you’re new to grants management at UW, you may be wondering what our office does and how we can support your work. And if you’ve been here awhile, this overview may serve as a helpful refresher!

The Big Picture
Grant & Contract Accounting (GCA) is a department within UW Finance and is responsible for postaward fiscal management for grant and contract budgets. In partnership with other central offices, department staff, and sponsors, we work with these budgets from setup through invoicing and financial reporting all the way to closeout. We also assist with the setup and closeout of gift, endowment, surplus, and discretionary budgets.

The majority of GCA staff are Budget Fiscal Analysts assigned to one of four “streams”—Budget Setup, Invoicing, Reporting, and Closing. Their work is largely driven by the requirements and deadlines dictated in the terms and conditions of sponsor award agreements.

The five-member Grant Analyst (GA) team triages all incoming inquiries and messages from sponsors, campus departments, and other UW central offices. Incoming items the GAs cannot resolve directly are routed to the appropriate stream or streams. The GAs share access to and responsibility for the gcahelp@uw.edu email account and the GCA Help phone line, and each team member is responsible for a set of Grant Tracker topics on a quarterly rotating basis.

When and How to Contact GCA
Make us your go-to resource for questions related to:

- Budget setup and revisions, including sub budgets
- Sponsor invoicing and payments
- Financial reporting
- Cost share
- Closeout of grant budgets

We are available via Grant Tracker, email, and phone:

- For inquiries related to a specific budget number and involving internal UW contacts only, use Grant Tracker
• Email us at gcahelp@uw.edu for general questions or for any inquiry including an external contact (e.g. a sponsor, a PI who has left UW, or anyone else without a uw.edu email address)
• Call us – we’re available 9 AM – noon and 1 – 4 PM at 206-616-9995

Tips for Working with GCA

• Provide up-to-date contacts in Grant Tracker for the budgets you manage. Instructions on adding or updating contacts can be found here: https://finance.uw.edu/gca/training-outreach/updating-contacts-grant-tracker
• Do not use multiple contact methods for the same question or issue (e.g. Grant Tracker and email)
• Respond promptly to Grant Tracker or email requests for information
• Notify us if you receive a payment (or payment advice) for a grant/contract budget

When NOT to Contact GCA (and Where to Go Instead)

• Outgoing subcontracts/subawards (OSP Subaward Team)
• Pre-award issues (OSP)
• Faculty effort and GCCRs (Management Accounting & Analysis)
• Purchasing Issues (Procurement Services)
• Clinical Trial Invoicing (Institute of Translational Health Sciences Clinical Research Handbook)
• Non-grant budgets (Budget Contacts by Prefix)

Researching Mystery Transactions

With the exception of indirect costs, GCA does not post expenditures to budgets; however, GCA Help receives a fair number of campus inquiries asking for help in identifying the source of a charge. Here are a couple of quick tips track down this information.

1: MyFD
In this sample, a charge was transferred on to a closed budget. Who did that? Click on the object code or Description, which are blue hyperlinks, to get to the transaction detail.

Scroll down to Originating Area Code to see which department initiated the charge:
The Transaction Detail shows that Harborview Medical Center originated the charge, and the Organization Code identifies the department within HMC that initiated it.

2: Decision Support
For JV copies or transaction detail, use Decision Support, aka BI Portal. This system can be accessed from MyFD by using the drop down on the far right to select Decision Support.

Once there, scroll to Journal Voucher Detail and run the report. For best results, enter a date range and the JV number, then click View Report.

This option provides more detail on the JV, which can help identify who to contact regarding the charge.
If you’d like more information, this topic was covered in greater detail in the Fall 2020 Forum. The recording is located on our website under Training and Outreach. Click here to go to the list of Forum recordings.

**Restricted Funds 101**

Restricted funds on an award can mean one of two things: Funds may be restricted for a specific purpose, or they may be restricted pending sponsor approval to be released for expenditure. How we treat the funds depends on which scenario we are encountering.

If funds are restricted for purpose, GCA will make a note on the Funding Action (FA) notification that there are funds restricted for a specific use. The department has the option to request that a sub budget be established to track the separate funds, but in most cases this is not required.

Restricted funds that are not released are treated a bit differently. A common example of this is carryforward funds awaiting sponsor approval. If there are funds remaining at the end of one period, but we do not have automatic carryover, we will move the funds forward, but they will be restricted until we receive sponsor approval authorizing the carryover. While this is the most common reason for restricted funds pending sponsor approval, there are other scenarios where it can occur. E.g. on multi-year awards, funding for later years may be restricted pending receipt of annual reports, or funding may be restricted until activity is authorized for different award subtasks.

In all of these cases, we will make note of the restriction on the FA notification, but we will also put the funds in the restricted category 37-99 on the budget. These funds will show up in Grant Tracker, but they will be encumbered as not yet available for use. Additionally, when we use the 37-99 object code, the funds will not display as available on any invoices sent to the sponsor. When the funds are released by the sponsor, we will move the funds out of 37-99 into usable object codes and remove the encumbrance for the restricted funds.

It is important to be aware of any restricted funds on your budgets to prevent overspending. If you are solely viewing the award and revenue in Grant Tracker, you may miss that some of the funds are restricted and not available yet. If you spend over the amount available and the funds are never released by the sponsor, this will result in a deficit to your department. Please read your FA notifications carefully and review how your budget is allocated in the MyFD Budget Summary view.

If you have any questions about topics discussed in this newsletter or would like to suggest topics for future newsletters, please contact us via email at gcahelp@uw.edu. Inquiries related to a specific budget should be sent via Grant Tracker.