

First Fridays with the Budget Office

Financial Improvement Transformation Forum

March 3, 2016

Thank you for attending March's First Friday's with the Budget Office and for participating in the Financial Improvement Transformation forum with Vice President Bob Brown. Your candid feedback helped identify the areas of improvement most important to you.

Below we have listed the questions and comments posed during the forum. We will be updating our responses as additional information becomes available. Again, thank you for your questions, concerns, and patience as we all continue to navigate through this transitional time.

Reporting

1. Transactions are back dated on the Transaction Detail Report. This causes budget reconciliation issues. Can this be corrected?

Now you can view transactions by the accounting period or by the date the transaction was entered! The Transaction Detail Report contains two columns: Accounting Period and Date. The "Accounting Period" reflects the period to which the transaction was posted. The "Date" reflects the date the transaction was entered. For example, November P-Card transactions (items purchased in November) were posted to the December period on March, 9th. The Accounting Period will show as "Period 4, December 2016." The Date will show as "March 9, 2017".

2. Payroll drill-down detail by employee is needed. The drill-down payroll capabilities should be the same as in 9.0 Cognos. **Per a show of hands, this was the number one priority of attendees.*

Payroll Drill-Down Detail is now available! Now you can drill into an employee to see all fiscal year payroll associated with that employee, regardless of funding source.

3. The Cognos Budget Summary Report does not show functions.

Functions are now displayed on the Budget Summary Report! Please note that "Function Unknown" represents balances without a Function.

4. Travel reimbursements are missing journal descriptions on the Cognos reports, and vendor names are not being shown.

In February the COGNOS reports were updated to pull data from the budget ledgers (KK) rather than from the General Ledgers. The change was necessary to ensure that users saw real-time information without delays.

Unfortunately, some journal descriptions and vendor names that are available in the General Ledger are not available in KK. The DAIR team is investigating what additional programming is needed to pull the information from the various databases within PeopleSoft and will provide an update at the next First Friday meeting on April 7th.

5. Account descriptions are missing on the Cognos reports.

Account descriptions are now available! When running the “Transaction Detail Report” you will see the account descriptions listed in the “Account” column.

6. It would be helpful to view a particular invoice number on a Purchase Order (PO).

Invoice numbers are now available! Within the Transaction Detail Report, simply drill into the hyperlink associated with your voucher to view the invoice number.

7. Users would like to have all the old Cognos Reports back including the Encumbrance Report.

The DAIR team will provide an update on the status of the Encumbrance report at the next First Friday meeting on April 7th.

8. Users don’t know what account will be used for copier lease charges. Why is this happening? Is there a general rule?

In September, copier leases were reclassified to capital leases, which resulted in charges posting to Capital Expense. Some leases may have been overlooked and, as a result, would still be reported under Maintenance and Operations Expense. UNTS is performing an analysis of all leases, to be completed this summer, to make a final determination of where each lease should be classified. At that time, guidelines will be available for determining which copier leases will be reported as capital leases (and expensed as a capital expense) or reported as operating leases (and expensed as maintenance and operations).

9. Pcard transactions for grants are lumped together by account rather than by individual invoices. This makes it very difficult to reconcile spending by different users and vendors.

The DAIR team will provide an update on the status of separating transactions by invoice rather than by account at the next First Friday meeting on April 7th.

10. Pcard descriptions should be improved to say “Pcard – Empl Name - Vendor” rather than “Pcard – Empl Name – Account.”

The journal line description is based on the interface file pulled from GCMS (Citibank Global Card Management System). Purchasing is investigating whether that information can be updated to a format that meets this request. Please note that there is a 30 character limitation for this field. Purchasing will provide an update at the next First Friday meeting on April 7th.

On a separate note, journals are separated based on type of funding and can be identified by the Journal ID mask and Journal Header Description. See table below.

Journal ID Begins With	Journal Header Description
PB	PCard Journal - Buyer
PG	P-Card Journal -Grant
PL	P-Card Journal - Local
PS	PCard Journal - State

11. The nature of the new COA and reports requires that users be accountants.

Incorrect mapping at conversion as well as limited reporting options have presented challenges with managing budgets. These issues are declining as departments become more comfortable with un-comingling their funds and creating chartstrings that best fit their needs. As reporting capabilities continue to improve users will be able to manage their budgets without having to do the background work that is currently needed. For example, 9.0 payroll drill-down features have been added to the 9.2 Cognos reports. Users now can quickly track payroll costs associated with each employee without having to drill into every payroll journal.

If you have a suggestion for an improvement to a report, we encourage you to email [DAIR](#). For assistance with creating chartstrings that best fit your department’s needs, please reach out to the [Budget Office](#).

Account Budget Authorizations (ABA) & Interdepartmental Transactions (IDT)

12. The ABA form won’t accept cents.

We apologize for the oversight. The form has been updated on the Budget website.

13. When submitting ABA’s, the Budget Office updates the chartstrings and/or accounts without notifying users.

To prevent processing delays the Budget Office has updated incorrect chartstrings when non-allowable fund category/fund combinations were used or when non-allowable transfers were requested. The Budget Office has also updated accounts when non-allowable or incorrect accounts were selected.

Beginning Monday, March 20th the Budget Office will return all incorrectly completed ABAs or work with the requestor to obtain the correct information. Exception: The Budget Office will continue to correct incorrect account codes used on non-budgetary chartstrings given that only a single option is allowable on the sending chartstring and only a single option is allowable on the receiving chartstring.

14. Better descriptions are needed on ABA/IDTs transactions. For example, the payer description for sponsorships processed on ABAs/IDTs simply state “sponsorship.” The receiving department is not able to tell who paid.

In January, IT Shared Services (ITSS) in coordination with the Budget Office and Financial Reporting, began the process for moving ABAs and IDTs to an electronic format. Once the electronic forms are implemented, each request will be assigned a unique ID from which users will be able to determine the From/To chartstrings associated with their transactions. Electronic forms will be available in September. The Budget Office and Financial Reporting are investigating interim solutions and will provide an update at the next First Friday meeting on April 7th.

15. Service Departments are incorrectly updating department chartstrings on the IDTs. This includes adding purposes or changing functions.

Processing departments should always use the chartstring they are given. The Budget Office has reached out to those service departments who have made modifications to explain that chartstrings should not be modified. If your chartstring is incorrectly modified, please notify the [Budget Office](#) and include details of the transaction including your contact at the processing department.

If a service department suggests a correction to your chartstring, please feel free to email the [Budget Office](#) to determine if the suggestion is correct.

16. Service Departments, including Dining and Facilities, are not being able to process IDTs for services rendered because the receiving department is in deficit.

The Budget Office does process IDT overrides for Service Departments when services have already been rendered. We apologize if your override was denied in error. When requesting an override, please make sure to indicate that your department is a Service Department and that the services have already been rendered to ensure that your override is processed.