What’s the deal with Conference Cards?

Conference cards, previously used by departments for varying business functions on campus, have not gone away but the purpose and requirements for obtaining a conference card have changed. At the beginning of this fiscal year, June 1, 2014, Dining Conference Cards are now only being issued for that purpose, conference events or preapproved group activity. For departmental business related meals or meetings on campus, the BC Purchasing Card (P-Card) is now the preferred method of payment. This change occurred in order to meet IRS tax requirements on business expense substantiation and to comply with University internal controls related to approvals and supporting documentation as to the nature of the business expense.

The new procedures for the Conference Card program will require completion of an application, definition of the program and business purpose, and authorization/sign off from a department administrator. There will be no carry forward of unused card balances at year end to the next fiscal year. Funds left over on conference cards from FY14 were returned to the FY14 department budgets.

Departments can have their staff use their current assigned Purchasing Card or obtain a separate P-Card using a distinct program identifier. A new program number, 17249, labeled “BC DINING”, has been assigned in PeopleSoft Financials for any department who would like to keep a separate accounting of meals purchased in BC dining units or would like to isolate or limit dining charges with a low dollar transaction limit.

As a reminder, the P-Card is to be used for University business purposes only. For reconciliation and documentation purposes, the register receipt with the nature of the business expense and attendees will need to be provided to the appropriate department P-Card administrator. Please contact your Department Administrator or Service Center if your department would like to use a separate P-Card using this new program code.

As business expenses are typically tax exempt, please inform the Dining Cashier BEFORE using the P-Card that this is a business function and to exclude meals tax on your purchase.

Click here for more information on conference cards.

Grant P-cards and Budget Transfers
Departments are now allowed to transfer budget money for up to $2000.00 into the P-card account on a grant without additional approval from the Office of Sponsored Programs (provided it’s not from a restricted account such as a salary.)

WARNING
FRAUD ALERT: THE NEWEST AND MOST FREQUENT P-CARD DECLINE

According to Card Hub Statistics, credit card fraud has been on the rise and continues to grow every year. In 2012, the United States and Canada lost over 3.5 billion dollars in on-line internet fraud compared to 2.7 billion in 2010. A staggering 47% of fraud transactions come from the United States.

To fight back, banks have become more diligent to prevent fraud, including US Bank, resulting in over 1100 fraud alert declines on P-cards in FY14 at Boston College. US Bank monitors and calculates whether a purchase looks suspicious based on the location of a purchase and the buying history of the P-card.

Although annoying and inconvenient to the cardholder, these freezes are necessary to protect Boston College, especially since, nationally, one in every 15 suspected fraud alerts turns out to be actual fraud.

What can you, as a P-card holder do?
1. Log into US Bank’s Access-On-Line to see why your card has declined. Declines are real-time and can be seen right away. (https://access.usbank.com)
2. If a decline refers to ADS I STRATEGY, the information provided by the cardholder to the vendor does not match the information in Access-On-Line.
Double-check the CVC Code (3 digits on the back of the card) and expiration date but the most common error is the address. The match is for the billing address, not the shipping address. Check the demographic information associated with the P-card on Access-On-Line under demographic information.

Please use ADDRESS 1. The zip code and telephone number associated with the account can also be found under demographic information.

3. If you receive any of the following codes for a P-card decline, please contact US Bank directly at 1-800-344-5696 to verify charges.

   ADS II FILTER (fraud alert)
   CAUTION ACCOUNT (unusual activity)
   PICK-UP FRAUD Code F1 (compromised)

If the charges are legitimate, then the bank will release your card right away. Please do not contact Procurement since US Bank will only verify charges from the cardholder.

Please note: If it has been determined that your card has been compromised, US Bank will send a new card within 3-5 days. Please inform your Department P-card Administrator or send a message to pcard@bc.edu

Is there anything you can do to prevent a fraud alert?

1. Do not attempt to use the card over and over again with the same transaction or with multiple vendors. Multiple declines are a trigger for a fraud alert. Find out why your card has declined before attempting a charge again in Access-On-Line at: https://access.usbank.com.


3. Be proactive and check your balance regularly. Every cardholder has the ability to see the real-time balance in Access-On-Line. See also: Access-On-Line instructions for cardholders.