Grant Accounting Frequently Asked Questions

How do I know how much money I have left to spend?
You have two options for viewing your available budget balance – using either Business Intelligence (BI) or SAP. Please refer to the attached links for detailed instructions.

- BI – https://portal.passhe.edu/irj/portal
- SAP - http://www.bloomu.edu/documents/tech/sap/budget/20081105_CompleteBCSTraining.pdf
  Training classes on the use of both of these options are available several times a year, or you can contact the Grant Accountant or Budget Office for personalized training.

How do I transfer funds?
Before transferring funds between commitment items, you must make sure it is allowable according to grant award budget guidelines. The Project Director (or admin assistant) is responsible for initiating the funds transfer in SAP using transaction FMBB (please see http://www.bloomu.edu/documents/tech/sap/budget/20081105_CompleteBCSTraining.pdf for detailed instructions). The transfer will be reviewed by the grant accountant for adherence to award letter spending restrictions. If allowable, she will approve and the Budget Department will process. If not allowable, the Project Director is responsible for obtaining written approval from the granting agency before the transfer will be made. No Funds Reservations or Purchase Requisitions can be made without an available budget.

How do I get my budget set up so I can begin spending funds?
Typically each new award will require a new fund center be created. The grant accountant is responsible for setting up all new award fund centers. Before the fund center can be set up the following information is needed by the grant accountant.

- Signed award letter
- Description of award
- Funding agency
- Amount of award
- Dates/duration of when expenditures must occur
- Budget breakdown and transfer allowances
- Method of reimbursement (drawdown, invoice, payment received up front, etc.)
- Reporting requirements – how often/when/who
- Type of award (research, program, social equity, etc.)
- Function of award (instructional, research, academic support, etc.)
- Source of funds – federal, state, PASSHE, private, match
- If there is money budgeted for salary, need details – whom it is for, how will they receive payment (dual employment, student payroll, outside contractor, etc.)

No funds can be spent from the award until the fund center and budget are created in SAP. Please send the above information to the grant accountant as soon as possible to ensure your budget is set up before funds are necessary.

What are my responsibilities as Project Director?

You are responsible not only for carrying out the objectives of the grant award, but also for monitoring the expenses to make sure only award related expenses are charged to your award, and expenses you know you incurred in the administration of the grant are all charged to the award fund center. It is also your responsibility to:

- initiate student employment paperwork,
- enter purchase requisitions and funds reservations into SAP,
- approve all invoices and travel vouchers pertaining to your award and submit to AP,
- monitor expenses based on SAP/BI reports and Excel spreadsheet sent periodically from grant accountant,
- make necessary (and allowable) budget transfers on SAP,
- request award extension from granting agency if funds are not expended by end of award period,
- contact granting agency and obtain written permission for questionable purchases or transfers not specifically referenced in award letter.

How do I pay my student?

There are many steps that must be completed in order to pay a student from a grant award. It is the responsibility of the Project Director to initiate the process but will also include involvement from the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, Financial Aid, and Student Payroll. The following procedures should take place:

- The Project Director needs to work with the Director of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs to get a grant appointment form completed for the student. This form can be found through the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs quick link.
- Once completed, the grant appointment form will be submitted to the Student Employment Coordinator in the Financial Aid office where they will determine student eligibility.
- Once the student is determined eligible, a placement card will be submitted to the department in which the student will be working for approval. Once approved, the placement card needs to be sent back to the Student Employment Coordinator.
- The Student Employment Coordinator will work with the student to complete all necessary forms prior to the student beginning their first day of work. It is the student's responsibility to make sure that they have completed an employment application, all necessary employment forms (W-4, I-9, etc.), and the current academic year's FAFSA application needs to have been submitted. (If the student is to work in the summer, the FAFSA application for the next academic year needs to have already been submitted).
- The Student Employment Coordinator will verify that the student is eligible for employment, that the student has completed all the necessary forms, and that the placement card has been returned. The placement card and grant appointment form are then forwarded to the Student Payroll Coordinator who will then set the student up to receive payroll payments. The Project Director is responsible for sending a memo to the Student Payroll Coordinator detailing how the student should be paid (bi- weekly stipend, lump sum payment)
- The Project Director is required to complete a Supervisor's Agreement in order to approve student hours. This form must be submitted to the Financial Aid Office. This document can be found on the University's shared drive.

It is the Project Director's responsibility to make sure that the procedures listed above have been completed BEFORE the student begins their employment on the grant.

How do I purchase food from my grant?

The Project Director or Administrative staff must follow the PR or RO process through the Purchasing department when purchasing food or beverages through a grant. This includes food and beverages purchased through Aramark. Before any food or beverage can be ordered, a Food Approval Form must be completed and electronically sent to the Grant Accountant for approval. The Grant Accountant will approve or deny the request based on budget conditions/justification stipulated in the approved budget. If the grant does not justify the purchase of food and beverages in the approved budget, the University spending guidelines for the use of public funds will be used in determining the approval/denial of the request. Please refer to the Spending Guideline link on the Grant Accounting web page for information of food/beverage and other spending through the University. Once approved, the Food Approval form will be sent to the Purchasing department and an RO # will be issued. Please note, an RO # must be obtained PRIOR to the purchase of food and beverages.