Approvals Training Handout

1.0 Contacts/Resources

- IRIS Helpdesk: email irishelpdesk@tennessee.edu
- IRIS Website: http://iris.tennessee.edu

2.0 Overview of Workflow

Workflow is the method for routing documents that are entered in IRIS to the appropriate users in the system for electronic review and approval.

2.1. The Basics of Workflow

- The routing of departmental approvals is based on the organizational concept of **funds center**. Funds centers are discussed further in the section on financial terms.
- Anyone who receives items in workflow is generically referred to as an **agent**. An approver is one type of agent. A reviewer is another type of agent that will be discussed later.
- The documents that are routed for approval are known as **work items**.
- The number and levels of workflow stops required vary depending on the work item type, campus, expenditure levels, etc. Some examples of different workflow stops are:
    - Departmental Approver
    - College Reviewer
    - Vice-chancellor Approver
    - Campus Business Office
    - Central Payroll Office
    - Human Resources Office
    - Vice-President
- Examples of transactions that generate workflow:
    - Invoices
    - Time Entry
    - Requisition
    - Travel Expense Reports
    - HR Personnel Transactions
    - User Requests
    - Position Create/Change

2.2. The Workflow Process

- The basic workflow process consists of the following steps:
  - A document is entered into the system and saved.
  - A step is initiated to release the document to workflow. The method for submitting to workflow may differ, depending upon the transaction that was submitted.
  - The system determines which approvals are required.
  - Work items are sent to the appropriate agents for all funds centers involved.
  - Once all necessary approvals have been given, the document is either posted as a final expenditure or revenue item, saved to the human resources record, or sent to central offices for entry.

- Approval paths are based on the following:
  - document type
  - the departmental funds center of all cost centers or WBS elements associated with the work item
  - the funds center(s) at the college or higher level if the document requires more than departmental approval

- To initiate the approval process, the agent "executes" the work item. "Executes" means that the document may be:
  - **Approved** – the document is allowed to move forward along the workflow path to the next approver, or if this is the final approval, the document is released for posting or manual entry by a central office.
  - **Rejected** – a message is sent to the document's originator announcing the rejection. The agent should always provide an explanation indicating why the document was rejected.

- In addition to the execute option, the agent may also:
  - Reserve the work item – no decision has been made, but the agent doesn't want anyone else to act on the document. The work item remains in the agent's inbox but the status is changed to indicate *it has been reserved and no one else may act on it.*

3.0 Review of Key Financial Terms

Cost Center – a collector of costs and revenues for <u>permanent</u> activities.

- "E" funds indicate expense activities
- "I" funds indicate revenue activities
- Employees are responsible to cost centers ("E" funds) in HR but may or may not be paid from a cost center
- Examples: E051234, E029876054, and I02345067

WBS (Work Breakdown Structure) Element – a collector of costs and revenues for <u>time-delimited</u> activities.

- Grants and Contracts
- Scholarships and Gift funds
- Most WBS elements begin with an "R"
- Examples: R041234056

Fund – a separately budgetable source of money.

- A fund exists for every cost center and WBS element in the system.
- The fund number is the same as the cost center/WBS element number. The terminology differs depending on the IRIS transaction you are using.
- Examples: E119876054, R071234056

Funds Center – is a collection of one or more funds (cost centers and/or WBS elements).

- Funds centers always begin with "U".
- Funds centers can be up to 10-digits in length.
- Funds centers can be broken down and classified. Every department has a funds center containing all of the cost centers and WBS elements in that department. Funds centers may also represent colleges, vice chancellor areas or budget entities.
- Examples:
    - U01 = Budget Entity (Knoxville)
    - U0134 = Vice Chancellor (Academic Programs)
    - U013410 = College (Arts and Sciences)
    - U013410024 = Department (Chemistry)

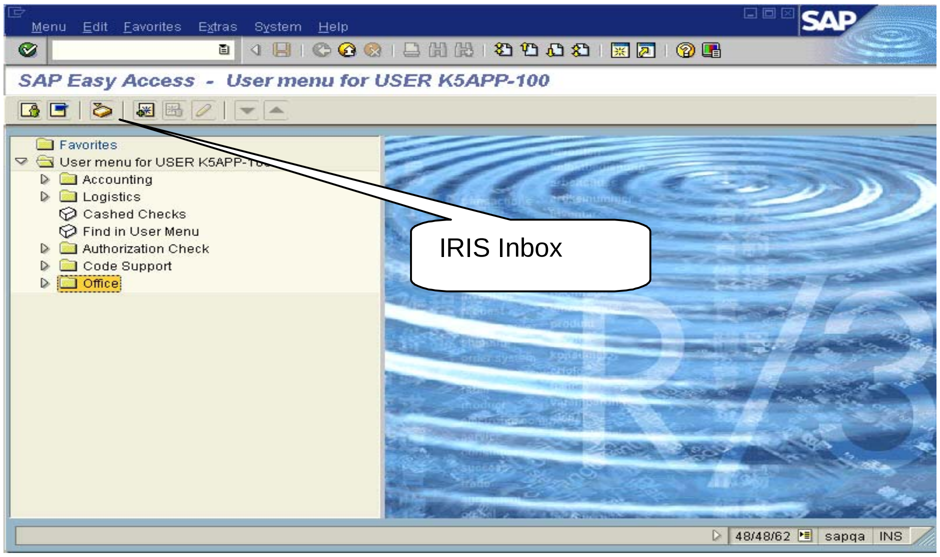
G/L (General Ledger) Account – a code that categorizes revenue and expense activities.

- Form the basis for creating the balance sheets and income statements
- Five types of General Ledger Accounts - assets, liabilities, fund balances, revenues and expenditures.
- Examples:
    - 439100 – Supplies
    - 800001 – Rent

4.0 SBWP – The IRIS Inbox

4.1. Accessing the IRIS Inbox

The IRIS inbox is accessed through transaction **SBWP**. It is also accessible from the main menu screen as shown on the following image.



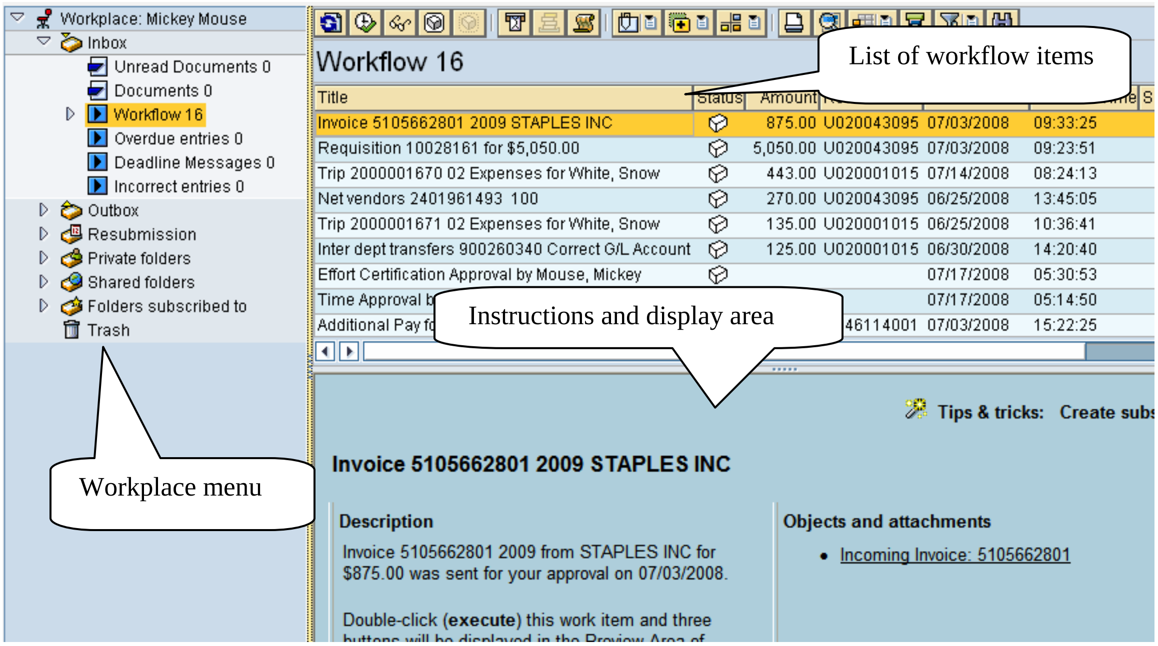
To access the IRIS inbox, click  **(SAP Business Workplace)** located just above the menu tree.

The IRIS inbox is used to take the following actions on work items:

- **Approve** – document posts or moves on for further approval
- **Reject** – document is returned to the originator
- **Modify** – if document has been rejected and needs to be corrected before resubmission (not available for all documents)
- **Reserve** – hold the document until action can be taken
- **Replace** – release the document back to the inboxes of other approvers, if applicable
- **Create Attachment** – will stay attached to the document in the workflow path
- **Forward** – not recommended as it allows the recipient to approve instead of the original approver

4.2. The format of the IRIS Inbox

An example of the IRIS inbox is shown in the following image.



4.2.1 The Workplace Menu

- The workplace menu is on the left side of the screen
- The number to the right of "Workflow" represents the number of work items in the inbox.

4.2.2 The List of Work items

- To the right side of the screen is a list of the work items in your inbox.
- The icons shown above the list of work items have been defined in a separate document titled "Workplace Icons".
- The columns in this section are defined below:
  - *Title*: gives the type of document to be approved and the document number that has been assigned to it, if applicable.
  - *Status*: indicates the item has not been viewed by the agent. or indicates that the item has been **viewed and/or reserved** by the agent and it is in process; however, since the item is still in the inbox, it has not been approved or rejected. No one else (not even your substitute) can see a reserved item.
  - *Creation date & Creation time*: show the date and time the work item was created.

- *Attachment*: will have a  in the column to indicate that the item has an attachment.

- *Amount:* the amount associated with the work item will appear in this column, if applicable. Not all work items have an initial amount displayed in this column.

- The additional columns are not used at this time.

4.2.3 Instructions and Display Area

- The lower right side of the screen contains information on the specific work item currently highlighted and what steps you need to take to approve or reject it. The type of item and the document number for the selected item is displayed near the top of this section.

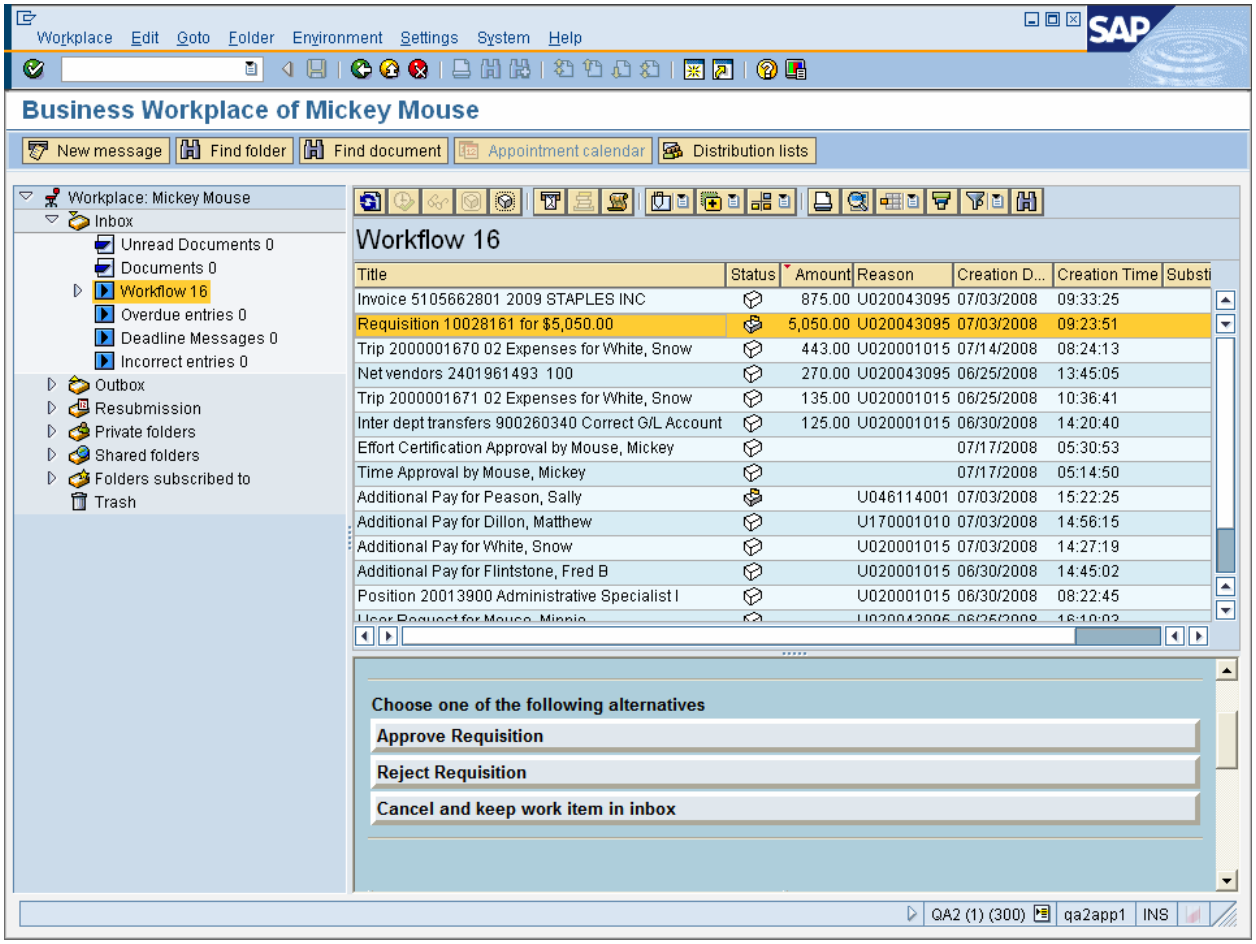
- The **Description** may include instructions on processing the work item or it may include summary information about the work item.

- To the right of the description is the heading **Objects and Attachments**. Below this heading is a link with the work item type and number. Click on the link to display the associated document in a separate window. If a work item has an attachment, you will see a link for it here as well.

4.3. Executing Work Items

- To execute (approve, review, or reject) a document, you can either double-click on the work item line or you can click on the work item line and then click  **(Execute)**.

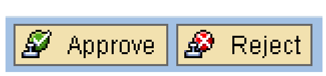
- For some work items, three buttons will appear in the lower right section of the screen after you execute them as shown in the following image. (You may need to use the scroll bars in that portion of your screen in order to see the buttons.)



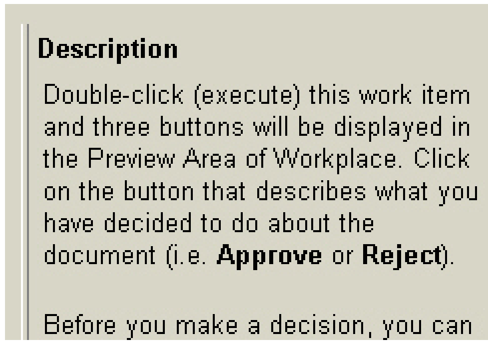
- You would use these buttons to approve or reject the item, or, if you need to wait to act upon the item, you can choose to cancel the action and keep the item in your inbox. **It is recommended that you display the document via the provided link before approving or rejecting the work item.**

- For other work items you will be taken directly to a screen that displays the associated document after you execute it. In these cases, near the top of the screen there will be buttons to **Release** and **Reject** or **Approve** and **Reject**.

or



- The description may give you more information on the buttons presented. For example, if the three buttons are supposed to appear, the **Description** will read as shown below.


Description

Double-click (execute) this work item and three buttons will be displayed in the Preview Area of Workplace. Click on the button that describes what you have decided to do about the document (i.e. **Approve** or **Reject**).

Before you make a decision, you can

4.4. Sorting and Grouping Work Items

If an agent's inbox has many items in it, it may be desirable to sort or group the items for ease of use. For example, some approvers choose to see the most recent work items at the top of the list. Another approver may wish to act upon all work items of a particular type at a time.

- **Sorting Work Items**

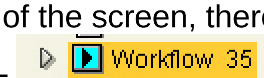
  You may sort the work items list on any column that you wish. The sort is active only for the current view. If you leave the workflow screen and return, even if you have not signed off of IRIS, you will need to resort your list.

  To sort the work items by a particular column, click on the column heading. When you click on the column heading, your list will be sorted and a tiny arrow will appear in the column heading on the right side of the column heading as shown below.

  The direction of the arrow indicates the direction of the sort. If the arrow points up as in the example above, the items are sorted ascending. In this example, the *Title* column, the sort is alphabetical, A – Z, by work item title.

  If you click on the *Title* column heading again, the direction of the arrow will change and the items will sort descending.

- **Grouping Work Items**

  In the menu section of the screen, there is a small arrow to the left of the *Workflow* selection – 

. Click .

The *Workflow* section will now expand to display four different grouping options as shown in the screen below.

You can click the arrows to the left of any of these folders to group your work items into the sub-categories indicated by the folder descriptions. For instance, if you clicked on the arrow to the left of the folder labeled *Grouped according to task*, then the folder would expand to show entries for each type of work item in the inbox (e.g. requisitions, time entry, additional payments, termination requests, etc.). Clicking on one of these types will change the display in your list of work items so that only work items of that type are visible.

4.5. The Outbox

When you approve, reject or forward a work item, it is removed from your inbox and placed in your outbox.

Use of the Outbox is discouraged.

5.0 Reviewers

- In many departments, the person who approves documents has someone who reviews documents and verifies that the information on the documents has been properly entered before the approver determines if they should be approved. These individuals are referred to as "departmental reviewers".

- Departmental reviewers are not required but can be useful, especially in larger departments.

- Reviewers, like approvers, are also considered workflow "agents" and must be designated in the system, just like approvers.

- The reviewer can validate that the entry has been done correctly and then "approve" or mark the item as reviewed. The items will then move on to the department approver.

- If the designated reviewer enters a document him/herself, then workflow will send the work item directly to the approver.

- Time approvals do not route to departmental reviewers. All approvals of time entries go directly to the approver.

- College and Vice Chancellor reviewers are only valid for certain HR transactions at certain campuses.

6.0 Substitutes

- A “substitute” can be assigned to take action on a primary approver’s/reviewer’s work items. An agent can define more than one substitute.

- There are different options for defining substitutes:
    - Via the IRIS Inbox **(SBWP)**
        - Set up by the primary agent – menu path **Settings > Workflow Settings > Maintain Substitute.**
        - **Only the *approver/reviewer* can set up a substitute to be active immediately.**
        - The online lesson “SBWP – Create Substitution” demonstrates the steps for establishing a substitute.
    - Via the departmental user request form (**ZSEDEPTAUTH000**) – more information is available on this transaction in a later section.

- Permanent substitutes
    - When an agent sets a permanent substitute, the work item appears in the inbox of the primary agent and all substitutes simultaneously. When either the agent or the substitute executes an item, it is removed from both inboxes.

- As-needed substitutes
    - An as-needed substitute does not automatically receive the agent’s work items. The work item appears in the inbox of the substitute only after the substitute adopts the work items. When the substitution is adopted by the substitute, all the work items in the agent’s inbox will appear in the substitute’s inbox as well.
        - **As-needed substitutes are the recommended method of establishing substitutes**.
        - The substitute adopts the work items from the IRIS Inbox (**SBWP**) with the following menu path: **Settings > Workflow Settings > Adopt Substitution**.
        - The online lesson “SBWP - Adopt Substitution” demonstrates the steps for adopting a personal substitution.
        - **It is strongly recommended that every approver create at least one as-needed substitute for emergency purposes.** For example, if the agent is suddenly called out of town or becomes ill, the substitute can adopt the substitution and

approve items during the agent's unexpected absence. The substitute does not need to adopt the substitution unless the agent is absent; therefore, the substitute does not normally see the agent's work items.

    - After the as-needed substitute has taken necessary action upon the primary agent's work items, the substitute must end the substitution to remove any remaining work items of the primary agent and return to his/her own inbox. The substitution can be ended from within the IRIS Inbox (**SBWP**) with the following the menu path: **Settings > Workflow Settings > End Substitution**.

- Date-delimited substitutes
  - The agent can also designate a substitute that is active only for a specified time period. This type of substitution could be used during planned absences. The date-delimited substitute can either be "permanent" for the time period or "as-needed" for the time period. If it is "as-needed", the substitute must still adopt the substitution before work items will appear in the substitute's inbox.

- **When setting substitutes for departmental approvers, the substitute must meet the requirements set forth in policy FI 0150 – "Approvals".**

- Reviewers also need substitutes. If the reviewer is out of the office, no documents will flow from the reviewer to the approver.

7.0 Attachments

- Attachments may be added to work items to provide additional information about the item. The attachment "travels" with the work item through the workflow path and can be seen by others who come in contact with the work item.

- Information can be entered directly into IRIS or uploaded and saved as an attachment from another source (MS Word, Excel or Power Point, etc.).

8.0 Email Notification of Items to be Approved

- The system will automatically send out daily email notifications to all agents with new or unattended work items in their IRIS inbox at 4:00 pm (Eastern).

- The email is routed to the agent's UT directory services address. The format of this email address is NetID@tennessee.edu.

- Anyone who wishes to receive email notifications must maintain his/her forwarding address in the UT directory. See document "Set Email Routing Address in UT Directory Services" for information on setting a forwarding address.

9.0 Authorizations for Workflow Agents and Substitutes

- Authorization for primary agents – Approvers or Reviewers
  - **ZSEDEPTAUTH000** is available at the following menu path: **IRIS User Tools > User Access**.
  - The on-line lesson "ZSEDEPTAUTH000 - Requesting IRIS Access" demonstrates the steps for completing the Departmental User Request.
  - **NOTE**: Per policy FI 0150, departmental user requests must be approved by the funds center Department Head instead of the delegated departmental approver that is discussed in the rest of this document.

- Authorization for substitutes
  - If a substitute needs to be set up and the approver/reviewer is not available, a request may be made through **ZSDEPTAUTH000**.
  - The online lesson "ZSEDEPTAUTH000 - Requesting Substitutes for Workflow" demonstrates setting up a substitute in this manner.
  - Substitute requests made through this transaction must be approved by the funds center Department Head instead of the delegated departmental approver that is discussed in the rest of this document as required by policy FI 0150.

10.0 The Workflow History Report

- **ZWF_HISTORY – Workflow History Report** – this report will show the current status of a selected work item, including the path that the work item has already taken and in whose inbox(es) the work item currently resides.

- IRIS menu path: **IRIS Reporting > Workflow**.

- There are separate tabs for different types of workflow documents.

- See the "ZWF_HISTORY – Workflow History Overview" document for more information.

11.0 Reports for Viewing Workflow Responsibilities

- The following reports are located at the menu path **IRIS Reporting > Workflow**.
  - ***ZAPPS – Display Approver/Reviewer Responsibilities***
    - Shows responsibilities by funds center, fund or user ID.
    - Choose to view either approvers or reviewers.
    - It is recommended that you check the box for *Show substitutes* to be sure that valid substitutes have been designated.
    - See document "ZAPPS – Display Approver/Reviewer Responsibilities" for further instructions.
  - ***ZSUBS – Workflow Substitutes Report***
    - Request a principal agent (primary approver or reviewer) to see all assigned substitutes.
    - Request a substitute to show the assigned primary agents.
    - See document "ZSUBS – Workflow Substitute Report" for further instructions.

12.0 Accessing IRIS for Workflow

- SAP graphical user interface (SAPGui) is available from the UT Administrative Portal (UTAP): http://utap.tennessee.edu.
- Web SAPGui is also available on the UT Administrative Portal. It requires no special installation on your desktop or laptop computer and can be used from anywhere you can access the Internet.
- Both the Web SAPGui and the client download require that you sign on using your NetID and password.

13.0 Workflow Examples/Lessons

- Approvals for Specific Types of Work Items via the IRIS inbox
  - Requisition
  - Invoice without a purchase order
  - Invoice with a Purchase Order
  - Internal Transfer
  - Procurement Card
  - Travel Request
  - Travel Expense
  - Time Entry
  - User Request
  - Position Change
  - Personnel Change
  - Additional Pay
  - Termination

- Special Topics
  - ZCAP – Approving Time Entry Outside of Workflow
  - Reject a work item and create an attachment (parked document)
  - Reject a work item with prompt for rejection reason (HR transaction)
  - SBWP – Create Substitute
  - SBWP – Adopt Substitution
  - SBWP – Setting for Invoices against a Purchase Order

    IMPORTANT NOTE: This setting may be needed if you are experiencing delays in displaying the invoice at approval time.