

FST ROUND TABLE

March 19, 2015

2:00pm to 3:30pm

Strathcona Anatomy & Dentistry Building,
Faculty Council Room M/48

Agenda

1. Announcements, Updates & Reminders
2. Tri-Agency Year End 2015
3. Compliance Update (Q2)
4. Best Practices – Management
5. Open Dialogue / Q & A / Closing Comments

Staff Announcements



Staff Announcements:

- Mavis Smith, AP Supervisor, Transactions Services has transferred to the Faculty of Science
- Orsola Sasso has been appointed as the AP Supervisor, Transactions Services
- Liette Daoust has been appointed as the Supervisor, Unrestricted Accounting
- Tara Wilkens has been appointed to Financial Administrator, Financial Reporting
- Nancy Furlano has transferred to the Faculty of Science
- Mariya Yaneva has accepted the FMT position

New FST Members

- Faculty of Arts: New FST Manager
 - Andria De Luca



Announcements, Updates & Reminders

■ Pending from last meeting:

■ Treasury board directives

- http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pubs_pol/hrpubs/tbm_113/menu-travel-voyage-eng.asp
- Appendix C & D refer to Meal Allowances
- Note: These are guidelines only



■ New items:

■ Computer justification

- As per TAFAG, Computers, tablets, modems, emerging technology and other hardware and/or specialized software required for the research not normally provided by the institution, and with **adequate justification**.



Announcements, Updates & Reminders

- Naming a Delegate in an Acting Capacity as Unit Head during Temporary Absences has been UPDATED

*“To delegate signing authority for Purchase Requisitions, Travel Advances, Expense Reports, Payment Requests, and POPS timesheets for **Research Grants and Contracts** where you are the Principal Investigator, please use the respective Minerva menu options: Delegate Purchase Requisition Approvals and/or Delegate Temporary Signing Authority”*

- When delegating signing authority in a researcher’s capacity the MINERVA delegation menu must be used
- <http://www.mcgill.ca/financialservices/forms>
- Travel Desk requires that the new revised form be used effective immediately



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Announcements, Updates & Reminders

- UPDATE - Reimbursement of Expenses Policy



- **Excerpt from Section 4.4.6 Summary of Expense Type: Transportation - Expense Type (4) Airfare**

"Airfare that includes costs which are not a necessary consequence of travel on behalf of the University (e.g. avoidable stopovers and trip extensions) is considered personal. The claimant is responsible for obtaining and attaching to the Expense Report one airfare quotation for the itinerary purely related to University business (i.e. that excludes avoidable stopovers and trip extensions). The claimant will be reimbursed the lowest airfare."



Tri-Agency Year End 2015

- Financial Statements 2015
 - The Tri-Agency Team will begin preparing financial statements the week of April 13th

- FST's can help by:
 - Reviewing financial statement with PI
 - Obtaining PI signatures
 - Emailing signed financial statement back to FA
 - Sending original signed hardcopy to FA for record keeping

Tri-Agency Year End 2015

Please note that due to volume and in order to meet the Tri-Agency deadline of June 30th the fund administrators will be focusing on producing financial statements and will be unable to respond to queries.

During this time we ask that you direct your queries to one of the following:

- Year End / Financial Statement queries:
 - RFMS Financial Statements: rfms-financialstatements.finserv@mcgill.ca
 - Eligibility queries:
 - RFMS Expense Eligibility: rfmsexpense-eligibility.finserv@mcgill.ca
 - All other queries:
 - RFMS Help Desk: rfmshelpdesk.finserv@mcgill.ca
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Compliance Results FY15 (Q2)

- FY15 (Q2) results were communicated to the FFOs and the TRIG Executive Steer Co in late February 2015
- Results remain consistent with those of FY15 (Q1)

Overall University Totals (Includes Other Research)

PROGRAM	FY15 (Q2)	FY15 (Q1)	FY14
Expense Reports	30%	28%	36%
POPS	26%	28%	41%
BSA	14%	NA	17%



Compliance Results FY15 (Q2)

- The TRIG Executive Steer Co is concerned with the increase in non compliance for EXRs specifically as it pertains to Tri-Agency claims.

Tri-Agency Specific			
PROGRAM	FY15 (Q2)	FY15 (Q1)	FY14
Expense Report	35%	30%	40%
POPS	23%	27%	40%
BSA	14%	NA	17%

- These results need to improve in order for us to obtain reasonable assurance that we are ready for the upcoming Tri-Agency monitoring visit.

Compliance Persistent Findings

■ Expense Reports

Issues	M&C Observations	Requirements
No affiliation of claimant to grantee	No affiliation stated when traveller is not the grantee OR only the ID of the traveller is indicated	Affiliation to the researcher must be specified – e.g. Post Doc, Grad Student, etc.
No conference program/prospectus/agenda	No documentation attached to the claim to support the travel	Official supporting documentation (e.g. prospectus or program, invite letter or email correspondence) must be attached to the claim
Ineligible Expenses	Alcohol expenses are being charged to the Tri-Agency grants	Alcohol must be deducted from the bill
Missing original receipt(s)	Credit card chits are attached in lieu of original receipts	Original receipts are required - credit cards slips are not valid receipts



Other Compliance Findings & Reminders

- Expense Reports:
 - For **Tri-Agency** – if the traveler is a visiting researcher, the claim must be countersigned by the Department Head or Dean
 - If no proof of travel, boarding passes must be attached to the claim
 - We have noted an increase in cancelled trips: in most cases, Tri-Agency deems these claims as **ineligible**.
 - Before approving the claim, gather all relevant information from the claimant and forward to rfmsexpense-eligibility.finserv@mcgill.ca



Other Compliance Findings & Reminders

■ POPS

- Digital Signatures are not permitted
- Timesheets must be signed **after** the work is completed and must be signed **before** the payment is processed
- POPS delegate must be recorded in the Minerva “**Delegate Temporary Signing Authority**” menu
- Offer Letters must be signed by the Principal Investigator (PI)

■ BSA

- Digital Signatures are not permitted
- Student Stipend Authorization Forms must be signed before installments are paid

Tri-Agency 2016 Monitoring Visit



- The next monitoring visit is scheduled for Spring 2016
- The audit reference period will be April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016

All transactions posted as of **April 1, 2015** **MUST** be compliant to Tri-Agency guidelines.



Need Assistance



- RFMS is committed to assisting the Faculties in improving their compliance performance:
 - RFMS Eligibility Email rfmsexpense-eligibility.finserv@mcgill.ca
 - Contact your Fund Administrator
 - Contact Monitoring and Compliance
 - Stella Sotocinal 514-398-1672
 - Sonia Pietraroia 514-398-5678
- On-site training is available. If you are interested, please speak to your FFOs and we will coordinate the training details with them.



FST Presentation: Faculty of Management

 DESAUTELS Faculty of Management
Faculté de gestion

Organization of the Finance Department:

Director of Finance & Planning

FFO

FST

FST

Accounts Administrator

Student



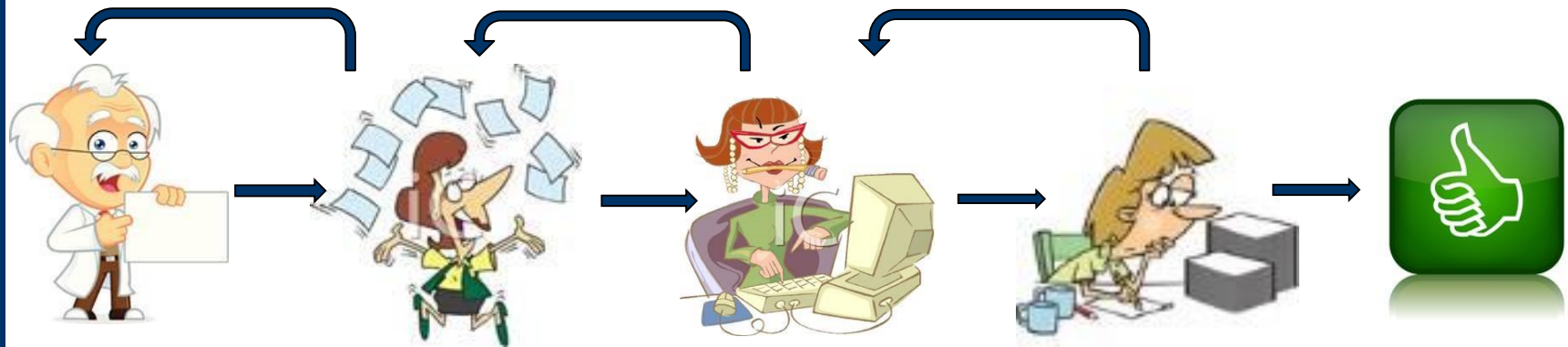
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FST Presentation: Faculty of Management

DESAUTELS Faculty of Management
Faculté de gestion

What works well in the Faculty: How an expense report travels from inception to approval



Professors/Claimants
-Gives receipts & documents to the Admin Coordinators/ Assistants

Admin Coordinators/Assistants
-Prepares the ERs, submits to the Accounts Administrator

Accounts Admin
-records date received
-reviews for completeness
-liaise between FST & Admin Coordinators/ Assistants

FST / FFO
-Reviews for eligibility
-Prepares yellow sheet for non-compliant items
- Provides additional support/ clarification as necessary
-FFO: final review and Dean's approval



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FST Presentation: Faculty of Management

- Detailed Corrections
- Tracking
- Streamlined Communication
- Yellow sheet also serves as an up to date guide of current compliance requirements

CORRECTION MEMO

Expense report # _____

Expense report returned to: _____ Date: _____

The attached Expense Report cannot be processed due to insufficient information and has been returned for the following reason(s):

Correction required to the following items:

- Conference program missing
- Meeting agenda missing (email communications and/or research notes between claimant and third party)
- Proof of payment missing (copy of credit card statement, credit card slip, cancelled cheq.) for item(s) # _____
- Original Invoice/receipt(s) missing for item(s) # _____
- Detailed restaurant receipt missing for item(s) # _____
- Incorrect currency for item(s) # _____
- E-ticket or original travel agency invoice required for item(s) # _____
- Incorrect per diem (if per diem is claimed for a meal, a meal receipt cannot be submitted for the same meal)
- Exceeds maximum allowable expenses item(s) # _____
- Affiliation between claimant & researcher must be specified
- Please provide explanation to item(s) # _____ belonging to a party other than the claimant (relationship with PI)
- Financial Manager / Area Coordinator or one up approval is missing
- Claimant's signature / or Visitor Claimant's Form is missing

Additional notes/comments:

Once rectified, please return the Expense Report along with this memo to your Financial Department. The claim will be processed promptly upon receipt. We thank you for your assistance.

Financial Department
Desautels Faculty of Management, Room 454

FD initials: _____

Corrected expense report returned on: _____ / _____ / _____ Signature _____

Reimbursement of Expenses Policy: <http://www.mcgill.ca/financialservices/policies/reimburse>



FST Presentation: Faculty of Management

How do the FSTs Communicate Compliance/Sponsor requirements to the Researchers?

- FFO sends compliance updates via email to researchers
- Regular Secretary Meetings: Communicate Compliance Results and Requirement Updates
- Follow up one-on-one as required for further clarification with PI



FST Presentation: Faculty of Management

Is any training being provided in the Faculty vis-à-vis compliance?

- Training with FSTs: new staff and new professors
- Admin Coordinator/ Assistant Group Training and Q&A multiple times a year
- Memos/ training guides provided as a quick reference



FST Presentation: Faculty of Management

What Process Improvements & Best Practices are in place, that can assist other Faculties?

- Meticulous verification of ERs to ensure compliance
- Yellow Correction Sheet which includes an up-to-date checklist
- Tracking Spreadsheet
- Provide customized quarterly fund reports tailored to PI's needs
- Finance team actively provides support to PIs
- Heads up: upcoming policy changes
- Ongoing training & review with Admin Assistants/Coordinators; positive compliance results shared
- POPS timesheet verification
- BSA tracking and planning of student support



FST Presentation: Faculty of Management

In FY15 the faculty had major improvements across all transaction streams leading to positive compliance results.



FST Presentation: Faculty of Management

What Challenges Remain?

- Enforcing stricter policies while remaining amicable with the PIs
- Policies open to interpretation
- Reduced Budgets and stricter spending guidelines
- Receiving ERs within 30 days of travel, 60 days for non-travel expenses

Upcoming FST Meetings



- Upcoming FST meetings
 - Next Faculty to present is.....

■ Next Meeting

Date	Time	Location	Room
April 22, 2015	10:00am - 11:30am	Strathcona Anatomy & Dentistry	M/48

- The FST meeting schedule for 2015 is posted on the RAN website
<https://www.mcgill.ca/research/ran/members/financial-services-teams-fst>

OPEN DIALOGUE

