



**FINANCIAL SERVICES CONFERENCE**

March 31 and April 1, have been selected as dates for the Financial Services Conference being hosted by UW System Administration and held at 780 Regent Street.

Desired topics and agenda items may be submitted to Gary Prisbe at <gprisbe@cmail.uwsa.edu>. Registration is available through the Financial Administration Web page, <http://www.uwsa.edu/fadmin/webform.htm>.

**SPRING CONTROLLERS' CONFERENCE**

The spring Controllers' Conference will be hosted by UW-Oshkosh on April 27 and 28.

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Oshkosh Park Plaza International Hotel (formerly the Hilton). Call the hotel (920-231-5000) by April 9 to reserve a room, and indicate "UW System Controllers" to receive the state room rate.

The meeting will begin at 12:30 and end at 4:30 the first day, and will be held at the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Museum. You may then tour the EAA Museum for an entrance fee of \$5.00 per person which will be collected and paid that afternoon. Maps will be sent to each controller, with directions to the EAA and the hotel.

Wednesday, the meeting will begin at 8:00 a.m. at the UW-Oshkosh Student Union. Departure will be at noon.

Register for the conference at the Financial Administration Web page: <http://www.uwsa.edu/fadmin/1999cont.htm>.

**CHANGE TO GIFT, GRANT AND CONTRACT REPORTING**

In September 1997, the Board of Regents changed the reporting requirement for gifts, grants and contracts from detail monthly reporting to summary monthly reporting. Subsequent to Board approval at their February 5, 1999, meeting, the monthly reporting by the institutions was changed to quarterly reporting. This change is in response to requests to reduce institutional reporting requirements.

**COLLECTION SERVICES CONTRACT**

The State of Wisconsin has signed a contract with eight different vendors for collection services: Collections Unlimited, Enterprise Recovery Systems, General Revenue Corp., Payco-General American Credits, Regional Adjustment Bureau, State Collection Service/Williams & Fudge, Valley Acceptance Corp. and Van Ru Credit Corp.

Financial Administration has provided UW System controllers information regarding the fees negotiated in the contract. Further information regarding these contracts can be obtained by visiting DOA's VendorNet site <http://vendornet.state.wi.us/> and looking under contract number 15-93250-801. Institution purchasing offices can assist in establishing view-only access to this site.

**NEW DOMESTIC LODGING MAXIMUMS**

The Department of Employment Relations has issued a new listing of maximum rates for lodging in most domestic cities. Unfortunately, most of the rates declined. DER uses Federal Government's lodging maximums, plus 25%. The Federal Government, this calendar year, reduced all their maximums because they no longer include state and local taxes. The State/UW's maximums have not included taxes for a number of years.

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## HOTEL UPDATE

Contracts for 1999 preferred corporate rates have been renewed with hotels in many of the frequently traveled to U.S. cities and with the Super 8 Motel chain. Information is available on the UW System Travel Page. Employees are strongly encouraged to use the contract properties. The contract rates may also be used for leisure travel.

## FPPP/GAPP PROJECT UPDATE

The Financial and Administrative Policies (FAPs), formerly FPPPs and GAPPs have now been consolidated and the table of contents reformatted. The letters "F" for FPPP and "G" for GAPP, along with the old number of the paper, will continue to be referenced for an indefinite period. Because there was concern expressed by some that they were no longer able to quickly locate papers by their old numbers and they had to search multiple functional categories to find them, the old numeric lists of FPPPs and GAPPs have been replaced on the Web page below the functional categories listing. A search engine has also been installed to enhance the availability of information.

Policy documents yet to be revised before the project is completed are:

### FPPPs

- 20 Segregated Fee Expenditures
- 24 Internal Services Chargebacks\*
- 30 Vendor Sponsored Education Sessions\*
- 43 Auxiliary Reserve Policy\*
- 44 Auxiliary Reserve Procedures

### GAPPs

- 7 Accounting and Budget Control
- 21 Maintenance of UW-Owned Residences\*
- 29 Special Course Fees
- 30 Cooperative Special Fee Schedules
- 40 Position Management

*\*Papers that are currently in process*

There is ongoing minor revision to many policies on the Web that are often not communicated to the institutions. When minor revisions occur, the "Last Edited" date at the bottom of the FAP will be changed. Accordingly, we strongly discourage relying on paper versions that may be in circulation. Instead we recommend that individuals who need access to the information go directly to the Web site.

We will continue to inform institutions of any major revisions. When major revisions occur such as in connection with the revision project, the "Last Revised" date at the top of the FAP will be changed.

**One final note: the URL for the FAP page has been changed. Please update your bookmark accordingly.**

## TRA Q&A's

A series of potential Questions and Answers (Q&A's) have been developed to assist institutions in responding to questions on the Hope Scholarship and Lifetime Learning Tax Credits. Over 200,000 Form 1098-T's were mailed at the end of January. System Administration has established links to the following IRS documents related to these credits and the student loan interest deduction:

- IRS Notice 97-60 (Education Tax Incentives: Questions and Answers)
- IRS Publication 970 (Tax Benefits for Higher Education)
- IRS Form 8873 (Education Credits (Hope and Lifetime Learning Credits))
- IRS Notice of Proposed Rulemaking—Education Tax Credits (1/6/99)

Comments on the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking are due by April 6. Institutions have been asked to provide comments to contribute toward a systemwide response to IRS.

## LOAN SERVICING CONTRACT

The UW System Purchasing Office has reached agreement with University Accounting Service, Inc. (UAS) on an agreement to extend the current contract, which expires on April 30, 1999, for an additional six months through the end of October 1999. The proposed contract extension provides for two minor contract amendments that have been agreed upon by the controllers of the institutions that use UAS for loan servicing. In February, our office convened a meeting of the systemwide committee that has volunteered to begin drafting an RFP for loan servicing beyond October 31. That group includes Sharon Radtke of UW-La Crosse, Denise Rohan of UW-Madison, Michelle Schartner of UW-Milwaukee, Lori Worm, Lynn Kriha and Jane Preder of UW-Oshkosh, Diane Badtke of UW-Parkside, Tom Stodola of UW-Platteville, Kay Hellendrung of UW-Stout, Rick Alden of UW-Superior, Al Haberman of UW-Whitewater and Doug Hendrix of System Administration.

## REPORTING DUE DATES

To assist institutions in meeting reporting deadlines, a chronological list of reports, showing the report name, date due, distribution and the policy to which they relate, has been added to the Financial Administration Web page, and can be accessed at <http://www.uwsa.edu/fadmin/reportdu.htm>.

## FAN CUSTOMER SURVEY

It has been five years since we surveyed users on the usefulness of the FAN. Since that time, there have been numerous technological enhancements (e-mail group lists, the Web, etc.) which, depending on your responses, may negate the need to continue its issuance.

Please respond to the attached survey to help us determine the direction we should go in the coming months.

# Shared Financial Systems Project

## WEB SITE OPERATIONAL

The Web site for the Shared Financial System is now operational. You can view it through the UWSA Financial Administration home page or by going directly to the URL for the page: <<http://www.bussvc.wisc.edu/acct/sfs/sfsindex.html>>.

There's an Introduction section, a Background section and an Organization section, as well as sections covering implementation plans and issues, communications, frequently asked questions and a glossary of common terms.

The Project Core Team will continue to add items of interest to the Web site on a regular basis. It's planned to be a dynamic site, a vehicle for communicating important items during the implementation of the financial system over the next three years.

## TESTING PLANS

For the past two months, a multitude of test transactions have been entered into the Shared Financial System. The goal has been to verify that all the setup activities that took place during prototyping resulted in switches and controls being set properly. Test transactions for journal entries, purchase orders and payments are beginning to build up in the test data base as the system is fine-tuned prior to production.

Further testing will determine other aspects of implementation, such as security, transaction volumes, response times, connectivity and interfaces to other systems. As problems are discovered, changes will be made immediately to the system. The goal is to have a quiet, problem-free transition when the system goes live.

## SFS DEMONSTRATIONS

On February 3 and 4, Accounting and Purchasing staff from UW institutions were presented with live demonstrations of the PeopleSoft modules supporting the Shared Financial System. An introductory overview provided participants with background information on the project. The Purchasing module was then demonstrated, including the management of the vendor tables, creating purchase orders with and without requisitions, approving purchases and printing the purchase orders.

Following the Purchasing activity, the Accounts Payable module was demonstrated: sharing the vendor table with Purchasing, creating vouchers from source documents (invoices), scheduling payments, writing checks and creating journal entries for posting.

Creating journal entries, both on-line and from electronic interfaces, was the focus of the demonstration of the General Ledger module. Batch processing, unposting, correcting entries and online inquiries were also shown. The flexible and powerful reporting tool, known as nVision in PeopleSoft, was then demonstrated. This tool is a marriage of PeopleSoft and MicroSoft Excel technologies, and provides an almost unlimited report writing capability for users of the Shared Financial System. Reports can be created by non-technical staff, set up to run on a periodic basis and formatted to individualized data files for viewing at all levels of an organization. Drilling down to detail that supports summary information is a real highlight of this aspect, and its power was appreciated by those in attendance.

Due to the wide interest in these demonstrations, space limitations necessitated cutting back on the number of participants. Those that weren't able to attend the February sessions will be notified of an additional demonstration later this spring.



**FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION NEWS (FAM) SURVEY**

- 1. How do you receive your copy of the *FAN*?
  - Paper copy mailed to me
  - Access it through the Financial Administration Web page
    - I receive e-mail notification of new issues
    - I check for new issues periodically and prefer not to be notified by e-mail
- 2. On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being "very useful"), how useful do you find the accounting information? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being "very useful"), how useful do you find the travel information? \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. What could we do to improve the content, format or distribution of the *FAN*?

- 5. Do you want someone else added to, or your name deleted from, either the e-mail notification list or the paper copy distribution list?

Delete from paper copy distribution (fill in name only below)

Delete from e-mail notification list (fill in name and e-mail address only below)

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**Please fax your response to Doni Zintz at 608/262-5316  
or mail to 780 Regent St., Suite 221, Madison WI 53715**