



Columbia Finance

GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS & ACRONYMS

To search for a term, click on the corresponding letter below:

[A](#) [B](#) [C](#) [D](#) [E](#) [F](#) [G](#) [H](#) [I](#) [J](#) [K](#) [L](#) [M](#) [N](#) [O](#) [P](#) [Q](#) [R](#) [S](#) [T](#) [U](#) [V](#) [W](#) [X](#) [Y](#) [Z](#)

**ADD-COMP**

Additional compensation payments.

AP

Accounts Payable.

AP/CAR

The University's automated payment voucher processing system that has been replaced by ARC. It was used to electronically submit payment vouchers to Accounts Payable. It is only available in READ-ONLY status as of July 2012.

ARC

Accounting and Reporting at Columbia, our new finance system that will go-live in July, 2012.

As-Is

The current state of a process; how something is currently performed.

**Budget Checking**

Enables you to control commitments and expenditures automatically by checking them against predefined, authorized budgets.

Budget Control

Process in commitment control whereby transactions are approved and posted, only if they are sufficient.

Budget Row

A valid ChartField combination in the system.

-See also: *ChartFields*

Business Owners

Senior-level staff responsible for policy, administration, and oversight of the functional areas being addressed in FIN ERP, i.e. Budget, Finance, Human Resources, Sponsored Projects, and Sourcing and Procurement.



Chart Fields

The fields that store the Chart of Accounts (COA) and provide the system with the basic structure to segregate and categorize transactional and budget data.

-See also: *Chart of Accounts*

Chart of Accounts

A list of all General Ledger (GL) accounts used by one or several University codes. For each GL account, the chart of accounts contains the account number, account name, and the information that controls how an account functions and how a GL account is created in a University code.

Chart Strings

The combination of ChartFields and the level at which accounting charges and credits are applied.

-See also: *Chart of Accounts*

COA

Chart of Accounts

-See also: *Chart of Accounts*

COB

Consolidated Operating Budget - found in the Data Warehouse section of My.Columbia portal - a useful budget report.

Commitment Control

Functionality in PeopleSoft that enables us to manage expenditures actively against predefined, authorized budgets

Conversion

The process of loading data from the existing system to the new system. The conversion process involves identifying the data that must be brought to the new system, mapping the data to PeopleSoft fields, translating old codes into PeopleSoft codes and loading the clean and compatible data into PeopleSoft.

Cost Transfers

Ability to change an employee's account distribution retroactively in PAC. Also refers to the retroactive transfer of expenditures from one account to another.

Crosswalk

The translation of a legacy value to a PeopleSoft value.

CUBHIS

Columbia University Biomedical and Health Information Services.

CUF

Columbia University Facilities.

CUHR

Columbia University Human Resources.

CUIT

Columbia University Information Technology.

CUMC

Columbia University Medical Center.

**DA**

Departmental Administrator.

DAF

Departmental Authorization Function – a critical component of the University's control system, the policies and process to assign levels of authority to University employees to approve key transactions on the University's behalf. DAF Administrators (including Deputy DAF Administrators), typically senior officers of a unit, are the only individuals authorized to delegate DAF authority and approve the creation, modification or deletion of DAF authority within the departments for which they have been designated.

DARTS

Departmental Advance Reporting and Tracking System - used for creating financial reports from FAS data.

Dialog Box

A box that appears on screen that asks the user for input, or relays information to the user.

Drill Down

To move from the general to the specific. By “drilling down” you can examine the data underlying any summarized form of information in your PeopleSoft system.

DWR

(also known as DWH): Data Warehouse - section of My.Columbia portal that houses various reporting mechanisms.

**EM**

Exception Memorandum.

EmpID

(employee ID): Unique identification code for an individual associated with the University.

Encumbrance

A commitment to pay for goods and/or services reflected in a budget (i.e. purchase order commitment).

ERP

Enterprise Resource Planning Systems: A single, integrated business solution that works across an entire organization. The primary elements of the solution are multiple software applications, or modules, that provide specialized functionality within a single, integrated operating environment that makes use of data in a database that is shared among the modules. At Columbia University, the Finance business area is the focus of our ERP effort.

**F&A**

Facilities and Administration: also referred to as Indirect Cost (IC), Indirect Cost Recovery (ICR), and overhead. F&A are actual costs incurred to conduct normal business activities, but are not readily identified with or directly charged to a specific project or program. -See also: *IC ICR*

FAS

Financial Accounting System (FAS) was the University's Accounting system that has been replaced by ARC. Data available in READ-ONLY mode as of July 2012.

FDS

Financial Data Store, our new financial data warehouse. (Previously referred to as ODS --Operational Data Store).

FFE

See FINSYS.

Field

An area on a page that displays or requires data.

FIN ERP

Financials Enterprise Resource Planning project.

FINSYS

FINSYS tab in My.Columbia Portal

FR&O

Financial Reporting & Operations

Functional Requirements

Comprehensive descriptions of what a specified software package will do, how it is expected to perform, and its intended purpose as it relates to the specified business needs (Finance) of the University.

FY

Fiscal Year runs from July 1st through June 30th each year.

**GL**

General Ledger: The 'Book of Record' which holds all financial transactions in detail or summary and is used for financial reporting and financial management.

Go-Live

The day the University starts to use a system such as ARC or Concur.



HRPC

Human Resources Processing Center.



IC ICR

(This term has not been defined.)

IDI

Inter Departmental Invoice - used by CU departments who need to charge other CU departments for services rendered.



JAC

Jobs@Columbia

JE

Journal Entry - mechanism for transferring funds between FAS accounts.



**Labor Accounting**

Manages an employee's account profile, additional compensation, and cost transfers.

Leading Practice

A process or practice that is considered to be highly efficient or effective and has been adopted by a large number of organizations.

**Matching**

The matching process compares vouchers with purchase orders (2-way) and receiving (3-way) documents. This ensures that you pay only for the goods and services that you order and receive.

Module

Groupings of software programs that collectively support a specific business function.



NFY
New Fiscal Year.



OFY
Old Fiscal Year.

OMB
Office of Management and Budget.

**P-CARD**

University Purchasing Card.

PAC

People@Columbia (also referred to as PeopleSoft system) – The customized version of PeopleSoft that integrates and processes all Human Resources and Payroll transactions for Columbia University including hire/rehire, salary distribution, additional compensation and cost transfer transactions.

PAD

Payroll Accounting Distribution - breakdown of personnel salary costs as charged across FAS accounts.

PAF

Personnel Action Form - used to convey individual personnel data to HR and Payroll systems.

PAT

Payroll Account Transfer form - used to accomplish payroll specific accounting entries.

PC

Petty Cash - cash held in department for small or emergency purchases.

PO

University Central Purchase Order.

Pre-encumbrance

Part of the budget checking process. It is the amount you expect to spend, but for which there is no obligation to spend and it is cleared when an encumbrance is created.

Project

First (highest) level at which you can budget and record project activity.

Project Life Budget

A budget that is created for the life of a project, e.g. Sponsored Projects, Capital Projects.

Purchasing Key Terms

Please navigate to the following page.



**Receiving**

A system record of goods received from purchase orders.

RG

Regular Earnings - refers to the most commonly used payroll earnings code.

Role

A named set of work that a user can do. A role is associated with one or more permission lists that authorize access to particular system functions to accomplish the work implied by the role.

**SAF**

Salary Action Form - used to convey labor information to payroll (i.e. which accounts salary will be charged to).

Sandbox

A test environment that allows experimentation with system elements without affecting production data. For example, a sandbox might be used to test a new system module or module interface.

School/Admin Unit Liaisons

Change agents for schools and admin units. These individuals will help champion change and help their respective areas prepare for the FIN ERP solution.

Security Mapping

The assignment of user roles and other user-specific settings to the employees who will use ARC, FDS (Financial Data Store) and PAC. These assignments define the functions, screens, and data available to each user when working in these systems.

Shadow System

A system used locally by a School/Admin Unit to provide a capability not available in a central system. The system was neither created by, nor supported by, Columbia University Information Technology.

SIC

Standard Industry Code - used to identify types of payments in AP systems.

SIS

Student Information System - student oriented system that conveys academic registration status to other CU systems.

SME

Subject Matter Expert: A person who is an expert in a particular business area.

SPA

Sponsored Projects Administration (formerly Research Administration).

SPF

Sponsored Projects Finance (formerly Restricted Funds).

Stakeholder

An individual or School/Admin Unit that is involved in, affected by, or has a relevant interest in project activities or outcomes.

**TBER**

(aka T&E): Travel and Business Expense Report.

To-Be

A future state of a process. Typically used in reference to a desired future state.

Trees

A PeopleSoft graphical format that organizes ChartField data into hierarchies which can be used for security, reporting and managing organizational structure.

**UNI**

University Network Identification.

UwPA

University-wide Purchasing Agreements are those supplier relationships for products and/or services that have cost, terms and other business elements negotiated by the Purchasing Office.



**Workflow**

Automatic, rule-based routing to pre-determined users based on criteria such as role, department, commodity, account and dollar amount. Workflow manages and tracks the flow of work.

Worklist

The automated to-do list created by workflow. From the worklist, you can directly access the pages you need to perform the next action, and then return to the worklist for another item.





**ZT (Module)**

Now called the FINSYS Time Entry Module which is used to pay casual (non-permanent) employees or make additions or deductions to weekly or bi-weekly regular employees. Also refers to paper forms used for the same purpose.