

The following guidelines apply to individuals who initiate, review, approve, or process expenses that are charged to Union College accounts. These guidelines are designed to ensure compliance with College policy and accompanying federal, state, or local regulations.

### **Overview of Financial Accounts**

Union College accounts include operating accounts, restricted accounts (e.g. discretionary, faculty research and travel, grants, etc.), and endowed accounts.

*Operating Accounts* - account numbers that start with the number 0 or 1 (e.g. 0xxxx, 1xxxx)

- Funding is provided through the College budget.
- The expectation is not to over-spend the available budget each year. Over-spent accounts may be covered by funds from "restricted" or endowed accounts, depending on the nature of expense.
- The College practice is to not carry-forward unspent funds to the following year for use.

*"Restricted" Accounts* - account numbers start with the number 4 (e.g. 4xxxx)

- Funding is from internal sources (e.g. faculty research funds, faculty travel grants, startup funds, etc.) or external sources (donations, federal or state grants, etc.).
- The use of funds may be for specified or unspecified (discretionary) purposes.
- The expectation is not to over-spend the available amount of funds each year. Over-spent funds must be covered by other department accounts or through personal funds, depending on the situation.
- The College practice is to generally carry-forward ("roll over") unspent funds to the following year for use.

*Endowed Accounts* - account numbers start with a 5, 6, or 7 (e.g. 5xxxx, 6xxxx, 7xxxx)

- Originally established from external sources, usually gifts from donors or foundation grants to the endowment.
- Income from the endowment is added to the account at the start of each fiscal year.
- The use of funds may be for specified or unspecified (discretionary) purposes.
- The expectation is not to over-spend the available amount of funds each year. Over-spent funds must be covered by other department accounts or through personal funds, depending on the situation.
- The College practice is to generally carry-forward ("roll over") unspent funds to the following year for use unless the terms of the endowed account mandate that unspent funds should be returned to the endowment.

### **Allowable Expenditures**

It is the responsibility of all faculty, staff, and students to use College funds for reasonable and appropriate expenses that support the mission of the College. Processes and guidelines established by the Finance Office must be followed when purchasing or paying for goods or services. Any funding from external sources must also adhere to the conditions of the grant and to the College's guidelines regarding the use of sponsored funds.

#### Examples of Allowable Expenditures

- Books, periodicals, materials, equipment, and consumables such as laboratory supplies, chemicals, etc. for teaching or research purposes
- Research students. Current Union students should be made aware of opportunities and the selection of students should be based on qualifications and position requirements. It is preferred that qualified Union students be hired over non-Union students.
- Payments to research subjects, as long as approval from the College's Human Subjects Review Board is obtained in advance.
- Computers, software, databases, and computer accessories, in consultation with ITS.
- Copying, faxing, and other reproduction charges.
- Memberships in professional organizations (note: please check whether Union College is an institutional member before expending funds for an individual membership)
- Conference registration fees.
- Travel including transportation, lodging, and meals to conferences or research locations.
- First checked baggage fees; second or additional checked bag fees are allowable only if they meet a College purpose.
- Meals associated with events such as lectureships, speaker series, departmental retreats, annual year-end department gatherings, special group meetings, etc. associated with College business. Normally, funds can be used to cover those who participated in the event.
- Additional mobile data or telephone charges incurred when traveling internationally, as needed for College business.
- Gifts, i.e. small tokens of appreciation, to non-employees who have volunteered their time for College activities or service. Gift cards or gift certificates are not allowed.
- Journal transfers to another department to fund an allowable expenditure.

### **Unallowable Expenditures**

Unallowable expenditures are those that do not support College business or are in excess of what is normally considered allowable. Expenses that are customarily considered to be personal, even if the goods or services were purchased to support College business, are also unallowable.

#### Examples of Unallowable Expenditures

- Salary or wages to one's self or one's family members (other than current Union students).
- Additional pay for hourly employees without prior approval (check with Human Resources before work starts).
- Personal expenses such as home-office equipment or supplies (desks, chairs, book cases, computers, toiletries, etc.).
- Recurring communication charges (e.g. cable, internet, telephone, mobile devices) unless approved in advance and in adherence to College policy.
- Personal travel including commuting to/from work.
- Meals with College employees that do not involve College business or that involve College business but that could have been discussed at a different (non-meal) time.
- Transportation or lodging for family members without prior approval.
- Gifts including but not limited to gift cards, gift certificates, flowers, meals, sympathy gifts to students, employees and their family members, and friends of the College for the primary purpose

of holiday celebrations, bereavement, sickness, or recognition of individuals (e.g. birthdays, retirement, etc.). Collections from individuals can be arranged and expended for this purpose.

- Fees, late payment penalties, or interest charges on personal credit cards.
- Amusement, entertainment, or social activities that are not connected to College functions or purposes.
- Memberships to personal, recreational, travel, or athletic clubs.
- Moving and storage of personal goods while on leave.
- Parking tickets or traffic violations.
- First-class or business-class travel and early check-in fees.
- Personal services (e.g. child care, pet care, home services).
- Political or charitable contributions of any type.
- Sponsorship of external teams or other external organizations.
- Stolen, lost, or damaged personal property.
- Sales tax (Union College is tax-exempt in most states; consult the Finance website for more information).

### **Departure (Resignation, Retirement, or Termination) from the College**

#### Property of Purchases

Any items purchased with Union College funds, including but not limited to computers, software, equipment, data, books, and periodicals are the property of Union College even if they were purchased for the exclusive use of an individual. Upon departure from the College, all items must be returned to the College. A departing faculty member may request approval to keep certain items (e.g. books, computer) upon departure. Requests must be written and submitted to the Dean of the Faculty's office at least 30 days before departure. Approval of such requests will be based on the items' value to the College. In some cases, the faculty member may be asked to pay the fair market value of the item.

#### Assignment of College Funds & Accounts

All accounts that are managed by a departing employee will be reassigned by Academic Affairs. The determination of reassignment generally depends on the original funding source and intended ongoing use of the account.

When a faculty member leaves Union College, remaining funds in that faculty member's research and travel (FR&T) account will automatically revert to the Dean of the Faculty. Faculty members with FR&T accounts in deficit are expected to repay the College for the amount of the deficit before leaving, unless there is an explicit plan to cover the deficit that has been approved by the Dean of the Faculty.

On occasion, retiring faculty members may still be engaged in College work, in which it might be appropriate for FR&T funding to continue to support that work. The faculty member may request approval from the Dean of the Faculty to continue to use the remaining FR&T funds after his/her retirement. Requests must be written and submitted to the Dean of the Faculty's office at least 30 days before the date of retirement. The continued use of FR&T funds after retirement must be approved by the Dean of the Faculty, in consultation with the department chair and/or relevant Deans. The judgment shall be based on whether the intended use of the funds is compatible with the purpose of advancing the mission of the College. Continued use of a FR&T account by a retired faculty member must be reauthorized on an annual basis.

### **Additional Information**

Additional questions concerning these guidelines should be directed to:

#### **Greta Donato**

Director of Academic Planning & Finance - 518-388-6033, [donatog@union.edu](mailto:donatog@union.edu)