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**Continued Essential Spending Policy**

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Office of the Provost

**ILLINOIS TECH**  
**Discover. Create. Solve.**

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Dear Illinois Tech Faculty and Staff,

As we begin the 2022–23 academic year, we are once again excited to welcome a talented, diverse, and energetic group of undergraduate and graduate students to campus. As an institution, we are also planning implementation of the many great ideas that came from the hard work of the Strategic Envisioning Committee last year. Our long-term goal of diversifying and growing our revenue remains central in these strategic initiatives so that we can expand our impact and reinvest in our core enterprises. We will be partnering with all of you on these initiatives in the coming months.

As we move forward with this growth agenda and continue to navigate our recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, prudent strategic spending will continue to be important in order to remain financially strong. As with much of higher education, the university anticipates a continuing fiscal impact from lower enrollment earlier in the pandemic, increasing inflation, and changing market conditions. Therefore, we believe it is appropriate, starting next week, to reintroduce NSF (insufficient funds) balance checking in Banner: the standard financial control that was suspended at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. **In addition, in keeping with the goals of the Board of Trustees-approved budget plan, all university departments and offices must continue to adhere to the “Essential Spending Only” guidelines outlined herein and that have been in place since the beginning of the pandemic for all operational spending until further notice.**

**“Essential spending” is defined as only spending what is necessary to successfully deliver student programming and ongoing sponsored research, ensuring that strategic long-term goals are achieved, and maintaining critical campus facilities and infrastructure.**

Essential expenses include:

- Costs related to keeping critical campus facilities and infrastructure safe and operational
- Setting up and delivering courses
- Supplies required to keep actively used labs and classrooms operational
- Supplies necessary for the safety, health, and security of residents living on campus
- Purchases required to keep the university in compliance with federal, state, and local regulations
- Travel and events, under the following conditions:
  - Travel/events paid for with internal university funds must be associated with critical university operations and be approved in writing by the interim provost (for those in the academy) or the appropriate vice president.
  - Grant-, endowment-, and/or ICR rebate-funded travel/events are permitted as long as sufficient funds from these sources are available.
  - Only economy-class domestic and international air travel is allowed.
- Active externally sponsored research
- For units that have gift/restricted funds, these funds must follow the critical spending criteria and must be exhausted with all applicable operational costs before spending for additive purposes.

All expenses that do not fall within the guidelines above should be considered non-essential. If it is unclear whether or not a requested expense qualifies as “essential spending,” requestors must seek advice and approval from their dean/VP. From there, the request must be reviewed and approved in writing by the interim provost (for all academic units and his direct reports) or the vice president of finance (for all non-academic units).

Please refer to these additional resources to facilitate adherence to essential spending guidelines:

- The essential spending policy for ICR rebate funds has not changed: see the [normal ICR policy](#) and current [FY23 essential spending guidelines](#). Discretionary spending on these funds must continue to be limited to the budgeted levels approved in writing in advance by the vice provost for research.
- The Budget Office will be reaching out to units individually regarding current P-card usage. Faculty and staff engaged in active funded research will retain active P-cards, as well as VPs, AVPs, deans, and budget managers. **Those individuals who are not reconciling their P-card purchases as required by [university regulations](#) will have their P-card privileges revoked.**
- The BuyIt eMarketplace must be used for purchasing whenever possible. Spending with any vendors that are available in BuyIt (including Amazon Business Prime, Fisher, Home Depot, VWR, CDW-G, McMaster Carr, and many other popular vendors) is **not permissible** on the P-card or reimbursable through the BuyIt Expense Module. **No exceptions will be made, and individuals violating these requirements will have their P-card privileges revoked.**
- Temporary and student labor: We should also anticipate a reduction in the availability of university-funded temporary and student employee positions.

- **This will not affect the essential student services that relate directly to student success** (housing, admissions, tech support, etc). These areas should continue to work with Human Resources, in communication with the interim provost, to establish the labor needs for each semester.
- This will also not affect federally or state-funded employees such as students on work study, those on endowed scholarships, or those funded by external research contracts.

We thank you in advance for your partnership in this collective commitment to prudent strategic spending.

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