

**ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICE LETTER**

**SUBJECT: GENERAL ACCOUNTING FOR CAPITAL ASSETS**

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#### **I. POLICY STATEMENT**

The University of Maine System (the “System”), through each of its campuses, acquires, records, inventories, maintains, and disposes of capital assets. Each campus is responsible for following System procedures to ensure accurate capital asset reporting and compliance with government requirements.

#### **II. REASON FOR POLICY**

The System makes beneficial use of capital assets in pursuing its program missions. Various legal responsibilities require that the System accurately record and account for capital assets on a regular basis. Because campuses are best equipped to account for acquisitions, disposals, and use of capital equipment, this policy sets forth the requirements for these actions and the necessary record-keeping that accompanies them.

#### **III. OVERVIEW**

Physical assets that meet the System’s requirements are recorded and capitalized to properly depreciate their value over time, thus reflecting their cost during the useful life of the asset. An item valued at less than the capitalization threshold is not capitalized and is fully written off as an expense at the time of acquisition.

This APL further includes definitions of different types of capital assets, asset inventory requirements, and accounting for asset disposal information.

#### **IV. WHO SHOULD READ THIS POLICY?**

- Facilities personnel
- University and Department Administrators
- Employees involved with capital assets acquisition and control

#### **V. RELATED DOCUMENTS**

- Business Process Document “Accounting For Capital and Maintenance Projects”
- Business Process Document “Requesting a Project – Completing the Project Create Form”
- APL III - Finance, Section C “System Internal Loans”  
<http://www.maine.edu/pdf/III-CSystemInternalLoans.pdf>

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- System wide Services: Facilities management  
[University of Maine System | System-wide Services and Offices](#)
  
- Office of Management and Budget: Circular A-110: Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations.  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a110/a110.html>
  
- Office of Management and Budget: Circular A-21: Cost Principles for Educational Institutions.  
[http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a021/a21\\_2004.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a021/a21_2004.html)
  
- IRS Forms and Publications.  
<http://www.irs.gov/formspubs/>

## VI. WHEN TO CONTACT THE SYSTEM OFFICE

University personnel are welcome to contact the System Office any time they have questions or need assistance. However, University personnel **must** contact the System Office in the following situations:

Situation	System Office to Contact	Forms to Complete and Forward
Real estate is being purchased or received as a donation.  <i>Note: Purchase requires prior Board approval.</i>	Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Real Estate Gifts and Acquisitions Form</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Property Acquisition and Environmental Questionnaire</a></li> </ul>
Capital Leasehold Improvement is placed in service.	Accounting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Leasehold Improvement Form</a></li> </ul>
To report ANNUAL inventory of works of art and historical treasures for insurance purposes or to report acquisitions or disposals of such assets as they occur.	Risk Management  Facilities	
Disposal or transfer of capital assets (including real estate).	Accounting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Capital Equipment Disposal Form</a></li> </ul>
An asset leased under a 'capital lease.'	Accounting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Capital Lease Form</a></li> </ul>
Requesting an Internal Loan	Accounting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email request</li> </ul>

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**VII. CAPITALIZATION THRESHOLDS**

Assets purchased, constructed, or donated that have a useful life exceeding one year and that meet or exceed System established cost thresholds will be capitalized. Such thresholds have been established for each major class of assets:

<b>Major Class of Assets</b>	<b>Capitalization Threshold</b>
Land/Land improvements	Capitalize All
Buildings/Building Improvements	\$50,000
Improvements Other Than Buildings	\$50,000
Leasehold Improvements	\$50,000
Equipment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moveable Equipment or Personal Property</li> <li>• Fabricated Equipment</li> <li>• Equipment upgrades (addition to existing asset)</li> <li>• Fixed Equipment</li> </ul>	\$5,000 * \$5,000 \$5,000 \$5,000
Software	\$5,000
Works of Art and Historical Treasures	Expensed

\* There is one exception to the capitalization threshold of \$5,000 per individual unit of personal property. As part of a building acquisition or construction of a new building or building addition, costs may be incurred to fit out space with new furnishings and equipment. When such purchases are made as part of an acquisition/construction project, if the aggregate cost of these expenditures exceeds \$50,000 and the items have a useful life of more than one year, the costs may be capitalized even though some of the individual items cost less than \$5,000. However, only allowable capitalizable items (i.e., items having a useful life of more than one year) may be included in the amount capitalized. Because the useful lives of furnishings and equipment not affixed to the building differ from the useful life of the building, assets and loans for moveable furnishings and equipment are accounted for separately from building assets and loans at the close of the construction project.

**VIII. DEFINITION OF CAPITAL ASSET ACQUISITION COST**

For purposes of valuing capital assets, the System separates them into five categories, based upon how they were acquired: purchased assets, donated assets, leased assets, fabricated equipment, and constructed assets other than equipment.

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#### A. PURCHASED ASSETS

To determine the capitalized cost of a purchased asset, you must include the purchase price, transportation costs, installation costs, value received from a trade-in, freight, professional fees, site preparation costs, and any other direct expenses incurred by the System in obtaining the asset.

If after an asset is placed in service you purchase additional components valued at less than \$5,000, you must treat them as expense.

**Caution:** *Assets that are accounted for under a grant or contract must comply with all contractual obligations set forth in the agreement.*

**Caution:** *Training, maintenance agreements, and warranty agreements are not considered part of the capital equipment cost, and should generally be expensed. If, however, the period covered by the agreement crosses the System's fiscal year-end, the portion of the agreement following in subsequent fiscal years should be recorded in the System's accounting system as an asset (prepaid expense) and amortized over the life of the agreement.*

#### B. DONATED ASSETS (GIFTS-IN-KIND)

The capitalized value of a donated asset is the market value of the asset at the date of the gift. To determine the market value of the asset, you may use the appraisal price, the selling price to educational institutions of an equivalent item, and/or information on IRS form 8283 (see the "[Definitions](#)" Section of this document).

#### C. LEASED ASSETS

These are assets purchased under a capital lease (see the "[Definitions](#)" Section of this document). You must record assets purchased under a capital lease when the lease begins. The items to be included in the capitalized value of a leased asset are the same as those for a purchased asset except that 'purchase price' is the principal portion of the total lease payments to be made. The interest portion of the payments is to be recorded as interest expense as the lease payments are made.

Determination of whether or not leased equipment should be capitalized should be made at the start of the lease. The System Accounting Department will determine the amount to capitalize, as a liability must also be recorded for financial statement purposes. **Universities should forward to the System Accounting Office information regarding each capital lease including account number to which payments will be charged, asset tag number, and a copy of the lease agreement and/or a [Capital Lease Form](#).** In addition, any supporting documentation for any additional capital costs related to the asset, as outlined in this APL, should also be forwarded to the System Accounting Department.

**Caution:** *Items paid for with an operating lease (see the "[Definitions](#)" Section of this document) are not considered capital assets. The lease payments are considered rental expense of the item.*

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#### **D. FABRICATED EQUIPMENT**

The capitalized value of a fabricated asset (see “equipment, fabricated” under the "[Definitions](#)" Section of this document) is the total of the recoverable costs associated with the construction. Recoverable costs include:

- Original invoice prices paid for the components.
- Shipping, handling, in-transit insurance, and storage charges related to the delivery and installation of the asset components.
- Costs associated with installation of the asset, including site preparation.
- Costs of testing.
- Books, manuals, and training necessary for the operation of the asset.

To help ensure that all costs of a fabricated capital asset are capitalized, you should request the creation of a project code in PeopleSoft GL at the beginning of the fabrication period. All recoverable costs related to fabricating the assets should be charged to this project code. Upon completion of the fabrication, the item will be capitalized when it is placed into service. See business process document entitled “Requesting a Project – Completing the Project Create Form” for more information about ‘projects’ in PeopleSoft GL. The department must also complete the top portion of the [Fabricated Equipment Report form](#) and submit it to the University Inventory Control Contact.

Construction of a system such as a Technology or Smart classroom will be considered capital if the total value of the components making up the asset is \$50,000 or more. This is tagged as one unit.

#### **E. CONSTRUCTED ASSETS OTHER THAN EQUIPMENT**

The capitalized value of other constructed assets includes the total amount paid for acquiring or improving the asset, such as labor, materials, architectural and design fees, charges by brokers, agents, notaries, building permits, inspections, and filing costs. Also included are the costs of utilities during construction and landscaping related to the building.

**Caution:** For building improvements to be capitalized their cost must exceed \$50,000 and they must increase the usefulness of the building, enhance its efficiency, or prolong its useful life by more than one year.

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## IX. EXAMPLES OF COSTS TO BE CAPITALIZED

### A. PURCHASED OR DONATED BUILDINGS

- Original purchase price (or appraised fair value in the case of a gift)
- Expenses for remodeling, reconditioning or altering a purchased or donated building to make it ready to use for the purpose for which it was acquired
- Environmental compliance
- Professional fees (legal, architect, inspections, title searches, etc.)
- Payment of unpaid or accrued taxes on the building to date of purchase
- Cancellation or buyout of existing leases
- Other costs required to place or render the asset into operation

### B. CONSTRUCTED BUILDINGS

- Completed project costs
- Cost of excavation or grading or filling of land **for a specific building**
- Expenses incurred for the preparation of plans, specifications, blueprints, etc.
- Cost of building permits
- Professional fees (legal, architect, engineer, management fees for design and supervision, legal)
- Costs of temporary buildings used during construction
- Unanticipated costs such as rock blasting, piling, or relocation of the channel of an underground stream
- Permanently attached fixtures or machinery that cannot be removed without impairing the use of the building
- Additions to buildings (expansions, extensions, or enlargements)

### C. BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS (COSTS MUST BE OVER \$50,000)

- Conversion of attics, basements, etc., to usable office, clinic, research or classroom space
- Structures **attached** to the building such as covered patios, sunrooms, garages, carports, enclosed stairwells, etc.
- Installation or upgrade of heating and cooling systems, including ceiling fans and attic vents
- Structural changes such as reinforcement of floors or walls, installation or replacement of beams, rafters, joists, steel grids, or other interior framing
- Installation or upgrade of window or door frames, built-in closets and cabinets
- Interior renovation associated with casings, baseboards, light fixtures, ceiling trim, etc.
- Exterior renovation such as installation or replacement of siding, roofing, masonry, etc.

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- Installation or upgrade of plumbing and electrical wiring
- Installation or upgrade of phone or closed circuit television systems, networks, fiber optic cable, wiring required in the installation of equipment (that will remain in the building).
- Other costs associated with the above improvements

#### **D. IMPROVEMENTS OTHER THAN BUILDINGS - INFRASTRUCTURE**

- Parking lots, driveways, and parking barriers
- Yard lighting
- Paths and trails
- Septic systems
- Fountains
- Fencing and gates
- Recreation areas and athletic fields, including bleachers
- Stadiums
- Swimming pools, tennis courts, and basketball courts
- Retaining walls and landscaping
- Plazas and pavilions
- Roads, streets, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, guardrails, and fire hydrants
- Traffic lights, street lighting, street signage
- Sanitary sewer piping, storm sewer piping, and drainage systems
- Canals, waterways, wharf, piers, docks, sea walls, bulkheads, and boardwalks
- Radio or television transmitting tower
- Electrical, water, and gas (main lines and distribution lines, tunnels)
- Fiber optic and telephone distribution systems (between buildings)

## **X. EXAMPLES OF COSTS TO BE EXPENSED**

### **A. BUILDING MAINTENANCE**

The following are examples of costs not to capitalize as improvements to buildings. Instead, these items should be recorded as maintenance expense.

- Adding, removing and/or moving of walls relating to renovation projects that are not considered major rehabilitation projects and do not increase the value of the building
- Improvement projects of minimal or no added life expectancy and/or value to the building
- Plumbing or electrical repairs
- Cleaning, pest extermination, or other periodic maintenance
- Interior decoration, such as draperies, blinds, curtain rods, wallpaper
- Exterior decoration, such as detachable awnings, uncovered porches, decorative fences, etc.
- Maintenance-type interior renovation, such as repainting, touch-up plastering, replacement of carpet, tile, or panel sections; sink and fixture refinishing, etc.

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- Maintenance-type exterior renovation such as repainting or repair of deteriorated siding, windows, roof, or masonry sections. (Costs less than \$50,000)
- Replacement of a part or component of a building with a new part of the same type and performance capabilities, such as replacement of an old boiler with a new one of the same type and performance capabilities
- Any other maintenance-related expenditure which does not increase the value of the building

#### **B. EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE**

- Maintenance agreements or renewal of maintenance agreements.
- Costs of demolishing or dismantling the asset.
- Moving the asset from one campus location to another.

## **XI. SPECIAL SITUATIONS**

#### **A. COMPUTER SOFTWARE**

##### **Purchased and Installed Without Modification**

Software purchased with a computer should be capitalized as part of the cost of the computer. Software purchased after a computer has been placed in service is capitalized as a separate asset if the unit price of the software is \$5,000 or more.

***Caution: Capitalization of computer software does not include the cost of software license or maintenance fees. Such costs should be capitalized as a prepaid expense and written off as expense over the life of the agreement.***

##### **Developed or Purchased and Modified for Internal Use**

Computer software developed or purchased and modified should be capitalized if total capitalizable costs are \$5,000 or more.

The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) Statement of Position 98-1 (SOP-98-1), *Software Developed or Obtained for Internal Use* provides guidance in this area and should be referred to for further detail.

For software to be considered for internal use, the University must meet the following tests:

- The software must be acquired, internally developed, or modified solely to meet the University's internal needs, **and**
- During the software's development or modification, the University must not have a substantive plan to market the software externally to other organizations.

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Software development generally involves three phases. These phases and their characteristics are as follows:

<b>Preliminary Project Stage - Costs incurred during this stage should be <u>expensed</u></b>	<b>Application Development Stage - Costs incurred during this stage should be <u>capitalized</u></b>	<b>Post-Implementation/Operation Stage - Costs incurred during this stage should be <u>expensed</u></b>
Conceptual formulation of alternatives	Design of chosen path, including software configuration and software interfaces	Training
Evaluation of alternatives	Coding	Application maintenance
Determination of existence of needed technology	Installation to hardware	
Final selection of alternatives	Testing, including parallel processing stage	
	Examples of items to be capitalized: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External direct costs of materials and services (third party fees for services)</li> <li>• Costs to obtain software from third parties</li> <li>• Travel costs incurred by employees in their duties directly associated with development</li> <li>• Payroll and payroll-related costs of employees directly associated with or devoting time in coding, installing or testing.</li> <li>• Interest costs incurred during application development.</li> <li>• Costs to develop or obtain software that allows for access to or conversion of old data by new systems.</li> </ul>	

**Caution:** *The following costs should be expensed no matter what phase they are incurred: training, general and administrative costs and overhead costs, maintenance costs, costs of converting data other than those noted above.*

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Development of software may not follow the order shown above; therefore, accounting treatment should be based on the nature of the costs incurred, not the timing of their occurrence. For example, while some training may occur in the application development stage, such costs should be expensed.

For computer software that consists of more than one component or module, this accounting guidance should be applied to each. For each module or component of a software project, amortization should begin when the computer software is ready for its intended use, regardless of whether the software will be placed in service in planned stages that may extend beyond a reporting period. Costs of specified upgrades and enhancements to internal-use computer software should be capitalized only when additional functionality is probable, otherwise such costs should be expensed.

Capitalization of costs should begin when the preliminary project phase is complete and the University's management has implicitly or explicitly authorized or commits to funding the software project with the intent it will be completed and used to perform its planned functions. Capitalization should cease no later than the time at which substantial testing is complete and the software is ready for its intended purpose or rendered in service.

If, after the development of internal-use software, an entity decides to market the software, proceeds received from the license of the computer software, net of direct incremental costs of marketing, should be applied against the carrying amount of that software.

#### **B. WORKS OF ART AND HISTORICAL TREASURES**

Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement No. 34 provides that works of art and historical treasures do not have to be capitalized if certain conditions are met. To ensure that the specified conditions are met, the University of Maine System is adopting the following practices as part of this APL:

1. Works of art and historical treasures are to be held for public exhibition, education, or research in furtherance of public service, rather than for financial gain.
2. Works of art and historical treasures are to be protected, kept unencumbered, cared for, and preserved.
3. The proceeds from sales of works of art and historical treasures are to be used to acquire other items for the collections.

Although works of art and historical treasures will not be capitalized for financial statement purposes they need to be inventoried for insurance purposes.

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**C. LIBRARY MATERIALS**

Prior to July 1, 2003, library materials were generally capitalized and depreciated over a ten-year period. Effective July 1, 2003, the System began to expense library materials as incurred. The estimated effect of this change on current and future operations is not expected to be material. The System elected this change to enhance reporting comparability with other state systems. The System will retain the undepreciated library materials balance as a core non-depreciating asset.

**XII. WHERE TO RECORD CAPITAL ASSETS IN PEOPLESOFT GENERAL LEDGER**

Capital asset acquisitions should be recorded in PeopleSoft GL as follows:

Land and building purchases	Should be set up as a project in PeopleSoft GL – see Business Process Document, “Requesting a Project – Completing the Project Create Form”
Capital construction or maintenance project	Should be set up as a project in PeopleSoft GL – see Business Process Document, “Requesting a Project – Completing the Project Create Form”
Donated assets	These will be posted to the general ledger by the System Accounting Department using the appropriate asset account and gift revenue account. See Business Process Document “Accounting for Gifts and Endowments”
Fabricated equipment	Should be set up as a project in PeopleSoft GL – see Business Process Document, “Requesting a Project – Completing the Project Create Form”
Internally developed software or purchased software that is being modified	Should be set up as a project in PeopleSoft GL – see Business Process Document, “Requesting a Project – Completing the Project Create Form”
Library materials and museum acquisitions	Use account codes: 62008, 62208 & 62508
Purchased equipment not part of a construction project – costs that do not qualify for capitalization	Use account codes: 62000 - 62007 62209 - 62216
Purchased equipment not part of a construction project – costs that qualify for capitalization	Use account codes: 62500 - 62707 62709 - 62716

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#### XIII. PERSONAL PROPERTY INVENTORY

A detailed inventory of personal property must be maintained by the University to:

- Comply with Federal requirements concerning supporting documentation for depreciation expenses included in the University's Facilities and Administration costs.
- Support the assets and depreciation reported in the University's audited financial statements.

Each university must maintain an inventory of all personal property meeting the capitalization threshold no matter the method of acquisition: purchase, donation, capital lease, fabrication. Items that are donated or leased should be distinguished from those that are purchase or fabricated. Jointly owned Personal Property should also be included as part of the inventory. All inventoried property must be tagged with appropriate information (e.g., university identification and asset number).

An inventory of personal property with a total unit cost of less than \$5,000 or being rented via an operating lease will not be required for System financial statement or Facilities and Administration cost calculation purposes. Each University may opt to track these items for other purposes, such as property control and insurance.

Each university is to maintain its personal property inventory using a database approved by the System Accounting Department. The inventory contact person for each University will update the database at least monthly.

**Caution:** *Assets that are sold or otherwise disposed of should not be deleted from the database. Instead, the disposal information (date, proceeds, method, etc.) should be noted in the database.*

The following information must be maintained for each asset in the database:

1. Campus
2. Location (i.e. Facility ID #, Building, etc.)
3. Department
4. In Service Date
5. Number of Units
6. Description of the Property
7. Tag Number
8. Serial Number
9. Manufacturer
10. Model
11. Purchase Order Number
12. Funding source
13. Chartfield combination to which the cost was charged
14. Acquisition Cost (See Definition of Capital Asset Acquisition Cost)
15. Gift (Y) (N)
16. Lease (Y) Expiration (Month/Year) or (N)
17. Condition

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18. Grant (Y) (N)
19. Grant Program if purchased with grant funds (not mandatory)
20. Jointly owned (Y) (N)
21. Comments (not mandatory)

As required by federal regulations, each University **MUST** take a physical inventory of personal property and reconcile the results with the database records at least once every two years. To initiate this process, each University inventory contact person will produce and distribute to each department its listing of inventory. The department is to verify the existence of all items, ensure the listing is complete, and update related information for all items as appropriate. Any additions, deletions, or corrections are to be noted on the listing. The department's responsible person must return the completed inventory to the University inventory contact by the date indicated. A copy of the completed inventory should also be forwarded to the Systems Accounting Office. If an asset is partially owned by the University it should be included in the database and in the physical inventory.

The department head is ultimately responsible for ensuring that all equipment purchased by the department is charged to the appropriate account and included in the University inventory. Likewise, the department head is required to inform the inventory contact person, in a timely manner, of any changes to the status of equipment.

## **XIV. CAPITAL ASSET TRANSFER AND DISPOSAL**

### **A. TRANSFER OR RELOCATION OF CAPITAL ASSETS**

When capital assets are transferred or relocated to another campus location an [Equipment Location Change Form](#) should be completed and sent to the Campus Inventory Contact and the System Accounting Department. The Capital Equipment Inventory should also be updated to ensure that moveable equipment can be located at any time.

Occasionally, moveable equipment may be temporarily taken off campus for business travel or to an off-site laboratory. When equipment is removed for more than fourteen consecutive days, you must notify the Campus Inventory Contact and the System Accounting Office. The notification should include:

- tag number and item description.
- description of the off-campus location.
- date the equipment will be removed.
- the expected date of return.

### **B. ASSET DISPOSAL**

When an asset is junked, traded-in, sold, or otherwise disposed of, the department should notify the Inventory Control Contact and the System Accounting Department so that the item may be removed from the depreciation records. Use a [Capital Equipment Disposal Form](#).

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In the case of a sale or scrap, the department should report the following additional information to the Inventory Control Contract and the System Accounting Department so that the applicable gain or loss may be recorded in the financial accounting records:

- Sale price
- Chartfield combination number to which the sales proceeds were recorded

**Caution:** *Capital assets acquired with government or corporate funds are subject to terms of the agency or donor. Permission from the specific agency will be needed before disposal. Capital assets received as gifts and disposed of within two years of the date of the gift are subject to Internal Revenue Service reporting.*

### **XV. IMPAIRMENT OF CAPITAL ASSETS**

A capital asset is considered impaired when there is both a large scale change in the service utility and the event or change in circumstance is outside the normal life cycle of the capital asset. Some events that may indicate a capital asset's service utility has declined significantly and unexpectedly include physical damage, enactment or approval of laws or regulations or other changes in environmental factors, technological changes or evidence of obsolescence, changes in the manner or duration of use of a capital asset, and construction. Any impaired asset should be reported directly to the System Office Capital Accountant for accurate financial reporting.

### **XVI. CAPITAL OR MAINTENANCE PROJECT DEFICITS**

The project manager should monitor the account activity and funding continually. Deficit balances, excluding encumbrances, on any projects must be resolved within 30 days. In some situations an internal loan from the System Office may be obtained to remedy the deficit. If an internal loan is requested the project deficit must be greater than \$75,000 and approved by the Campus President and the System CFO. For information related to Interfund Borrowing (Internal Loans) see APL Section III - C at: <http://www.maine.edu/oft/apl.html>

For additional information on project budgets and project management please refer to the University of Maine Systemwide Services Facilities Management Website located at:

<http://www.maine.edu/construction/02.0ConstProjMgmt.htm>

**APPROVED**

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**Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer**

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**EXHIBIT I - GENERAL DEFINITIONS**

Accumulated Depreciation	The total depreciation expense recognized for an asset since acquisition.
Acquisition Cost/Value	Value of an asset at the time it is acquired. May be the invoice price or, if donated, the fair market value. If jointly owned the cost paid by the University. Costs incurred to place the asset into use are also included (e.g., freight, installation).
Addition	Acquisition of a new asset or modification to an existing asset that increases the useful life or the service potential of the existing asset.
Alteration, Building	A change in the internal arrangement or other physical characteristics of an existing asset so that it may be effectively used for a newly designated purpose. An example of an alteration is changing classroom space into office space.
Appraised Value	The estimated value of an asset based on the expertise of a qualified independent appraiser.
Bar Code Tag	An asset identification tag assigned and affixed to an asset to assist in its identification and the physical inventory of equipment.
Book Value	The difference between the acquisition cost and accumulated depreciation.
Building	Facility intended for the permanent or temporary shelter of persons, animals, plants, or equipment. It is permanently attached to the land, is partially or completely enclosed by walls, and is not intended to be transportable or moveable.
Building Improvement	<p>A significant alteration, renovation, or structural change that meets or exceeds \$50,000 and that increases the usefulness of the asset, enhances its efficiency, or prolongs its useful life by more than one year.</p> <p>A building improvement should be capitalized as a betterment and recorded as an addition of value to the existing building.</p>

**ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICE LETTER**

**SUBJECT: GENERAL ACCOUNTING FOR CAPITAL ASSETS**

Capital Asset	<p>A capital asset is defined as real or personal property that has a value equal to or greater than the <a href="#">capitalization threshold</a> for the particular classification of asset. An item that is permanent in nature, having a life of greater than one year, is tangible, and is held for purposes other than investment or resale.</p> <p>There are six types of capital assets: land/land improvements, buildings/building improvements, improvements other than buildings, leasehold improvements, personal property and computer software.</p>
Capitalize	To record the cost as an asset subject to depreciation over the assets' estimated useful life, rather than as expense of the current period.
Depreciation	A method for allocating the cost of capital assets over time. Generally accepted accounting principles and federal regulations dictate that the value of capital assets must be written off as an expense over the life of the asset as an indirect cost.
Disposal	Removal of an asset from inventory due to sale, scrap, obsolescence, donation, etc.
Donated Assets (Gift-in-Kind)	A donation to the university of a tangible or intangible asset other than cash or securities. The gift can be something consumable such as supplies; or something with a longer duration, such as books, artwork, equipment, copyright interests, equipment, buildings or land.
Durable Supplies	Items that have a useful life of less than one year <b>or</b> have an acquisition cost less than \$5,000. Examples include most computers, file cabinets, calculators, chairs, most printers, pictures, etc.
Expense	A charge incurred for the current fiscal period.
Equipment, Fabricated	Constructed equipment that cannot be purchased in final form. It does not include upgrades to existing equipment, only the construction of a new piece of equipment or system.
Equipment, Fixed	Equipment permanently affixed to a building but separate from the building itself. Examples include fume hoods, carpeting, built-in furnishings, and fire systems. Fixed Equipment does not include telephone systems which are considered moveable equipment but does include wiring. Fixed Equipment that qualifies as a capital asset will be categorized as a building improvement; otherwise it will be categorized as building maintenance.
Equipment, Moveable (Also known as Personal Property)	An item that is not permanently affixed to or part of a building. Examples include computers, copiers, furniture, vehicles, boats, aircraft, and recreational vehicles.

## ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICE LETTER

### SUBJECT: GENERAL ACCOUNTING FOR CAPITAL ASSETS

Equipment, Upgrades	<p>Additional costs incurred after equipment is installed and ready for use to achieve greater future benefits. For these costs to be capitalized the upgrade must cost \$5,000 or greater and one of the following conditions must be present:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The useful life of the asset must be increased by one year or greater.</li> <li>2) The quantity of units produced from the asset must be increased.</li> <li>3) The quality of units produced must be enhanced.</li> </ol>
Impairment of Capital Assets	<p>A capital asset is considered impaired when there is both a large scale change in the service utility and the event or change in circumstance is outside the normal life cycle of the capital asset. Some events that may indicate a capital asset's service utility has declined significantly and unexpectedly include physical damage, enactment or approval of laws or regulations or other changes in environmental factors, technological changes or evidence of obsolescence, changes in the manner or duration of use of a capital asset, and construction.</p>
Improvement Other Than Building	<p>Modification other than repairs to an outside area, including sidewalks, parking lots, outdoor benches, and fences. The University considers infrastructure to be a part of improvements other than buildings. Infrastructure includes long-lived assets that are part of a network of assets that are normally stationary and normally have service potential for more than one year.</p>
Interfund Borrowing (Internal Loan)	<p>Interfund borrowing, also referred to as an internal loan, is a loan made by the System Office to a Campus for the purpose of purchasing of constructing a capital asset.</p>
Intangible Asset	<p>An asset not having physical substance (e.g., a patent or goodwill).</p>
IRS Form 8282 (Disposition of Donated Property)	<p>The form used to report to the IRS any disposition of donated property (other than cash or publicly traded securities) if the disposition occurs within two years and the donated property was valued at more than \$5,000 at the time of the gift.</p>
IRS Form 8283 (Donated Property)	<p>The form that donors are required to attach to their tax returns whenever they donate property to the university (other than cash or marketable securities) valued at more than \$5,000.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> For additional requirements see Administrative Practice Letter <a href="#">Section V-C, IRS Required Forms for Gifts</a></p>

**ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICE LETTER**

**SUBJECT: GENERAL ACCOUNTING FOR CAPITAL ASSETS**

Land	Land is the improved or unimproved surface or crust of the earth, which can be used to support structures, and may be used to grow crops, grass, shrubs, and trees. Land is characterized as having an unlimited life.
Land Improvement	Land improvements consist of betterments, site preparation and site improvements (other than buildings) that ready land for its intended use. The costs associated with improvements to land are added to the cost of the land.
Lease, Capital	<p>An installment payment agreement to acquire capital assets. The leased asset should be capitalized if:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The cost meets or exceeds the capitalization threshold of \$5,000. The lease cost is equal to the sum of all principal payments (including down payments) plus ancillary costs. In the case of a lease for multiple pieces of equipment (e.g., the GE Capital Public Finance, Inc. leases) each piece of equipment should be reviewed separately to determine whether it meets the capitalization threshold. <b>AND</b></li> <li>2) Any one of the following criteria is met:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Ownership transfers to lessee at end of lease.</li> <li>b) Lease contains bargain purchase option.</li> <li>c) Lease period is at least 75% of its useful life.</li> <li>d) Present value of lease payment is at least 90% of fair market value.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
Lease, Operating	An installment payment agreement that does not meet the criteria of a capital lease.
Leasehold Improvement	<p>Construction of new buildings by the University on property it leases from another entity, or improvements made by the University to existing structures it leases from another entity (refer to the definition of 'building improvements' to determine what should be considered an improvement to a leased structure).</p> <p>As lessee the University has the right to use the leasehold improvements over the term of the lease. At the expiration of the lease the improvements typically revert to the lessor. Moveable equipment or office furniture that is not attached to the leased property is not considered a leasehold improvement.</p> <p>If the University makes the improvements in lieu of rent, costs should be expensed in the period incurred.</p>

## ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICE LETTER

### SUBJECT: GENERAL ACCOUNTING FOR CAPITAL ASSETS

Library Materials	Books, journals, bound periodicals and microfilms purchased for and catalogued in university libraries.
Maintenance	The costs associated with recurring work required to preserve or immediately restore a facility to such condition that it can be effectively used for its designed purpose. Maintenance costs should be expensed as incurred.
Market Value	The cost to acquire an item in its current condition through an arm's-length transaction. Also referred to as fair market value.
Obsolescence	A factor to consider when determining the disposition of assets. Assets are obsolete when they are no longer useful to the university.
On-Campus	A location that is university-owned, operated, or affiliated. All university facilities have an official Facility ID code.
Personal Property (Also known as Equipment, Moveable)	An item that is not permanently affixed to or part of a building. Examples include computers, copiers, furniture, vehicles, boats, aircraft, and recreational vehicles.
Real Property	All immovable property such as land and the buildings or other objects permanently affixed to the land.
Renovation, Building	The total or partial upgrading of a facility to higher standards of quality or efficiency than originally existed. An example of a renovation is the transition of an old research laboratory into one with state-of-the-art equipment, lighting, or other subsystems.
Software	The entire set of programs, procedures, and related documentation associated with a computer system. <b>Caution:</b> Personal computer operating and application software included with a purchase of a computer system (hardware) will be considered part of that hardware system, and the related software will be included in the value of the hardware.
Software Licenses	Fee paid by the University for the right to use computer software. Such costs are not to be capitalized as a depreciable asset. Instead, they should be recorded as a prepaid expense (current asset) and written off over the life of the license agreement.
Software Maintenance Costs	Fee paid by the University for technical support related to purchased software. Such costs are not to be capitalized as a depreciable asset. Instead, they should be recorded as a prepaid expense (current asset) and written off over the life of the license agreement.
Technology Room	A Technology Room is a combination of various pieces of technology

**ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICE LETTER**

**SUBJECT: GENERAL ACCOUNTING FOR CAPITAL ASSETS**

(Smart Classroom)	equipment that function in a room and are considered one unit. The room may be equipped with items such as a video/data projector, a VHS cassette player or DVD/VHS combo unit, an overhead transparency projector, and a slide projector. These rooms have connections for laptop computers and campus network/Internet access and a smart panel that allows easier access and control of the video projector. Individual pieces of equipment costing \$5,000 or greater would be is capitalized and tagged as a single unit. If the total equipment costs are \$50,000 or greater and the equipment works together as a system that should be capitalized.
University Administration, Capitalizable	Trade shop and Professional employees who are working directly on a capital project may charge their time to the capital project.. These charges should be based on actual time spent on a project. Benefits are based on the current year Federal Benefit rate. Classified employees should <b>not</b> be charged to the capital project
Useful Life	The period of time over which an asset has use to the university in performing the function for which it was purchased.
Works of Art and Historical Treasures	Works of art, rare books, historical treasures, or scientific specimens that are held for public exhibition, education, or research rather than for financial gain. They are protected and preserved and are subject to an organizational policy that recommends the proceeds of items that are sold be used to acquire other items for collections.

# FABRICATED EQUIPMENT FORM

When a fabricated equipment project begins, complete the top half of this form and send a copy of the entire form to the University inventory contact person. Please use a separate form for each project. Call \_\_\_\_\_ with any questions you may have.

FABRICATED ITEM DESCRIPTION: \_\_\_\_\_

PROJECT DIRECTOR: \_\_\_\_\_

CAMPUS: \_\_\_\_\_

DEPARTMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

PROJECT BEGIN DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

PROJECT END DATE (Estimated): \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT PERSON: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

When a fabricated equipment project has been completed, fill out this portion of the form and return the entire form to the University inventory contact person.

DATE	CHARTFIELD COMBINATION	COMPONENT	PURCHASE ORDER #	AMOUNT
(Additional sheets may be attached if necessary)			TOTAL COST	

LOCATION OF FABRICATED ITEM: \_\_\_\_\_  
Building and Room Number

COMPLETION DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

DEPARTMENT HEAD: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE OF DEPT. HEAD: \_\_\_\_\_

# REAL ESTATE GIFTS AND ACQUISITIONS FORM

CAMPUS \_\_\_\_\_

PROPERTY ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
(street address with number)

CITY, STATE \_\_\_\_\_

DONOR OR SELLER NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_

PURCHASE PRICE (OR VALUE, IF GIFT) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

LAND AREA \_\_\_\_\_ acres      BUILDING AREA \_\_\_\_\_ sq ft

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT COMPLETED? \_\_\_\_\_ (Attach copy of survey form)

TYPE OF TRANSFER DOCUMENT \_\_\_\_\_  
(warranty deed, quitclaim deed, bequest, etc.)

DATE OF TRANSFER \_\_\_\_\_

TAX MAP AND LOT \_\_\_\_\_

CAMPUS CFO SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS

**UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM  
PROPERTY ACQUISITION  
ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONNAIRE**

**ATTACHMENT C**

Use for all purchases or gifts of real estate. Leases, depending on terms, may require use of questionnaire. Provide responses as indicated. Submit copy to UMS Office of Facilities, 16 Central Street, Bangor, ME 04401. FAX: 207 947-7556 prior to completion of purchase or acceptance of gift real estate.

<b>ISSUE</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>
<b>I. GENERAL</b>	
<b>a.</b> Person completing form:	Name:
	Title:
<b>b.</b> Date questionnaire completed:	Date:
<b>c.</b> Property location (include county and town)	Address:
<b>d.</b> Name of current owner:	Name:
<b>e.</b> Is legal description of property attached?	Yes      No
<b>f.</b> Are there buildings located on the property?	Yes      No
<b>g.</b> Approximate year building was constructed:(If more than one building, list year each was constructed)	
<b>h.</b> Current use of building: (If more than one building, list use of each)	
<b>i.</b> Are there any landfills, former landfills, underground tanks, or hazardous waste dumps within two miles of or on the property?	Yes      No      Unknown If yes, explain:
<b>j.</b> Have there been any environmental investigations done in the vicinity of the property?	Yes      No      Unknown
<b>II. ASBESTOS HAZARDS</b>	
<b>a.</b> Has building been inspected for asbestos-containing materials or hazards?	Yes      No      Unknown
<b>b.</b> Are there any asbestos-containing materials in building or in materials used in building construction?	Yes      No      Unknown If yes, explain:
<b>c.</b> Has asbestos air sampling been done in building?	Yes      No      Unknown If yes, explain:

**UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM  
PROPERTY ACQUISITION  
ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONNAIRE**

<b>III. POLYCHLORINATED BIPHENYLS (PCBs)</b>	
<b>a.</b> Does building or property contain any large transformers, capacitors, or other electrical equipment which might contain PCBs?	Yes            No
<b>b.</b> Has building or property been checked for PCB-containing equipment?	Yes            No If yes, results:
<b>IV. LEAD HAZARDS</b>	
<b>a.</b> Has building been checked for lead-based paint?	Yes            No If yes, results:
<b>b.</b> Does building contain lead pipe, lead flashing or other lead materials?	Yes            No If yes, describe:
<b>V. RADON HAZARDS</b>	
<b>a.</b> Has building been checked for radon?	Yes            No If yes, results:
<b>b.</b> Is building served by private well?	Yes            No
<b>VI. STORAGE TANK, DRUMS AND PIPELINES</b>	
<b>a.</b> Are there any aboveground or underground tanks on the property or in buildings?	Yes            No If yes, explain:
<b>b.</b> Have tanks/drums been inspected or tested for leaks?	Yes            No
<b>c.</b> What was the date of most recent inspection or testing?	Date:
<b>d.</b> Is there any storage of chemicals, fuel or other substances in drums on the property or in buildings?	Yes            No If yes, explain:
<b>e.</b> Are there any known spills or leaks of fuel oil or other chemicals on the property?	Yes            No If yes, explain:
<b>f.</b> Have underground tanks been registered with the Maine DEP?	Yes            No If yes, identify:
<b>g.</b> Are there any underground fuel oil, chemical or other pipelines crossing the property?	Yes            No If yes, identify:

**UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM  
PROPERTY ACQUISITION  
ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONNAIRE**

<b>VII. AIR EMISSIONS</b>	
<b>a.</b> Are there, or has there been, any air emission sources which require licensing through the Maine DEP?	Yes            No If yes, explain and complete balance of this section:
<b>b.</b> Do air emission sources have any pollution control equipment to reduce emissions?	Yes            No If yes, explain:
<b>c.</b> Are air emissions monitored?	Yes            No
<b>d.</b> Is a copy of the latest DEP air emission permit attached?	Yes            No
<b>VIII. WASTE WATER DISCHARGE</b>	
<b>a.</b> Is there any waste water discharge to anywhere other than a public sewer system?	Yes            No If yes, explain and complete balance of this section:
<b>b.</b> Are there waste water discharges to surface water system?	Yes            No If yes, explain:
<b>c.</b> Are there, or have there been, holding ponds on the property?	Yes            No If yes, explain:
<b>d.</b> Are there liquid wastes generated on the property other than normal waste water?	Yes            No If yes, explain:
<b>e.</b> Has the waste water discharge been permitted by DEP?	Yes            No
<b>f.</b> Is a copy of the latest waste water discharge permit attached?	Yes            No
<b>IX. INDUSTRIAL OR COMMERCIAL PROPERTY</b>	
<b>a.</b> Has the property been used for industrial or commercial business?	Yes            No If yes, explain and complete balance of this section:
<b>b.</b> Has there been any on-site disposal of hazardous materials?	Yes            No If yes, explain:
<b>c.</b> Have there been any soil or groundwater analysis studies on the property?	Yes            No If yes, explain:

**UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM  
PROPERTY ACQUISITION  
ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONNAIRE**

<b>d.</b> Have any evaporation or storage ponds been located on the property?	Yes                  No If yes, explain use:
<b>e.</b> Have any waste water or chemical treatment facilities been located on the property?	Yes                  No If yes, explain:
<b>f.</b> Are there, or have there been, raw chemical or waste chemical storage areas on the property?	Yes                  No If yes, explain:
<b>X. AGRICULTURAL PROPERTY</b>	
<b>a.</b> Has the property been used for agricultural purposes?	Yes                  No If yes, explain and complete balance of this section:
<b>b.</b> Have pesticides, herbicides or other agricultural chemicals been used on the property?	Yes                  No If yes, describe locations and type of chemicals:
<b>c.</b> Have pesticides, herbicides or other agricultural chemicals been mixed, formulated, rinsed or disposed of on the property?	Yes                  No If yes, explain:
<b>XI. MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES</b>	
<b>a.</b> Do buildings have evidence of water inside structure, water damage, or mold growth?	Yes                  No If yes, describe and include pictures, if possible:
<b>b.</b> Do buildings have evidence of bird nesting, bird guano, bat colonies or bat guano?	Yes                  No If yes, describe and include pictures, if possible:

# LEASEHOLD IMPROVEMENT FORM

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Campus: \_\_\_\_\_

Leasehold Improvement Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Tag (Asset) number assigned to the improvement. \_\_\_\_\_  
(Assignment of the number will be done by the System Facilities Office and will be done in such a way to identify the item as a leasehold improvement. The records for the asset will be kept in the Facilities Office lease database.)

Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Lease Term:

Start Date \_\_\_\_\_ End Date \_\_\_\_\_

What is the likelihood that the lease will be renewed? \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Length of expected renewal(s)? \_\_\_\_\_

Other Information: \_\_\_\_\_

**Send to System Accounting Department**

## CAPITAL LEASE FORM

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

LEASED FROM: \_\_\_\_\_

CHARTFIELD COMBINATION TO BE CHARGED:

\_\_\_\_\_

TAG # (ASSET #): \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIPTION: \_\_\_\_\_

CAMPUS: \_\_\_\_\_ LOCATION \_\_\_\_\_

MANUFACTURER: \_\_\_\_\_

MODEL: \_\_\_\_\_  
SERIAL #: \_\_\_\_\_

LEASE TERM:

Start Date \_\_\_\_\_ End Date \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER INFORMATION: \_\_\_\_\_

**Send this form and a copy of Lease agreement and supporting documents to the  
System Accounting Department.**

## EQUIPMENT LOCATION CHANGE FORM

DESCRIPTION: \_\_\_\_\_

TAG # (ASSET #): \_\_\_\_\_

MANUFACTURER: \_\_\_\_\_

MODEL: \_\_\_\_\_ SERIAL #: \_\_\_\_\_

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### FORMER LOCATION

DEPARTMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

BUILDING: \_\_\_\_\_ ROOM NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

DEPARTMENT HEAD: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE OF DEPARTMENT HEAD: \_\_\_\_\_

### NEW LOCATION

DEPARTMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

BUILDING: \_\_\_\_\_ ROOM NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

DEPARTMENT HEAD: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE OF DEPARTMENT HEAD: \_\_\_\_\_

Return form to campus inventory contact.  
Cc: System Accounting

