

**Welcome...** The most successful audit projects are those in which the client and Internal Audit have a constructive working relationship.

Our objective is to have your continued involvement at every stage, so that you, our client, understand what we are doing and why we are doing it. This edition of *Inside Audit* details the Audit Process: A Collaborative Effort.

### Meet The Auditor



Internal Audit's Assistant Director, Alka Rastogi, has been with George Mason for over 12 years. Alka and her family reside fairly close to the Fairfax Campus and take full advantage of the activities the university has to offer.

### Audit Process

Although every audit project is unique, the audit process is similar for most engagements and normally consists of the following stages:

- Preliminary Survey – includes gathering information about your processes and reviewing and evaluating the existing internal control structure.
- Fieldwork – includes informal communications and detailed examination of transactions, documents, and records.
- Audit Report – written report that includes an overall opinion, audit results, recommendations, and actions to be taken. We solicit comments and suggestions from the client prior to issuing the final report.
- Audit Follow-Up – within approximately one year of the final report, we will perform a follow-up review to verify the implementation of the action plan.

### Management Best Practices

- Read all requests to spend university money before you sign them (check requests, travel expense vouchers, payroll time sheets, etc.). Never sign a document unless you have reviewed at least the most important information on that document. Satisfy yourself it is a wise use of taxpayer funds.
- Develop written procedures for critical operations. These serve as a resource for current employees and a good training tool for new employees.
- Make sure each transaction has two people involved; one initiator and one approver. Separate these two duties to reduce the possibility of errors and irregularities.
- Review the departmental Banner financial reports monthly, scanning for unusual transactions. Follow-up on anything that doesn't look right.
- Deposit all cash and checks received at the Cash Office. If something has to stay in your office overnight, lock it up.
- Be intimately familiar with the university's purchasing guidelines and stay within the rules, maintaining good supporting documentation for all purchases. Ask yourself "what would an auditor want to see?"
- Make sure staff and faculty time sheets are reviewed and signed off by a supervisor or someone who is familiar with the employee's work hours.
- Don't be satisfied with "The way we've always done things." Review your processes on a continuous basis for inefficiency and duplication of effort.
- Remember "Trust but Verify."

### Hotline Reminder

There are several ways to report fraud, waste and abuse: through the university's own hotline 1-866-GMU-1706 or through the State hotline at 1-800-723-1615. Both numbers are toll free and anonymous. Employees can also contact Internal Audit directly at 3-3091.

### New University Policies

#### Academic Policies

- [Policy 3001](#) Distance Education Policy Statement

#### Student Policies

- [Policy 6002](#) Health Insurance Requirement for International F-1 & J-1 Visa Students

The University is responsible for paying employees consistent with the terms and conditions of their employment.

It is the individual responsibility of each wage, classified and 12-month faculty member to submit hours worked and/or leave taken according to procedures established for their employment type. Failure to do so according to established schedules may result in non-payment, mispayment and/or disciplinary action.

For further information on Staff and Faculty Recording and Submitting Hours Worked or Leave Taken, go to Administrative Policy 2205: <http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/policy/newpolicy/2205adm.html>

All other university policies are available for review at:

<http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/policy/newpolicy/>

### The Lighter Side of Audit

What do you call an auditor who is seen talking to someone?  
*Popular*

How does an auditor make a bold fashion statement?  
*He wears his grey suit instead of the blue.*

