Notes from the Chancellor

At the recent Staff Council Spring Forum, Chancellor Arthur K. Smith explained that UHS elected to use PeopleSoft over other applications because other systems had a tendency to become outdated and were expensive to maintain. With time, PeopleSoft would best serve the university once its various kinks were worked out. "It is a challenge," Smith said. "Prior to PeopleSoft, we developed a series of systems that over time, had become tailored for particular preferences, needs and circumstances at this institution. That's part of the reason why it became so expensive and time consuming to keep those systems. With PeopleSoft, we must be prepared to adapt our business practices to the software." - excerpted from *University of Houston Campus News*

Coming Soon: On-line Journal Entry

University of Houston financial processes will move beyond the spreadsheet-based journal entry form first used by departments for making accounting entries with the implementation of PeopleSoft General Ledger. The journal forms were intended to bridge the gap between the many transaction-specific forms used in FRS and the online journal entry supported by PeopleSoft. With six months' experience with PeopleSoft, UH General Accounting will begin to deploy online journal entry to departmental business staff in early April. Deployment will be done college by college, to allow training to be tailored to specific business processes. Once trained, users will enter

> *General Accounting Contacts*
>
> *Beverly Ruffin, Director — 3-8859*
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> *Baron Sauls — 3-8733*

journals directly into PeopleSoft, use the system edits and validate budgets before submitting the transactions for processing. General Accounting will approve and post the transaction upon receipt of approved documentation. The benefits of this direct, online journal entry will be greater reduction in data errors and more timely posting of entries. General Accounting will have all journals and SCRs that are received by Friday, March 29 posted in March business. This represents a major step forward in the processing goals that have been set by the department.

General Accounting's goal is one-day turn around for processing journals and SCRs, and expects to reach this goal as soon as the end of April.

Tidbits for Running HR Reports on Screen

Here's the latest helpful tidbits for viewing reports on screen to make sure you have what you need. Remember, this is to view only, as the format is not set to print what is viewed on screen. Select your report, enter your run control id, enter your parameters (date, business unit, department, etc), and click on the left stoplight to run your report. Once your process scheduler appears on the screen, select the following:

1. Client (for your run location).
2. Select file for your output destination.
3. The word **%temp%** appears in the file/printer box.
4. After the last % symbol, skip a space and type –ziv.
5. Your file/printer box should look like this **% temp% -ziv**,
6. Click on OK to run your report.
7. The word **SQR** appears at the bottom of your screen, once it disappears the report will appear on your screen.

To view more of the report on the screen, click on the magnifying glass that has a minus sign. Use the scroll bars on the right to move from the top of the page to the bottom and the scroll bar at the bottom to move from right to left. The arrow buttons in the menu panel will move from one page to the next. The bottom right hand corner of the screen shows how many pages are in the report. Use the binoculars to search for specific information. More than one report cannot be viewed at a time, as it will cause an error and lock up when you request a second report. If you have any canned reporting questions for HRMS please call Carla Ponzio at 713-743-4275.

Update on New, Improved Finance Reports

Confused about reports? Here's an update in a nutshell. New general ledger reports were introduced in late January to incorporate user requests and lessons learned by the project team since September's implementation. These new reports will be the standard month-end financial reports published on Report.Web each month following the closing of General Ledger. The user can produce these reports directly from the PeopleSoft Financial Reporting database as well, in much the same way as the original reports. This new ensemble of reports is already available on Report.Web for the months of December, January and February, and will be published for the months of Sep-

tember, October and November to replace the older reports. Training

Report ID	Description	Replaces
UGL01048	Balance Sheet Summary	UGL01003
UGL01049	Balance Sheet Transactions	UGL01047
UGL01050	Revenue/Expense Summary	UGL01004
UGL01051	Revenue/Expense Transactions	UGL01047

sessions in the use of these reports are scheduled from now through the summer months.

What is Report.Web? Report.Web is not part of PeopleSoft, but is a web-based report distribution tool that allows reports to be viewed using an Internet browser.

It was purchased as part of the FAST project to eliminate the need to print and distribute multiple paper copies of reports. Access to reports published on Report. Web does not require People-Soft security access or People-Soft training; users need a network username and a browser (Internet Explorer is preferred). The application for Report.Web access is available on the FAST Finance website (http://www. uh.edu/fast/financial/FS-refandforms.htm) as form FS005. Users must sign the confidentiality statement, have the application approved by their manager, and fax the form to the functional campus security manager. An upgrade to Report.Web has been issued by the software supplier and will be installed during April. Details on this upgrade will be posted to the Finance Listserv.

PeopleSoft Finance Factoids

- Reconciling cost centers can be as simple as verifying the beginning balance for the year and then checking that each month's transactions are correctly posted. Stay tuned for classes in Cost Center Reconciliation, coming soon.
- The FAST Finance website will be moving to a new home during the next month.

Now that PeopleSoft is the production system, FAST Finance forms,

references and training materials will be available on the Finance pages of the Administration and Finance website.

There will be a link from the old to the new during the transition.

Want to know more? Subscribe to the Finance Listserv at (http://www.uh.edu/ fast/FAST-contact. htm), attend the monthly PeopleSoft Question and Answer sessions, contact the project at FAST@uh.edu or PeopleSoft@uh.edu, or register for (and attend!) training classes (http:// www.uh.edu/fast/FIN-Training.

Subscribe to the Finance Listserv for up-to-the-minute information!

What About BOB?

PeopleSoft HR and Financial systems are very much like the other ERP systems that are capable of serving the other needs of organizations as complex as the University of Houston System: they don't support position control budgeting. In response to the stated need to continue budget development and control by positions, UH System developed a budget-reporting tool that uses data from PCBud, PeopleSoft HR and People-Soft Financials. This tool is what is termed a "Bolt On" in technical slang; hence it was labeled as BOB for Bolt On Budget. BOB reports were first available for the month ending January 31, 2002 and will be distributed monthly to colleges and divisions, and in the near future will be published on Report.Web.

Save Time with Template Vouchers

If you make frequent payments to the same vendor at various intervals, consider using a template voucher to save time. Vendors for which you might create template vouchers include Boise Cascade, Airborne Express, or others you pay the same or varying amounts on a regular basis.

The first step is to create a template. Start by creating a voucher, or choose an existing voucher that is not posted, to the vendor you need to pay on a frequent basis .

On the Template Information panel, select **Save as a Template Voucher**. Enter a Template ID and Description. Save the voucher. Only the person who creates a template can see his/her own templates, so you don't need to worry about someone else using your template. You can type anything that you like for the Template ID (up to 10 characters) and Description (up to 30 characters). It's better to be specific so you can remember what it is being used for.

After you've created the template, create the new voucher by copying from a template voucher. Navigate to add a new voucher. Select the vendor on the Invoice Header Information panel.

After selecting the vendor, go directly to the Template Information panel and select **Copy from a Template Voucher**.

Select the correct template from the list of Template IDs for that vendor. The gross amount, voucher line amounts, account, and cost center numbers are copied from the template to the new voucher. If needed, these fields can be changed on the new voucher.

Complete the voucher using the normal process.

If you have questions about using template vouchers, contact Linda Howard at 713-743-8708.

April HR/Payroll Enhancements

Several exciting enhancements are being rolled out in April for the HR/Payroll System.

1. Departments will soon be able to run their own Trial and Final Payroll reports. No more walking or driving to the Treasury department to pick up your reports!

Watch for more information about this new process.

2. A new report is now available called "Pending Future Actions." With this report departments can see who has a "future" action in the system. Find it under Go, Administer Workforce, UHS Reports.

3. The programming of the Short Work Break has been completed. This means that your Faculty, Grad Students and TAs show a Short Work Break for June 1, 2002 and a Return from Short Work Break on August 31, 2002.

The encumbrance process will pick up these outages and process the March encumbrances to reflect the adjustments.

4. All departments now have access to a new report called Journal Detail. It is under Go, Define Budget Encumbrance, UHS Rpt. This report will help in reconciling your UGL01051 and Labor Distribution reports. Information has been sent out via the HRMS ListServ on how to run this report.

5. A new HRMS website has been completed. Keep an eye on http://www.uh.edu/hrms for information and updates.

The new HRMS web site is up and running.

Keep an eye on http://www.uh.edu/hrms and the HRMS ListServ for information!

A/P Update

Accounts Payable has responded to the increased number of vouchers and vendor setup requests by getting caught up and staying caught up for the past three months. Vendor setup requests are being processed the same day or no later than the following day, which has been the case since the beginning of November. UHS_AP_SEARCH_FOR_VENDO-RS query is the best way to find vendors by DBA name or federal ID number. Instructions for using this query were distributed by email to UH college/division administrators. Properly completed and documented purchase vouchers, travel vouchers, and journal vouchers are being approved within one to three business days of receipt.

The most common reasons for returning vouchers to the department for correction are missing certifying signatures or errors in budget checking. If you have a concern about a document being processed in a timely manner, call Mike Glisson at 713-743-8706.

Purchasing online in April

UH's Purchasing Department will be rolling out its own online use of PeopleSoft during April. Online requisition and direct purchase order entry will be made available to departments on a college-by-college basis, to allow the tailoring of training to the business requirements of the unit. Online requisition entry will permit the user to enter purchase requests directly into the Purchasing application, reducing the time required for processing by the Purchasing Department. Users can edit and budget check the request at the time it is created, again reducing data entry errors. The budget check will immediately commit budget for the amount of the purchase so that online budget inquiry will be accurate and timelier. Direct purchase orders will be used in much the same as a voucher purchase is presently used: for purchases under $5,000 of items that do not require additional approvals or control. These POs will provide departments with the same advantages as online requisition entry, such as reduced data errors and more timely budget information. They will also provide a record of an order that has been placed and a purchase order number that can be given to the vendor for better reference. The information entered into the application at the time of the order will be copied into the PO Voucher at the time payment is to be made, so there will be no duplication of data entry.

Fit Gap started in April for Student & Academic Administration System

Planning for extending the Student & Academic Administration system from UHCL to the other campuses is in full swing. The plans will include migrating UHCL to the newest PeopleSoft Version 8, an all web-based version, installing Financial Aid at UHCL, and extending these applications to the other three campuses. The plans are targeted for completion and review in early July. Key to developing the plans is the ability of the software to fit our needs through Fit Gap sessions. Fit Gap sessions began April 1, 2002 and will continue for nine consecutive weeks. The first week covered Financial Aid. Fit Gap sessions include all of the business process owners with FAST Project analyst performing a detail review of the PeopleSoft software against UHS needs and requirements. Both fits and gaps are identified. The gaps are further evaluated to determine if software changes are needed, if additional functions should be added or if any business practices need changes. In March, custom reporting for the Coordinating Board at UHCL was completed. Conversion programming for student records for students not currently registered or not previously converted is underway. In other news, FAST Project Leader Darella Banks accepted a position as a consultant installing PeopleSoft for Crestone International. Darella was Registrar at UHCL for 10 years prior to joining the FAST Project in 1999.

> Fit Gap Sessions began April 1, 2002. This includes a detailed review of PeopleSoft software compared to UHS requirements. Stay tuned to future newsletters for updates!

Notes from the Training Room

- 1,073 have attended HR Training classes.
- There have been 317 no-shows at HR trainings and 356 cancellations.
- Four additional Basic Finance Query classes have been added. Sign up today to reserve your spot!

Obtain Access to PeopleSoft Financial Applications

Access to University of Houston System's PeopleSoft Financial applications is requested by using the access forms that are available at the Financial web site (http://www.uh.edu/fast/financial/FS-refandforms.htm) and submitting the approved forms to the functional campus security manager. The OperID Request (FS001) is required for all users. This request does not provide a user with access to any of the applications, but allows the individual to be set up as an operator (user) in PS Financials.

Access to specific PeopleSoft financial applications must be requested using the form for each: FS002 for General Ledger, FS003 for Accounts Payable and FS004 for Purchasing. Individual forms are required for each module because of specific set up requirements, including the level of access and user privileges, as well as default values for departments, sources, locations and other data elements.

Specific training requirements that must be met before requested access can be provided.