OFFICE OF THE CONTROLLER

Chart of Accounts Top 10 Q and A

January 2026

UNIVERSITY OF
South Carolina

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Top 10 Chart of Accounts
Q and A

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#1 Chart of Accounts Q and A

What is the Chart of Accounts and why is it essential to the University's financial operations?

The Chart of Accounts is the backbone of the University's financial reporting system.

- ✓ Provides a structured way to record and classify all financial transactions
- ✓ Uses Chartfields to define the source of funds, the purpose of spending, and ownership or responsibility for each transaction
- ✓ Ensures financial integrity and supports accurate reporting across the institution
- ✓ Ensures compliance with institutional, state, and federal requirements

#2 Chart of Accounts Q and A

What is a Chartfield, and how is it used within the PeopleSoft Finance system?

- ✓ A Chartfield is a data element that stores accounting info
- ✓ Chartfields combine to form a **Chartfield string**
- ✓ The string determines how transactions are categorized, tracked, and reported across the University

Required Chartfields include:

- Business Unit
- Operating Unit
- Department
- Fund
- Class
- Account

PeopleSoft Chart of Accounts

Updated March 2022

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CHART OF ACCOUNTS - CHARTFIELDS - FOR PEOPLESOFT FINANCE						
Business Unit XXXXX	**Account** XXXXX	**Operating Unit** XXXXX	**Department** XXXXXX	**Fund** XXXXX	**Class** XXX	**Product** XXXXXX
USC Legal Entity	*Transaction Type*	*Campus, College, Division*	*Department*	*Source of Funding*	*Functional Account Category*	*Academic Terms*
WHICH responsible entity?	**WHAT** are we doing with our dollars?	**WHO** is spending the funds?	**WHO** is spending?	**WHERE** is the funding?	**HOW** are we spending the funds?	**WHEN** is the related term?
• USC01	• Assets • Liabilities • Fund Balance • Expenses • Revenues **Examples:** 10300, 21221, 48650, 53005	• Finance • Law School • Aiken **Examples:** CL010, CL043, AK000	• Chemistry • Human Resources • Aiken **Examples:** 130200, 620100, 910000	• Tuition/Appropriations • Sales and Services • Federal Grant **Examples:** A0001, E3170, F1000	• Instruction • Research • Fiscal • Operations **Examples:** 101, 202, 602	• Fall • Spring • Summer **Examples:** 202108, 202201, 202205
***Required* on all transactions**	***Required* on all transactions**	***Required* on all transactions**	***Required* on all transactions**	***Required* on all transactions**	***Required* on all transactions**	***Used on term specific Transactions (from Banner)***

REQUIRED for Project Transactions		
PC Business Unit XXXXX	**Project ID** XXXXXXXX	**Activity ID** X
WHY are we spending the funds?	**WHY** are we spending the funds?	**Required Chartfield**
• Sponsored Programs • Construction Projects • Internal Projects • Endowments • Student Activities **Examples:** USCSP, USCCP, USCIP, USCEN, USCSA	• Grants • Capital Projects • Internal Projects • Endowments • Student Activities **Examples:** 1009009, 50000104, 80000173, E0000125, S000450	• USC only uses 1

OPTIONAL
Cost Share XXXXXXXX
WHAT is the transaction cost share?
• Use the project ID that the cost share expense is related to **Example:** 10009009

#3 Chart of Accounts Q and A

What Is the Difference Between a Department and a Project?

- Departments and projects serve different purposes within the University's financial structure
- **Departments** are:
  - Part of organizational chart
  - Permanent and ongoing
  - Represents long-term organizational responsibility
- **Projects** are:
  - Limited in scope and duration
  - Funded by an existing department
  - Created for up to a five-year term
  - Can be extended by submitting a request to CFMaint@mailbox.sc.edu

#4 Chart of Accounts Q and A

What does the "Fund Number" signify in a Chartfield string?

- The Fund Number identifies the **source of financial resources**
- Ensures funds are used according to applicable restrictions
- Allows transactions to be segregated by origin, such as:
  - State appropriations
  - Student Tuition & Fees
  - Grants
  - Sales and Services
  - Auxiliary Funds
  - Student Activities

#5 Chart of Accounts Q and A

What are the primary Fund types used at USC, and how are they categorized?

- The University's Fund types include:
  - **A – Departmental Operating Funds:** Core unrestricted operating resources
  - **F – Federal Funds:** Federal grants and contracts with spending limitations
  - **N – Internal Funds:** Department-managed funds for specific purposes or initiatives (e.g. internal grants, strategic initiatives, program income)
  - **G – State Funds:** State sponsored awards, specific state appropriations
- Each Fund type follows distinct accounting and reporting requirements

#6 Chart of Accounts Q and A

What types of Expense accounts exist, and how should they be applied?

- Expense accounts capture costs incurred by the University and are categorized as either:

  - **Direct Expenses (5xxxx):** Payments to vendors or payroll costs.

  - **Contra/Internal Expenses (6xxxx):** Reductions of expenses or internal revenue transactions between departments.

- Proper classification ensures accurate financial reporting and compliance

#7 Chart of Accounts Q and A

What's the process for creating, modifying, or inactivating a Chartfield?

- ✓ Complete the **Chartfield Maintenance Request Form**
- ✓ The form can be used to:
    - Request new Departments.
    - Request new Funds.
    - New USCIP and USCSA projects.
    - Change a description for a chartfield (Renaming only; re-purposing is not allowed).
    - Extend an existing USCIP or USCSA project.
    - Inactivate a USCIP/USCSA project or chartfield.
- ✓ Submit the completed form and required documentation to **cfmaint@mailbox.sc.edu**

#7 Chart of Accounts Q and A Cont'

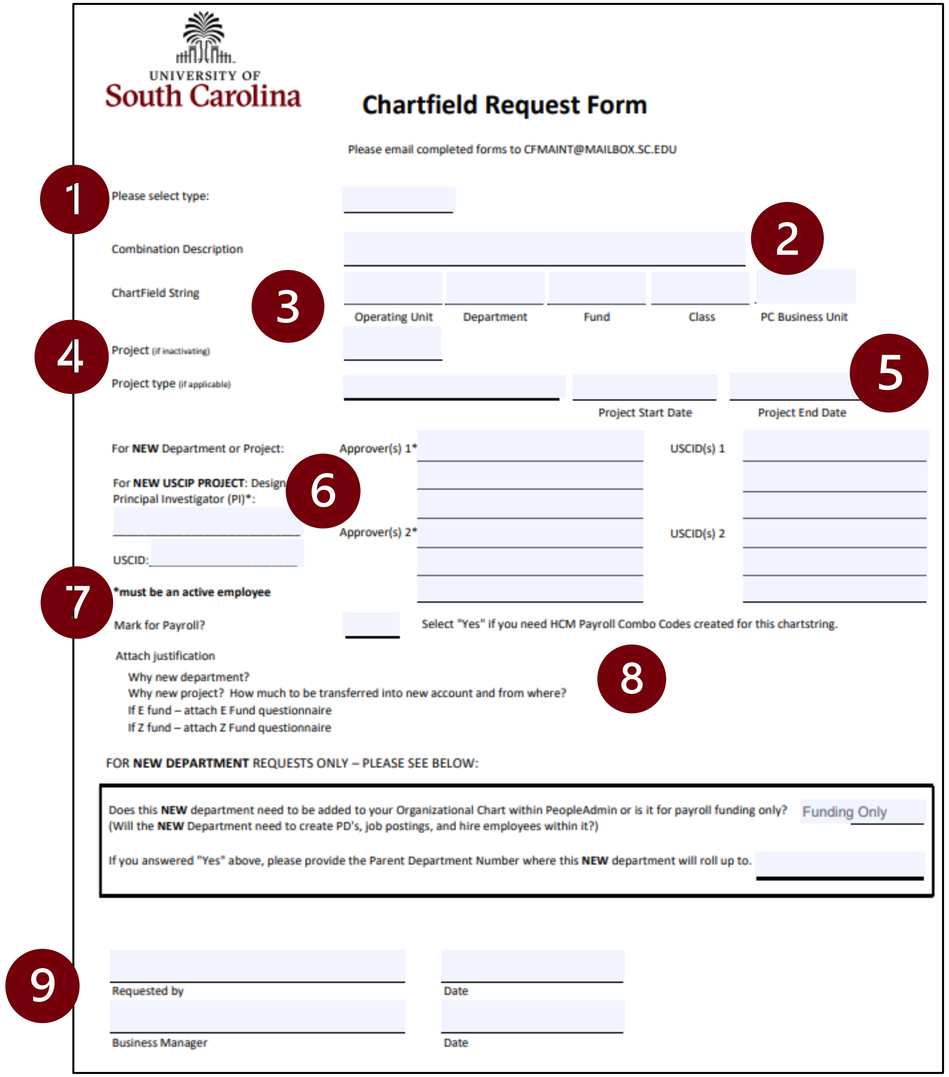
What's the process for creating, modifying, or inactivating a Chartfield?

Before a Chartfield or project can be inactivated, it must:

- ✓ Have a zero balance
- ✓ Ensure payroll funding has been reassigned to active Chartfields
- X Contain no open encumbrances or receivables
- X Have no prepaid card, asset, or active lease balances

NOTE: Actions involving USCSP projects must originate with the SAM Office

Completing a Chartfield Request Form



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Chartfield Request Form

Please email completed forms to CFMAINT@MAILBOX.SC.EDU

Please select type:

Combination Description

ChartField String

Operating Unit | Department | Fund | Class | PC Business Unit

Project (if inactivating)

Project type (if applicable)

Project Start Date | Project End Date

For **NEW** Department or Project: Approver(s) 1* USCID(s) 1

For **NEW USCIP PROJECT**: Design Principal Investigator (PI)*:

Approver(s) 2* USCID(s) 2

USCID:

***must be an active employee**

Mark for Payroll? Select "Yes" if you need HCM Payroll Combo Codes created for this chartstring.

Attach justification

Why new department?
Why new project? How much to be transferred into new account and from where?
If E fund – attach E Fund questionnaire
If Z fund – attach Z Fund questionnaire

FOR **NEW DEPARTMENT** REQUESTS ONLY – PLEASE SEE BELOW:

Does this **NEW** department need to be added to your Organizational Chart within PeopleAdmin or is it for payroll funding only? (Will the **NEW** Department need to create PD's, job postings, and hire employees within it?) Funding Only

If you answered "Yes" above, please provide the Parent Department Number where this **NEW** department will roll up to.

Requested by | Date

Business Manager | Date

1. Select Type of Action: Add/Change/Inactivate
2. Provide a Combination Description/Name
3. Enter chartfield string
4. Enter Project (if requesting inactivation or change to an existing project)
5. Enter Project Type, Start and End dates (if applicable)
6. Enter the name of Approvers (PI if applicable) & their USCIDs
7. Will this chartfield have payroll?
8. Include Justification and any additional supporting documentation
9. Signature & Approval

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#8 Chart of Accounts Q and A

What is the difference between a Combo Key and Combo Code?

Combo Keys and Combo Codes are two separate and different things:

Combo Key: Unique Identifier in PeopleSoft **Finance** assigned to a chartfield string on the crosswalk

- Sponsored Award Projects - begin with a U and correspond to USCeRA
- Older chartstrings – the combo key for chartfields that were converted from our legacy system are the legacy dept/fund number
- All others – begin with a 1000xxxxx
- Construction projects – begin with an X000xxxx

Combo Code: Unique identifier in PeopleSoft **HCM** assigned to a specific payroll account code for a chartstring value

- Begin with A00000xxxxx and C00000xxxxx
- Used for payroll processing

#9 Chart of Accounts Q and A

How can users verify valid Chartfield combinations in PeopleSoft Finance?

Helpful Tip: Use the wildcard to look up multiple values “%”

- Use the **USC CoA Combos Inquiry Page** in PeopleSoft

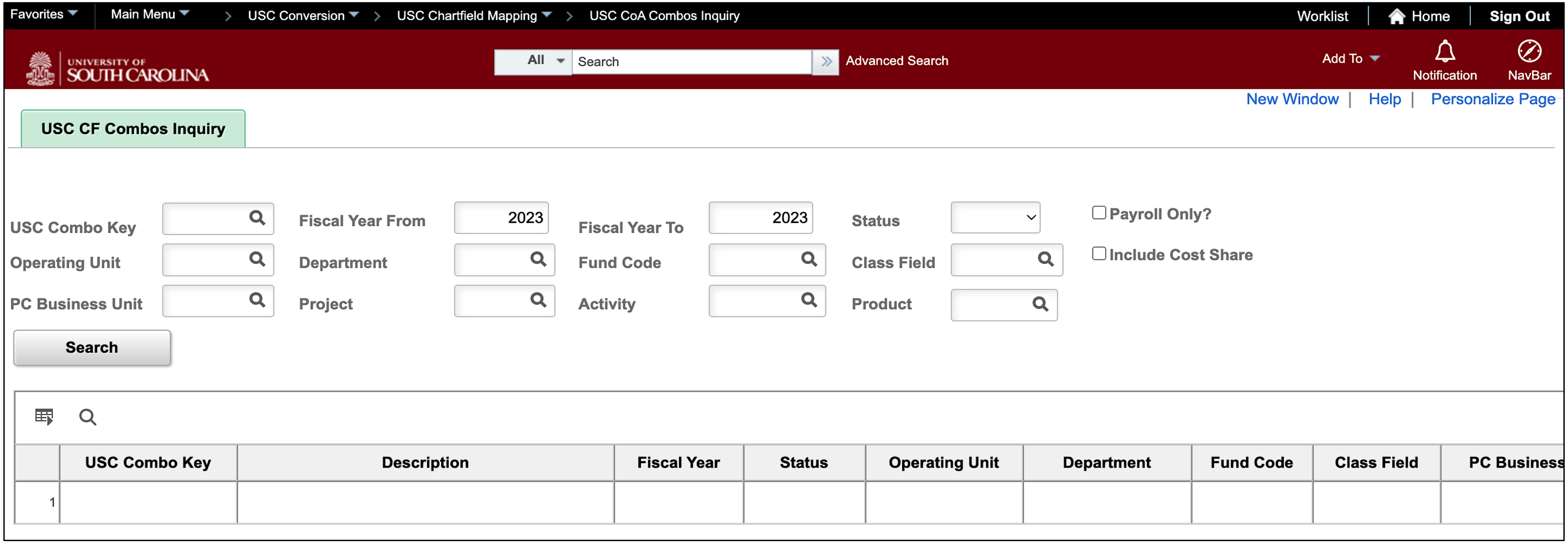
  PeopleSoft Finance Navigation: Main Menu > USC Conversion > USC Chartfield Mapping > USC CoA Combos Inquiry

- To find a Chartfield inactivated in a prior fiscal year, remove the **Fiscal Year** field to view all Chartfield strings and see when it was inactivated

- Step-by-step guidance is available in the **USC CoA Combos Inquiry Job Aid**

USC Chart of Accounts (CoA) Combos Inquiry

PeopleSoft Finance Navigation: Main Menu > USC Conversion > USC Chartfield Mapping > USC CoA Combos Inquiry



#9 Chart of Accounts Q and A Cont’

How can users verify valid Chartfield combinations in PeopleSoft Finance?

Helpful Tip: Use the wildcard to look up multiple values “%”

- ✓ Use the **Chartfield Values Page** in PeopleSoft

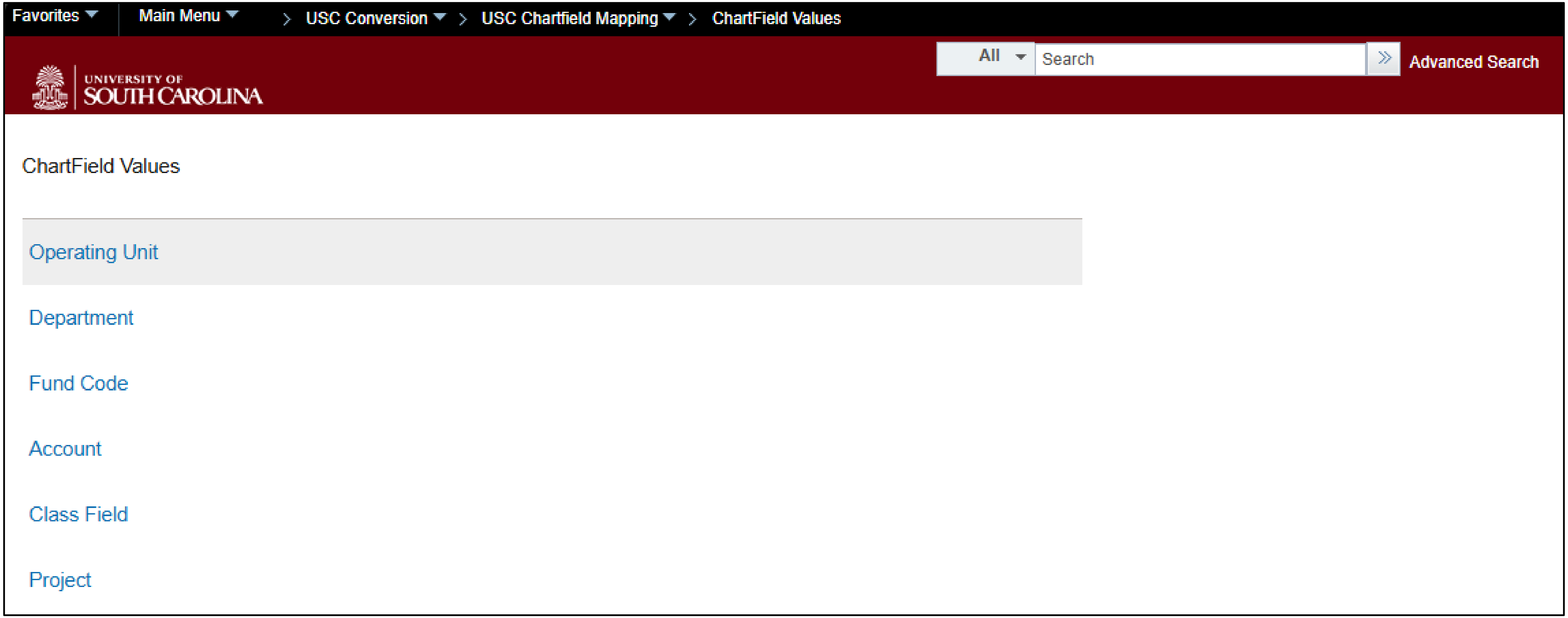
  PeopleSoft Finance Navigation: Main Menu > USC Conversion > USC Chartfield Mapping > Chartfield Values

- ✓ Can search for specific values by their name/description or value

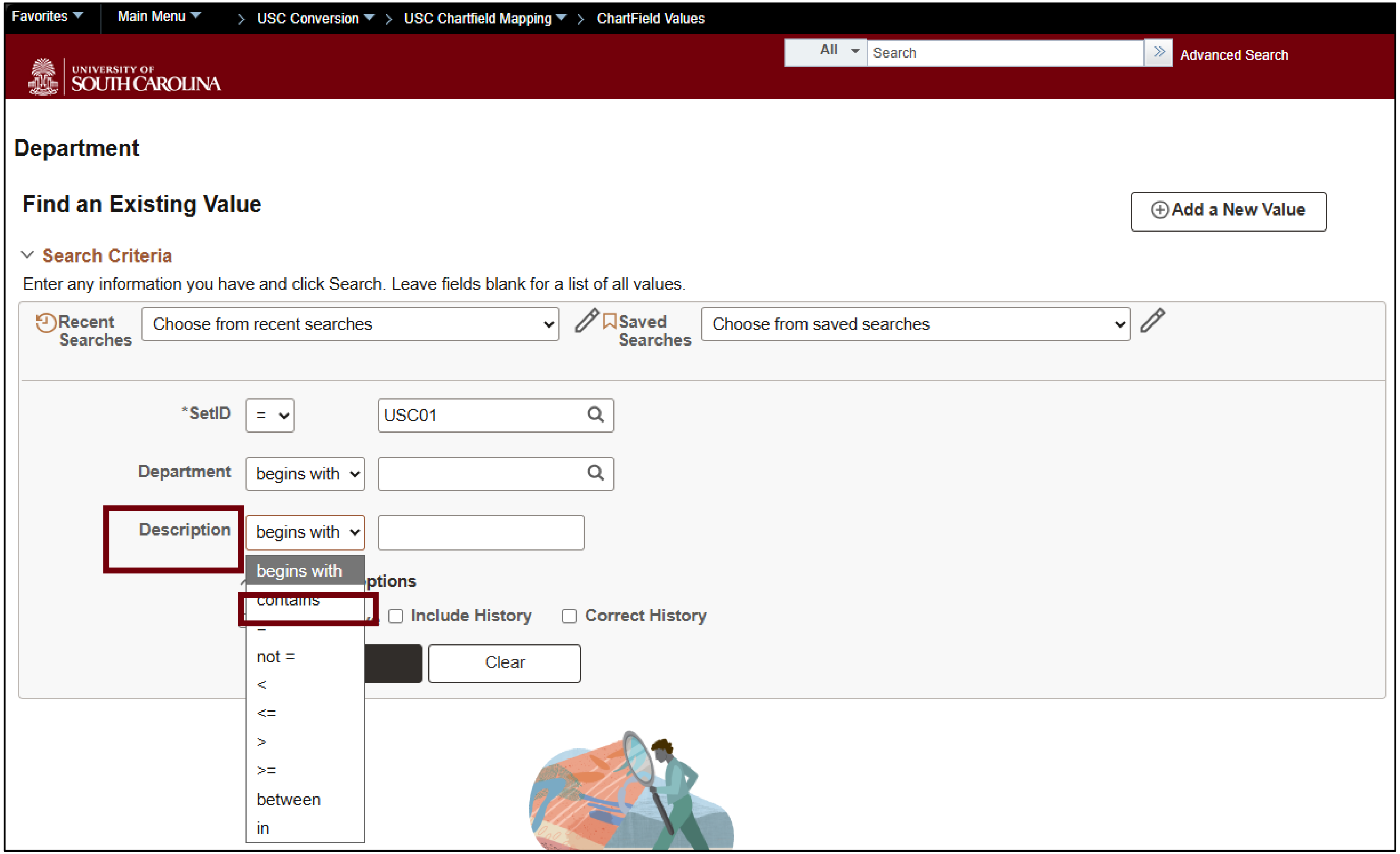
- ✓ Step-by-step guidance is available in the **Chartfield Values Job Aid**

Chartfield Values

PeopleSoft Finance Navigation: Main Menu > USC Conversion > USC Chartfield Mapping > Chartfield Values



Chartfield Values – Search by Description



#10 Chart of Accounts Q and A

What is the difference between a PeopleSoft Finance department and and PeopleSoft HCM department?

- **Budgetary Only Departments:** used for HCM security and workflow only and do **not** process financial transactions

- **Financial Departments:** departments with financial transactions that can be used in both HCM and Finance PeopleSoft

  - **Funding:** Funds payroll but does not house employees
  - **Organizational:** Houses employees and appears in org reporting
  - **Both:** Houses employees and funds payroll

Peoplesoft Finance Department vs. Peoplesoft HCM Department

Type	Created in PS Finance?	Created in PS HCM?
Funding Only	Yes – can be used as funding source on payroll and non-payroll transactions	No – cannot be used to create PDs, hire employees, not a part of organizational structure
Organizational	Yes - can be used as funding source on payroll and non-payroll transactions	Yes – can be used to “house” employees, included as part of organizational chart
Funding & Organizational	Yes	Yes
Budgetary Only	Yes – no financial transactions, cannot be used as funding source for payroll and non-payroll transactions.	Yes

Questions

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Resources & Contacts

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Chart of Account Resources

- Review the PeopleSoft Chart of Accounts
- Funding Sources Matrix
- ChartField Values Job Aid
- USC CoA Combos Inquiry
- USC CoA Combos Inquiry Page Job Aid
- General Ledger Queries and Job Aid
- Chartfield Request Form
- E Fund Questionnaire
- Custodial Fund Questionnaire
- Requesting New Chartfields Webinar Recording
- Requesting New Chartfields Presentation
- How to Use the Finance Intranet Demo Video
- How to Use the Finance Intranet Presentation
- Drilling Down into the Expenses/Payroll in the Grant Dashboard Job Aid
- How to use the GL Dashboard Report Job Aid
- How to use the GL Summary Report Job Aid
- How to use the GL Activity Report Job Aid
- How to use the Non-USCSP Project Dashboard Job Aid
- Using HCM Distribution in the Finance Intranet Job Aid
- Using HCM Distribution in the Finance Intranet Webinar Recording
- Using HCM Distribution in the Finance Intranet Presentation
- Earnings Summary Payroll Report Job Aid

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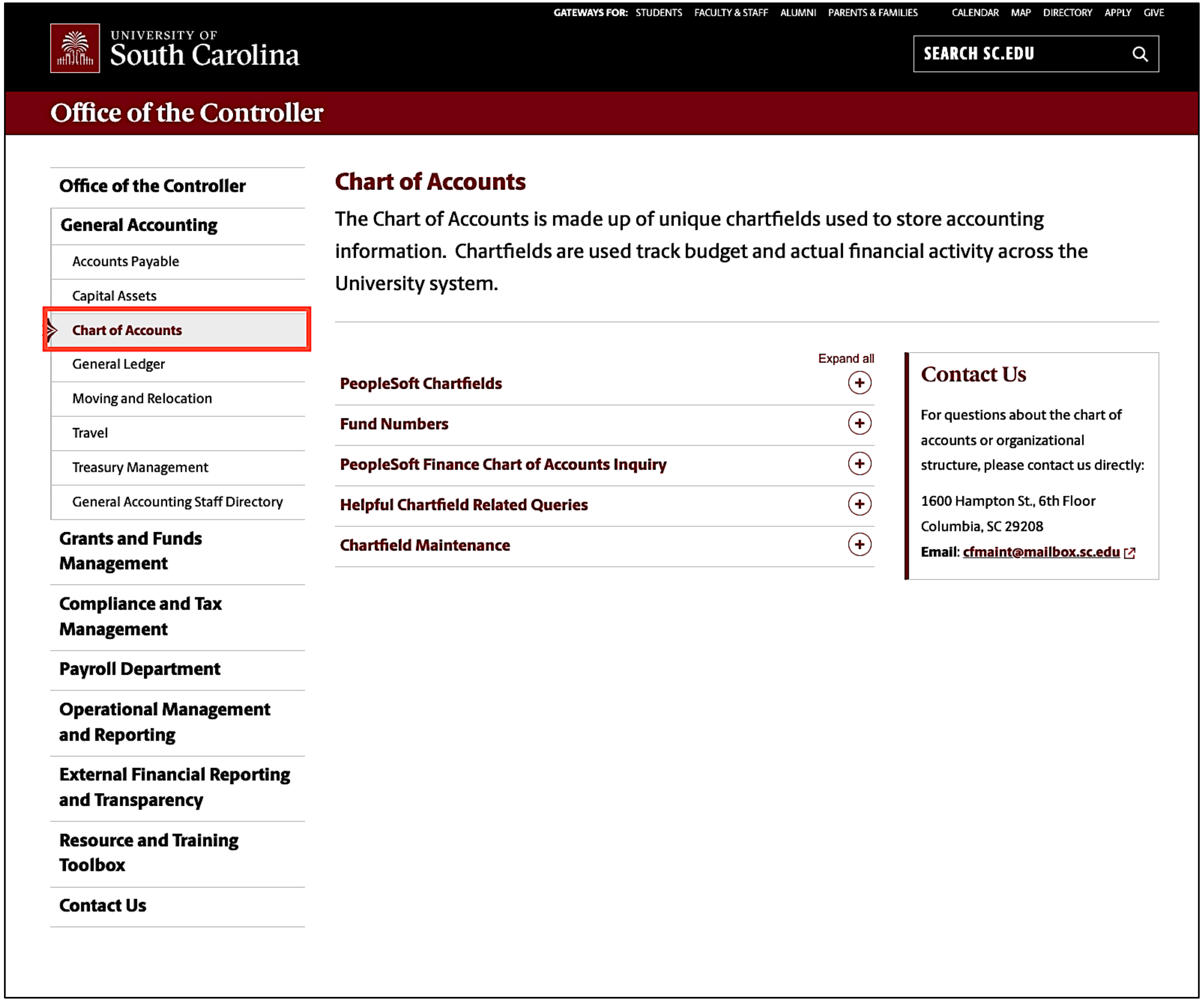
Where to Find the Resources

For Chartfield maintenance resources, visit the Chart of Account page.



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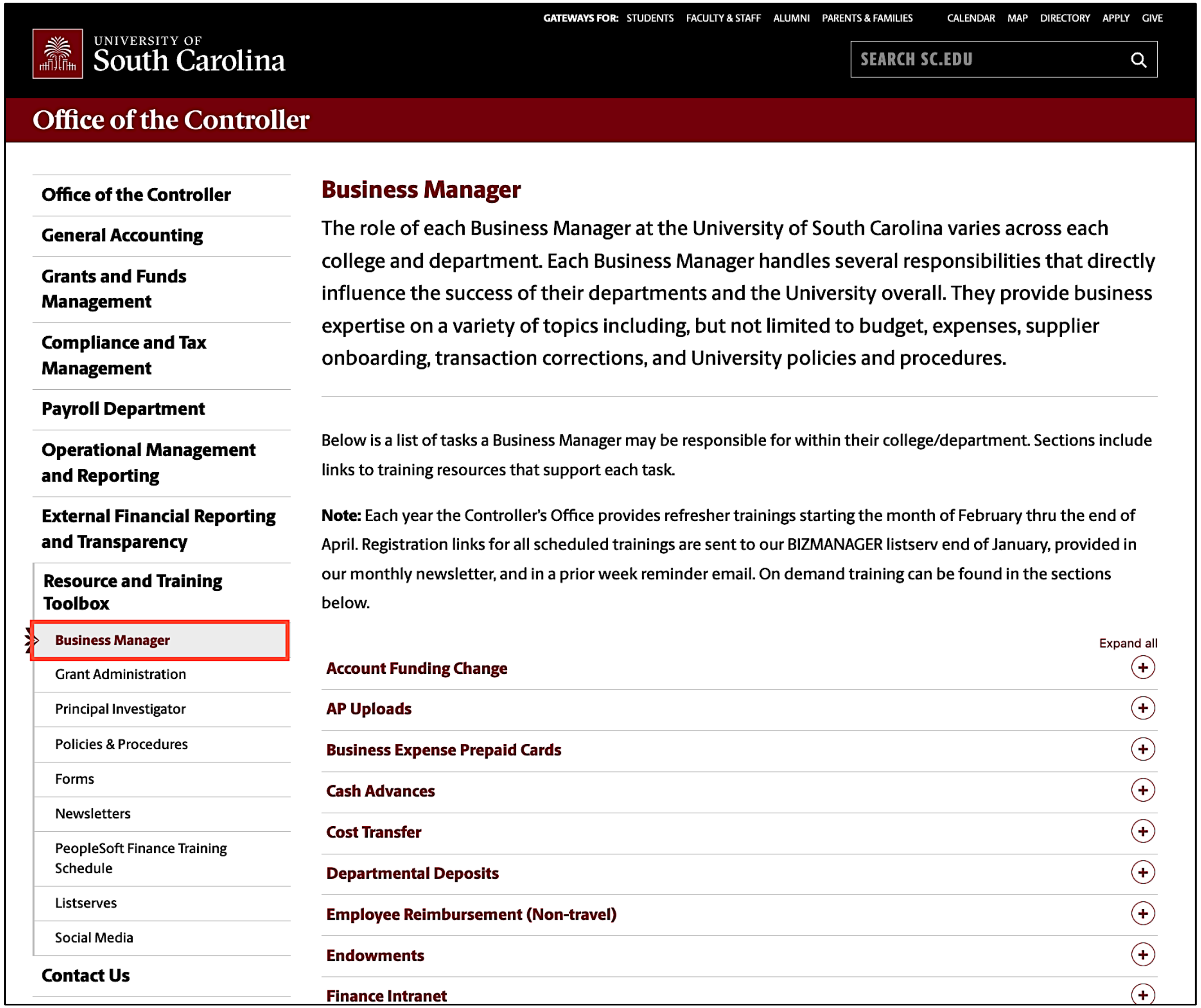
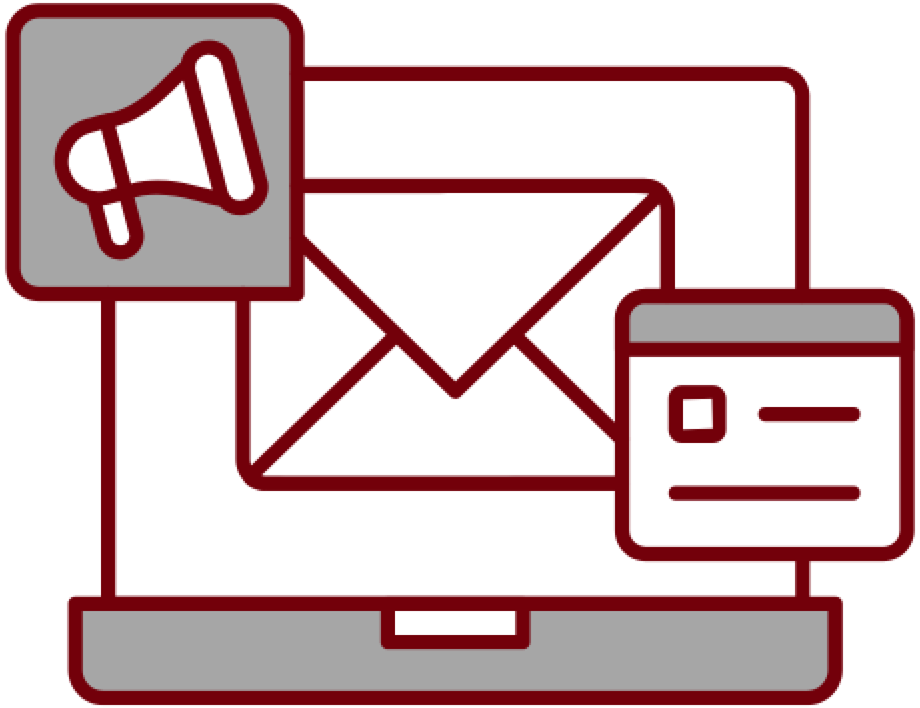


Where to Find the Resources

For general training resources, visit our Business Manager page.

Contact Us



For specific questions, please visit our website to find the appropriate contact.

University of South Carolina

Questions

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THANK YOU!

Office of the Controller

Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much.

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