

By the Numbers

News to use and amuse from Accounting and Business Support (ABS)



Note that [blue text](#) is a hyperlink

DECEMBER 2007						
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Deadlines & dates

Date	Day	Time ¹	Deadline Description
Dec 3	Mon		Budget Journal Entry cutoff for November. Arts & Science units should submit all budget change requests to A&S Budget Office by A&S deadline.
Dec 4	Tue	6:00	Finance System closes for November. Do not create, validate or approve November journals after 6:00PM—they will not post and will be deleted.
Dec 5	Wed		All unposted November journals that you have not copied and assigned a future date, deleted, or saved in incomplete status will be deleted by Systems or Data Control.
Dec 6	Thu	5:00	Time collection for the December 1 biweekly payroll. ² Note: The December payroll processing calendar was revised on Nov 30. Details here.
Dec 6	Thu	6:00	Gift fund expense calc to CUF for next Monday wire transfer.
Dec 13	Thu	6:00	Gift fund expense calc to CUF for next Monday wire transfer.
Dec 17	Mon	5:00	Time collection for December end of month payroll. ²
Dec 18	Tue	Noon	Time collection for December 15 biweekly payroll. ²
Dec 20	Thu	4:00	Lynda Reisinger to receive allocation changes and creates for current month business. Send to Lynda.Reisinger@colorado.edu or call 2-8646.
Dec 26	Wed	4:00	Data Control to receive INs for current month business. Send INs to Lynda Reisinger, Data Control, 579 UCB.
Dec 26	Wed	4:00	Creation, validation, and approval to post cost transfers and PETs for fund 30 projects and fund 34 gift journals for current month. ³
Dec 26	Wed	6:00	Gift fund expense calc to CUF for end of month transfer.
Dec 27	Thu	7:00	First Avalanche versus Redwings game of the season.
Jan 2	Wed		Budget Journal Entry cutoff for December. Arts & Science units should submit all budget change requests to A&S Budget Office by A&S deadline.
Jan 3	Thu	6:00	Finance System closes for December. Do not create, validate or approve December journals after 6:00PM—they will not post and will be deleted.
Jan 4	Fri		All unposted December journals that you have not copied and assigned a future date, deleted, or saved in incomplete status will be deleted by Systems or Data Control. As month end nears, check for any unposted journals that you need to correct, approve, or that need additional info for SPA or gift approval.

¹ **Times** are p.m. unless otherwise noted. No time means the sooner the better.
² **Payroll** deadlines must be followed so that funding distribution corrections from payroll suspense and/or changes are in place before the next payroll is run. The [PBS website](#) has the most current payroll calendar, including HR down times.
³ **Tips:** 1) Don't mix fund 30/31 or 34 JEs with other funds or with each other in the same JE. This slows approval and delays non 30/31/34 lines from posting. 2) Plan for HRMS downtimes to meet PET deadlines (see [PBS website](#)). 3) Contact [Hua Xu](#), 2-1679 for project cost transfers & [David Sayers](#), 2-2396 for gift journal approvals. 4) Make a habit of checking for unposted journals to correct, validate or approve, or that need documentation for Hua or Dave.

Payment Voucher PPS

While other methods of procurement are often preferred over the Payment Voucher (PV), such as the Procurement Card or Purchase Order, in some cases the PV is the way to go. That's what the new [Payment Voucher Authorization and Use PPS](#) explains. The new policy's table of PV Allowable Goods and Services is far easier to use than the old in-line list.

The Procedural Statement itself bears a mild resemblance to the old, but it includes more on signature requirements and it is recast to match current PPS layout standards. A few items were **removed** from the Allowable list:

- books
- insurance
- instructional/program fees to universities
- rental assistance payments
- reprints of articles
- page charges to publish articles
- bus tokens
- renting of space at exhibits
- upgrades to current software.

The new PPS also has some new entries **added** to the Allowable list. (Please note that some of these "additions" were previously allowed but have simply been rephrased for clarity):

- building and construction permits and fees
- campus library purchases of hard-copy or electronic media and payments for interlibrary loan
- governmental assessments
- immigration/ visa fees required to conduct study or work
- sales tax remittances
- Technology Transfer Office payments.

The key thing to remember is to check the table before incurring the expense.

The PV form was also revised to comply with the new policy. The [10/26/07 Communicator](#) tells how to use the new PV form. The new PV PPS was released Oct. 1, 2007 PPS and was revised on November 1: The Signature Requirements section was made clearer and some entries on the table were tweaked. For the most current version, use the [online PPS](#) instead of a paper copy.

Holiday Season Reminders

Donation Activity — Is your organizational unit planning a holiday season donation activity that involves non cash support, such as collecting items from employees and donating them to a good cause? If yes, then please read the [Donations APS](#). Generally, these types of activities are permissible at the department, college, or campus level if they have received advance approval from the appropriate officer for that org unit.

Holiday Parties — If your department is planning a "staff holiday party," be sure that the business purpose makes it clear that it is a Staff Appreciation Meal. Staff appreciation meals with a holiday theme timed to coincide with a university holiday are allowable events. Please see the [Recognition and Training Activities PPS](#) for details and restrictions on staff appreciation meals on page 6.

SHORT TAKES

When PI's move on, retire, or take leave of absence

When a Principal Investigator plans to leave the university, retire, or take a leave of absence and will have unfinished projects remaining, please inform the SPA accountant *as early as possible*, preferably well before the departure date. This sort of occurrence requires considerable work and coordination that involves SPA, OCG, the sponsor, the department, and possibly additional university offices. Serious consequences can result for projects without an active and officially designated PI, so please consider adding this SPA notification to your personnel departure checklist.

Cell phones & projects

The [Personal Technology and Telecommunications PPS](#) establishes criteria and approval requirements for cell phones used for official university business. However, phone expenses are generally not allowable on fund 30 projects. Departmental approval is *not* enough to charge cell phone expense to a sponsored project. SPA requires an approved [Cost Accounting Standards CAS Exception form](#) in addition to dept/org approval. Contact your SPA accountant for assistance.

Per diem meal expenses & projects

The [Travel Authorization and Expense PPS](#) states that no receipts are required for per diem meal reimbursements. This is true in order to process the Travel Voucher. However, if a fund 30 project pays the travel expense, the sponsor may require meal receipts. Without this documentation, the sponsor may disallow the meal expense and the department will have to pay it, not the sponsor. Therefore, SPA advises departments to treat meal expenses like all other project expenses and **keep the receipts**. The general rule is that the more restrictive requirement is the one to which the university must abide.

QUESTION & ANSWER

Q: Instead of storing paper documents that we must keep for records retention, can our department scan electronic images of the documents and dispose of the paper?

A: Yes, an electronic image is a suitable substitute for original paper University Records in most cases. The new *Retention of University Records* APS states in section D.7, "The retention period is satisfied by retaining an electronic record of the information that accurately reflects the information set forth in the record and remains accessible for later reference."

"Accurately reflects" implies that the electronic image is readable, so before you toss the paper, be sure you can read the electronic version. "Accessible" means that you can locate the electronic files for later retrieval to use as needed and to dispose of when the retention period is met. You may want to keep these files on a networked drive and limit the access. It is also a good idea to keep electronic back up copies on a different drive. One crash can make for a very bad day.

These electronic files are *still* university records and therefore, should be stored on a medium owned or controlled by the university. Work with your IT staff on how to best manage these records for archival purposes.



Upcoming trainings

ABS offers training and education to the campus using formally scheduled group classes and individual instruction by request. Register early by email to ABSTraining@colorado.edu or call **Diana Vidal** at 492-8648 for more info.

To learn about all of our training opportunities and to get complete class descriptions, the latest information and any requirements, visit our [training webpage](#). Trainings marked below with ● are special limited offerings and details appear on the [ABS homepage](#) under Current Announcements.

DATE	DAY	TRAINING	LOCATION
Dec 5 9:00-12:00	Wed	Financial Statement Reading How to access & read your statements	ARC 248 3100 Marine Map
Dec 11 8:30-4:30	Tue	Finance System Day 1 includes finance and budget	RL6, room W179 3215 Marine Map
Dec 14 8:30-4:30	Fri	Finance System—Procurement Day 2 of Finance System training by PSC	RL6, room W179 3215 Marine Map
Dec 18 9:00-12:00	Tue	Financial Statement Reading How to access & read your statements	ARC 248 3100 Marine Map

MORE SHORT TAKES

Calendar deadlines

The implementation of the new expenditure controls and other recent Finance System changes have created additional oversight responsibilities for ABS' General Accounting and SPA. Therefore, we ask for your diligence in meeting the cutoff dates each month for the creation of PETs, JEs, and other submissions, to ensure that ABS has enough time to process or approve and post by month end. The cut off dates appear on page one of this newsletter and on the [ABS homepage](#), click on Deadlines & Dates.

Excess ticket distribution

The *Complimentary Tickets and Related Expenses for Employees and Non-Employees PPS* is the operational side of the APS of the same name. It details the tax treatment and expenses related to complimentary tickets for university performances or sporting events used to promote the university. A recent revision (10/20/07) changed the Excess Ticket Distribution section. Changes include: 1) added an 85% attendance threshold; 2) increased ticket value from \$45 to \$50; 3) states that distributions must be infrequent and non-regular; 4) extended the distribution window from 5:00 pm the day before the event to 10 business days, thus making excess ticket distributions far more feasible.

Chemical alert

The US Department of Homeland Security has issued new rules pertaining to chemical management and security. The rules require universities to inventory lab and shop chemicals, and determine locations and quantities of 344 "chemicals of interest." If your department uses or stores chemicals, [please read this memo](#) from the VC for Research & Dean of the Graduate School. Action is required by December 19, 2007. Background information on this DHS regulation is available from the National Association of College and University Business Officers ([NACUBO](#)).

I was trying to daydream, but my mind kept wandering. *Steven Wright*

ABS INNERVIEW

Sutha Thanikasalam



Sutha



Beach near Tangalle



Diwali, festival of lights



Tea fields

Sutha, how long have you worked at ABS and what do you do here?

I have been working here since April 2007. I am one of the six grant accountants attached to the Customer Service Unit of the Sponsored Projects Accounting. I monitor expenses in sponsored projects, draw funds and submit interim and final financial reports to the sponsor. I make sure the terms and conditions of the contracts are met when charging expenses to the account.

Where did you work before this and what sort of work did you do there?

I worked for the Boulder County and was attached to a department called Workforce Boulder County, which provides easy access to a wide array of employment and training services to job seekers. I was involved in financial and management accounting. I had to submit management reports by monitoring different funds on a monthly basis.

What do you enjoy most about you work, and what is most challenging?

I enjoy my work when I can give prompt answers to the department and solve their problems. The most challenging part is overspending in projects. It is going to be a nightmare when expenditure control is implemented for fund 30.

What are some of the more common reasons that departments contact you, or vice versa?

I usually contact the departments before submitting the financial report or closing projects. I also contact them on a monthly basis to clear account deficits. The department contacts me for clarifying expenses which can be charged to projects and to close out fund 30 accounts.

Tell me about your first name.

Sutharshini is my full first name. But I go by Sutha, as I don't want my name to be a tongue twister to the nice people who would like to call me!! Sutharshini means pleasant.

Where did you grow up and how long did you live there?

I was born and raised in Sri Lanka – a small island close to India. I lived there for 28 years.

What motivated you to move to the US, and why Boulder, Colorado?

My husband was working in Longmont, Colorado and I moved here after my marriage.

Do you have any family here, or are they all back home? It's so far away—are you able to visit very often?

I do have two of my cousins living on the east coast. But my mother and most of my family members live in Sri Lanka and in New Zealand. I do try to visit my mother every year and catch up with my cousins on the east coast frequently.

In addition to family and friends, what else do you miss about Sri Lanka?

The tropical climate, beautiful beaches, religious and cultural festivals, religious place of worship.....endless list!

InnerView continued on next page

WHAT ABOUT SUTHA

Grew up where? Sri Lanka – a tropical island, known as the “pearl” in the Indian Ocean.

Where do you live now? Longmont, Colorado

Brothers or sisters? I am the one and only spoiled brat in the family.

Married? Happily married for 4 years.

Kids? Not yet

Pets? No

Movie you saw recently? Bee Movie

A TV show you like? Law and Order – Special Victims Unit

Favorite comfort food? Mint flavored ice cream and German chocolate cake

Favorite place to shop? Kohl's and Marshalls

Favorite cartoon character? Simpsons

Favorite season? Summer

Place you'd like to live? Right now Boulder. Maybe a warmer place when I reach 50 or 60.

Dream job? Personal shopper



Sunset in Sri Lanka

INNERVIEW CONTINUED**What are some similarities between Americans and Sri Lankans that you have noticed? How about differences?**

Both American and Sri Lankan people are very friendly towards foreigners and make them feel at home. They are also very hard working people. The difference would be that back in Sri Lanka we have a joint family system, where our grandparents too live with their children and grandchildren in the same house. I have wonderful memories of growing up with my grandparents under the same roof.

When people ask you, “What’s it like there?” how do you answer?

I tell them it is a beautiful tourist location famous for its long beaches and tasty tea. But sadly the country is having an internal war going on for more than 30 years which is destroying the country and its resources.

In general, what do people you meet here know about Sri Lanka?

Most of the people know that it is a tropical country with beautiful beaches. There is a lot of awareness after a tsunami hit the country in December 2004. A rather sad way of getting to know a beautiful island.

What are your holiday traditions?

Our holidays are usually tied with a religious festival. If it is a religious festival we usually get up early in the morning, make special sweets, wear new clothes, go to the religious worship place, and visit our relatives and share the food with them. We get holidays only on religious festival days. Believe it or not, we have 28 public holidays in Sri Lanka which are observed by Buddhists, Christians, Hindus and Muslims. As I follow the Hindu religion, our new year falls in the middle of April not on January 1st. But Christians in our country celebrate the New Year on Jan 1st. So the festivals are celebrated by each religious faith at different times of the year. But all of us do get a holiday for each festival whether we celebrate it or not!

What do you like to do on your own time?

Gardening, listening to music, light reading, browsing the net and of course shopping.

Do you have any longer range goals, plans, or hopes?

I just live for the day and take life as it comes. So, no dreams or plans for tomorrow.

Sutha, thanks for your time.

By the Numbers is published by
Accounting & Business Support (ABS)
3100 Marine Street, 4th floor
579 UCB, Boulder, CO 80309-0579
Direct questions, comments, corrections to
Barry Northrop, (303) 492-7119,
barry.northrop@colorado.edu
ABS website: <http://abs.colorado.edu>

Staffnotes

Hua Xu gave birth to daughter Alice on October 7. Hua has recently returned to work after taking some time off for the baby.

[Click here](#) for the latest on who’s who, who’s where, and who to call at ABS.