General Reimbursement & Purchasing Rules

- Reimbursement requests must be submitted within 60 days of the purchase.
  - This now includes travel expenses for trips not yet taken (airplane tickets, conference registration, etc.)
- Receipts are required for any request > $50

Prime Chart Strings

- Chart strings represent how you code a financial transaction. It is composed of values for key chart fields, including account, fund, and department.
- Two main formats you will be dealing with:
  - Department-Fund-Project-Activity Code (xxxxx-xxxx-xxxxxxx-xxx)
  - Department-Fund-Program Code (xxxxx-xxxx-xxxxx)

Two Sponsored Fund Types

- All MAE chart strings begin with department # 2510x (25100 & 25105 are the only two you will likely deal with)
- "G0001 funds" (25105-G0001-1000xxxx-101*) supported by government sponsors
- "G0002 funds" (25105-G0002-1000xxxx-101*) supported by private (i.e. non-government) sponsors

*Project numbers almost always start with 1000; Activity codes are almost always 101

Purchasing Restrictions for G0001 & G0002 Funds

- General supplies are usually unallowable on sponsored funds (i.e. tools, paper towels, paper, toner, pens, tape, batteries, etc.)
  - Computers, hardware, & software were recently removed from this category, but **must be justified at the time of purchase!!!**
- **Food is not allowed on grants***

  *unless during travel or part of a budgeted workshop
  - This includes: lunches for group meetings, coffee for the lab's coffee maker (and filters), soda & bottled water for fridge, etc.
  - Alcohol charges -- never allowed on a sponsored award (including travel reimbursements)
- Membership dues
- Postage (excluding freight)

Policies for Non-Sponsored Funds

- Bear no overhead
- Food Charges
  - Note purpose of the meeting
  - Include list of participants
  - Actual bill showing what was ordered (not just the credit card slip)
- Can be used as "placeholders" for purchases that will be moved later to a G0001 or G0002 fund

TRAVEL

- Travel and expense reimbursements are submitted through Concur
- Always discuss travel plans with your faculty advisor before making any arrangements
- Book travel at least 14 days in advance
- Get receipts for everything over $50
- Mileage is currently reimbursed at $.54 cents/mile
- You must be 25 to rent a car

FLY AMERICA ACT
(Foreign travel on federal grants)

- All federally funded travel abroad must comply with this Act and use only US carriers
- EXCEPTIONS to using US carriers:
  - CODE SHARE AGREEMENT
    - Payment must be made through the US carrier
  - OPEN SKIES AGREEMENT
    - For travel in the EU, Switzerland, Australia, & Japan
    - Not applicable to DOS or DOD awards
    - Booked through University travel agency (Carlson Wagonlit)
  - No US carrier provides service for that leg of route
- Best way to ensure compliance: Book through Concur

Meals

Meal reimbursement per meal:

- Meal receipt must be your actual order, not your credit card receipt
- Receipt must be in English
- If meals are a part of your meeting registration fee, you can't request reimbursement
- Meals before leaving and after return are not allowable for reimbursement

Other Travel

- Foreign Travel
  - Graduate students are required to register all University-sponsored international travel in Concur
  - Currency conversion must be done on www.oanda.com
- Personal travel in concurrence with business:
  - You can only be reimbursed for the business part
  - Check Concur or a travel site (Orbitz, Expedia, etc.) and print a trip itinerary as if you were only going on the business trip. This is what you will be reimbursed.

Concur

- Accessed from the Prime Travel Portal (travel.princeton.edu)
- Used for all reimbursement requests
- Can also be used to book travel
  - The University <u>strongly encourages</u> its use in this regard
  - For air travel, a small icon in the top right corner of each potential flight (just above the price) certifies Fly America Act compliance through the Open Skies Agreement. The icon is a blue check mark within a small shield.
    - Note: Open Skies does not apply to DOD or DOS awards – those flights need to be made through a US carrier, regardless of the presence of the icon

Concur Reimbursement Process

- Enter Concur and "Start a Report"
- Enter Report Name , and fill in all necessary fields
  - Include chart string allocation (department, fund, program code OR project & activity)
  - Use the optional "Trip ID" field for travel expenses you will accrue over time (remember to enter the same ID for every expense on the same trip)
- Add expenses (you can allocate expenses to different chart strings in this step if necessary)
- Attach receipts (can be scanned with app)
- Submit to the appropriate approver
  - For travel, this is your advisor
  - For other purchases, this is Debbie or Val

Princeton Marketplace

- Princeton's online buying system
- Navigate from the Prime Portal (prime.princeton.edu, "Marketplace Shopper")
- Front Page holds Princeton's preferred vendors (database includes 4,000+ vendors overall)
- Buying Process
  - Search for an item or enter a preferred vendor's contract
  - Build a "cart," and assign cart to the appropriate assignee (Debbie or Val), with note including chart string to charge
  - Cart then becomes a "requisition," which will later be turned into a purchase order by the assignee

Purchasing Card Policy

- Preapproval for all purchases is required from your faculty advisor
- See Valerie in D209 **by 3:30 PM**
  - Purchases on the card must be made at the kiosk in Valerie's office
    - You **cannot leave D209 with the card for use off-site**
  - Fill out the form she gives you and fill out the expense in the logbook
  - Give or send the receipt or invoice to Valerie
  - $2500 limit per transaction

Purchasing Policies

- The preferred method for purchasing any materials at Princeton is through Marketplace
- The department purchasing card should be considered a secondary purchasing option when:
  - No vendor in Marketplace carries the item needed* **AND**
  - The vendor is not willing to become a Marketplace vendor **OR**
  - Time is critical and it is impossible to wait for the vendor to be added to Marketplace **OR**
  - It is **<u>highly</u>** unlikely you will ever need to purchase anything from this vendor again in the future

  *<u>Note</u>: a minor difference in price between the vendor of choice and a vendor already in Marketplace <u>does not</u> constitute justification to use the purchasing card

Purchasing Policies (cont.)

- Buying materials with personal funds or a personal credit card (or a T&E card) and requesting reimbursement should be an **ABSOLUTE LAST RESORT**
  - This is **ESPECIALLY** true when the purchase will be placed on a sponsored fund
- Sales Tax
  - As a non-profit, Princeton is exempt from paying most sales taxes on purchases
  - Valerie has tax exempt forms available to show to a vendor when making any purchases that would normally carry sales tax. Feel free to grab one and keep it on hand in case you do have to make a purchase yourself.
  - If you do end up paying sales tax with personal funds/credit cards, you will still be reimbursed for it
  - Any purchases made with the department cards (purchasing or T&E) cannot have sales tax included
    - Our tax exempt number is printed directly on these credit cards

Important Links & Forms

- Princeton Prime Portal: prime.princeton.edu
- Travel & Concur Portal: travel.princeton.edu Graduate International Travel Checklist: travel.princeton.edu/graduate-students/checklist
- Fly America Act Waiver Checklist: finance.princeton.edu/form-library/sponsored-research-account/fly-america-act-waiver/