Senior Design Project Purchases and Reimbursements Guidelines and Rules

This document outlines the following information:

- Team Budget
- Completion of the Guidelines Quiz – required by all students
- Where do I get purchasing and reimbursement forms?
- Purchases (READ PRIOR TO MAKING PURCHASES!!!)
  - over $50 and under $50
  - Amazon, Lowes, Home Depot
  - 3D Printed Parts, RIMS Accounts, Engineering Shop Services
  - Software Purchases, File Sharing Websites, Subcontractors, Focus Groups
  - Learning Factory Shop Charges/Usage (Waterjet, 3D printer, Materials)

- Reimbursement for Purchases and Travel Expenses
- Site Visits to Your Sponsor
- Non-refundable Expenses (READ PRIOR TO MAKING PURCHASES!!!)
- Sample reimbursement and purchasing forms and rental car agency memo

Team Budget

The team has up to $1000 to be used for materials and supplies REQUIRED for the project and limited travel expenses. Each team must designate a bookkeeper to keep track of expenses. The bookkeeper is not responsible for placing orders or requesting reimbursement on behalf of a teammate.

Quiz – Completion is Required Before Reimbursement and Purchasing

Deadline is Friday, February 14, 2020

ALL STUDENTS are required to complete the online Purchase and Reimbursement quiz prior to buying items or requesting assistance from Cindy to make a purchase or reimbursement. The quiz is located in Canvas through your capstone course and must be completed by the deadline date or before assistance is needed from the LF staff, whichever comes first. Your instructor might have an earlier deadline.

Proof of Completion: You must bring a hard copy of the results (not the actual quiz) to Cindy’s office showing successful (100%) completion. Each team member must print their scores since we need one on file for each person so do not cut and paste your scores together, as a team, onto one piece of paper. Your name should appear on the results page. You only need to bring proof once and it will be kept on file for future use. You will not receive assistance until you take the quiz. DO NOT EMAIL THE RESULTS TO CINDY.

Where Do I Get the Required Forms?

All forms mentioned in this document can be found on the Learning Factory website under the Student tab under Forms and Policies. http://www.lf.psu.edu/Students/forms.aspx Example forms are at the end of this document.

Purchases – How Are They Made?

Purchases over $50: Complete a Materials Request Form for each vendor and email them to Cindy.

**IMPORTANT** The LF staff will only make purchases from vendors within the US and Canada. Unless the following vendors are used via Amazon, the LF staff will not make purchases from Gearbest, eBay, Hobby King, Hobby Wing, Craigslist (even if these companies have a US based warehouse).

1. Always include item#, product#, or catalog # and URLs are helpful too.
2. Make sure the items 1) are in stock, 2) have the quantity you need, and 3) if there is a lead-time, you indicate on the Materials Request Form that you are OK with the timeframe.
3. Be detailed and specific. If the item has choices (e.g. colors, lengths, sizes, shapes), you must include these.
4. Shipping: All orders will be shipped standard ground unless the LF staff is told otherwise or Amazon Prime is available.
**Purchases under $50:** Students may purchase items from any vendor of their choosing, online or in a store. The total purchase (including tax and shipping) cannot exceed $50 per day, per student, per store. Complete a Petty Cash Form and bring it and your receipts to Cindy for reimbursement. Follow the example petty cash form.

For example, students *can* go to Walmart, Target, and Lowes all in the same day and make $50 purchases at each location as long as each receipt does not exceed $50. Splitting up the purchases and receipts from one vendor in the same day IS NOT ACCEPTABLE if the day’s total exceeds $50. HINT: Split up the items among your teammates and checkout and pay separately.

**Amazon Orders**

Only one form is needed for Amazon orders even if different vendors are being used. You are still only ordering from one vendor...Amazon. Include the ASIN number that begins with a “B” found under Product Information and a URL to the items. If the URLs do not fit onto the material request form, include them in an email that accompanies the form.

**Lowes and Home Depot Orders**

You can buy items yourself or the LF staff can place online or over-the-phone orders and someone from the team can personally go and pick up the order. You must indicate this preference in the Comments section of the Materials Request Form. Include the name and cell # of the person who will be picking up the order so they receive the notification when the order is ready for pick-up. Most times it is easier for you to go to the store and make your purchase. PLEASE USE LOWES BEFORE USING HOME DEPOT.

**3D Printed Parts, RIMS Accounts, & Engineering Services Shop**

Talk to Cindy first. She will need to give you budget/fund information for RIMS and Eng. Shop Services.

**Software**

University Policy states that software purchases must get prior approval, therefore, all software purchases must be requested through and made by Cindy. Send an email and include the exact use/need for the software and a URL link to the software. Please allow time for the approval. **Software cannot be loaded onto personal computers.**

**File Sharing Websites**

Monthly subscriptions to file sharing websites are not considered software, therefore, students can purchase this on their own as long as MONTHLY subscriptions are available (versus 1 year subscription). Talk to Cindy first.

**Subcontractors**

(Payment to vendors who are providing a SERVICE)

Only Penn State can pay a subcontractor/vendor for providing a SERVICE (e.g. sewing, welding, painting). This is different than purchasing an item. **Students cannot pay for services, regardless of the amount.** Get an invoice from the subcontractor/vendor and give to Cindy to process.

What is required on the invoice? Date, vendor name, address, phone number, contact person, tax exemption number if applicable, social security number if applicable, detailed description of the work performed, hourly rate if applicable, total amount due, and who to make the payment “payable to” if requiring a check.

**The Learning Factory (LF) Shop Charges**

(The shop is located in the Engineering Services Building.)

Incurring expenses in the Learning Factory is handled differently than any other purchase/expense. There will be a charge when you use certain equipment and materials in the LF. The charges will be entered into the LF billing system by the staff and will be deducted from your budget at the end of the semester. **Tell the LF staff you are working on a capstone project and provide them with the name of your project and sponsor company.** They will find it in the billing system and charge your team accordingly. You will be given a quote for your budget person.

**Focus Groups**

If your project requires you to use a focus group, please contact Cindy to discuss the process. You may use food as an incentive such as prepackaged donuts or cookies, bottled water, etc. No non-food items are permitted to be purchased as incentives (e.g. gift cards). A list of participants and their email address must be obtained at the time of the focus group event and a faculty member must be present at the event.
Reimbursements – How Are They Requested/Processed and When?

All reimbursement requests must be within 30 days of the purchase or travel dates. They will be accepted on Tuesdays and Thursdays only 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. to Cindy in 314C Leonhard Building.

Receipts Required

Students must submit actual, itemized/detailed receipts for ALL types of expenses. The receipt MUST include vendor name, date of purchase, description of items, and proof of payment. Credit card receipts alone are not acceptable as they do not list what was purchased.

Reimbursement for Travel

Within 30 days of each trip, personally bring the original receipts and appropriate travel reimbursement form (one per trip) to 314 Leonhard.

- If you are an employee of PSU (RA, TA, Wage Payroll), complete the Employee Travel Reimbursement Form.
- If you are NOT an employee of PSU, complete the NON-Employee Travel Reimbursement form.

You must fill in one of the three circles at the very top of the form because you may be required to complete a Non-Employee Information (NEI)* form and provide additional documentation (e.g. I94).

Submit itemized receipts (meals, rental car, hotel, tolls, parking, etc.) and if requesting personal mileage reimbursement, submit directions from GoogleMaps or Mapquest to prove the distance driven. The directions and NEI form (if applicable) will be kept on file.

* Section II of the Non-Employee Information form might require you to submit a copy of additional documentation (e.g. I94, etc.). Please read it carefully.

Reimbursement for Purchases of Materials

(Students must come for their own reimbursement.)

Within 30 days of the purchase, submit in person to Cindy, a Petty Cash Form and receipts.

One form should be completed for multiple receipts even if the purchases were made on different days and with different vendors. Be specific but brief with a ‘generic description’ (e.g. nails, glue, nuts, bolts, pvc pipe, boards, paint, brushes.) Do not include dimensions or quantities and only list an item once even if it appears more than once on the receipt. Put the grand total (including tax) of each receipt on the form and not the price of each item.

Site Visits to Sponsor – What do I do?

1. Prior to the first visit, complete the Emergency Contact form and email a copy to your instructor and Cindy.
2. TRANSPORTATION (two options): You can use your own vehicle or you can use a rental car. See below.

- Use your own vehicle. Roundtrip mileage or gas receipts (whichever is cheapest) are reimbursable on personal vehicles with a starting point of State College, PA to the address of the sponsor company. Mileage reimbursement rate is currently $.057.5/mile. Reimbursement will be calculated based on the directions you provide.

- Rent a car. PSU will only reimburse rental cars from NATIONAL or ENTERPRISE. Use the Big Ten Corporate Discount Number (XZ40034) when reserving a vehicle. When picking up the vehicle, students must present a letter of authorization from and signed by the renter’s instructor, on institution letterhead, which states the purpose of the rental and specifically indicate that the vehicle will be used for an official institution function or purpose. Sample memo at the bottom of this document. Students must also have a valid credit card. Students age 18-20 shall be restricted to rentals of Economy, Compact, Midsize/Intermediate, Standard, Full Size, Minivan and Intermediate/Midsize/Standard SUV vehicle classes. If you reserve the car under this program, you should not request or be asked to choose the young renters fee. It is already included. If you rent the vehicle but do not use this program you will have to choose the young renters fee. Reimbursement for the vehicle will include basic cost of rental car, applicable taxes, young driver fee, and only the days you traveled for the project. Additional coverage voluntarily purchased by the driver will NOT be reimbursed (e.g. damage waiver, liability fees, roadside assistance fees, etc.). If you return after the agency is closed, they have drop boxes for the
keys. Rental of the car beyond your actual travel dates will not be reimbursed so if you keep the car an extra day(s), you will not receive reimbursement or coverage for those days.

3. HOTEL (if applicable): Students should make and pay for their hotel accommodations and then request reimbursement upon return. Double-up in one room when possible. Submit detailed/itemized ‘paid’ hotel receipt.

4. MEALS:
   a. Students will receive reimbursement for meals for overnight site visits ONLY and are in excess of $10.00 (total of all meals). Meals purchased within 30 miles of State College will not be reimbursed.
   b. Group meals are not permitted. Each student must buy their own meals and request reimbursement.
   c. PSU allows up to a 20% tip. Keep in mind that every penny spent comes out of your $1000.
   d. The University has a meal per diem policy which means there is a maximum in which you can be reimbursed and it varies based on where and when you traveled. For your reference, the Federal rules governing per diems are here http://travel.psu.edu/travel-tools > Reimbursement Rates > U.S. General Services Administration Per Diem Rates for CONUS Meals & Incidentals. A handy tool can be found here: http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/26429

Non-Refundable Expenses (BUT NOT LIMITED TO):
- Food/meals for sponsor or team meetings.
- Purchases made in the last two weeks of classes that were not preapproved and were not required to complete the project.
- Meals while on travel unless you meet the criteria listed in the Site Visits to Sponsor section.
- Taxi, Uber, personal mileage in the State College area UNLESS you are visiting your sponsor who is located in State College.
- On-campus parking.
- All clothing or boots/shoes. Team shirts are NON-REFUNDABLE even if your sponsor or instructor suggest it.
- Give-a-ways, trinkets, gift cards, etc. for focus groups or any other recipient.
- Mileage to and from rental car agency.
- Voluntary coverage on rental cars (e.g. damage waiver, liability fees, roadside assistance fees, etc.).
- Rental of the car outside of your travel dates. If you return after the agency is closed, all of them have drop boxes for the keys. Therefore, rental of the car beyond your actual travel dates will not be reimbursed.

Returning Unused or Incorrect Items: Cindy will process all returns and exchanges for orders that she placed. All unused or incorrect items should be returned for a refund even if the project is under budget. Students must research vendors return/exchange policy, package up the items, (HINT: Keep original packaging until you are sure item is going to work.), provide the return shipping address and any pertinent information that the vendor requires. Credit will be issued to the team’s budget, however, any costs to return the items will deducted from the team’s budget.

IMPORTANT! IMPORTANT! IMPORTANT!

- Teams cannot purchase items in the last two weeks of classes that are not REQUIRED for completion of the project. Last minute requests must go through the Learning Factory staff and may or may not be approved.
- Sponsors may ask you to buy ‘extra’ materials/supplies to ‘use up the budget.’ This is NOT PERMITTED and the purchase/reimbursement request will be denied.
- Sponsors and instructors cannot give approval for last minute purchases, however, they may be consulted by the Learning Factory staff, if needed.
- Items purchased by the LF staff, or something you purchased and received reimbursement for, are the property of PSU. For example, if a cell phone, a monitor, or even as simple as an extension cord not permanently attached to a prototype is purchased, they must be returned to the LF staff at the conclusion of the semester. They do not belong to anyone on the team and they do not belong to the sponsor.
- Prototypes become the property of the sponsor, subject to limitations outlined in PSU Policy BS07 Authority and Procurement. https://policy.psu.edu/policies/bs07 A good example of this would be a monitor that is purchased for testing but not a component of the final prototype. The prototype would, but the monitor would not, become the property of the sponsor.
DATE: Today's Date
FROM: Professor XXXXX, phone number and email
TO: Name of Rental Car Agency (National or Enterprise)
SUBJ: Business travel for engineering students on behalf of Penn State University

On February 15, 2020, a team of senior engineering students in ME 440.001 will be visiting their senior design project sponsor, Ford Motor Company, in Dearborn MI to tour the facility, meet with company representatives, discuss project deliverables, and/or provide updates to the project. This is required for the project and as part of the course. The team members are XXXXX.

Please allow this team to receive the BIG Ten Corporate Discount and coverage.

Please contact me with any questions.

Thank you.