SAHARA Overview

What is SAHARA?

- The acronym comes from Shared Accounts Reconciliation Application, and is an account reconciliation application in PeopleSoft used to reconcile cost centers and projects.
- Streamlines and accelerates reconciliations.
- Helps reconcilers identify and correct errors more efficiently.

What does SAHARA do?

- Takes all financial transactions posted to a cost center or project and shows them in a manner that makes reconciling and reviewing more efficient.
- Data funnels into SAHARA from various modules, such as:
  - accounts payable (A/P)
  - general ledger (GL)
  - commitment control
  - purchasing

What are the benefits of SAHARA?

- Reconcilers and approvers can easily check the status of reconciliations.
- Reconcilers can get a clear view of financial transaction details and export them into Excel.
- Provides tools, such as flags and comment boxes, for improved communication between reconcilers and approvers.
- Contains a robust electronic and paperless approach to reviewing and approving reconciliations.
- Approvers can electronically approve multiple cost centers or projects at one time after they have been reconciled.
- It offers Easy Correct, allowing reconcilers to initiate corrections for certain actuals transactions.
What is the reconciliation process?

Information is posted to SAHARA

From various PeopleSoft modules such as:
• General ledger
• Accounts payable
• Commitment control

Review and reconcile

Reconcilers review and reconcile the SAHARA information

Reconcilers initiate corrections

Following established procedures for each correction type

Reconcilers electronically sign

In SAHARA

Reconcilers notify approvers

When reconciliations are complete and ready for approval

Approvers electronically sign

In SAHARA

What other resources are available for guidance?

- The following helpful tools are located on the Financial Affairs Training Accounting Services website:
  - Reconciliation Checklist: Provides each step necessary for reconciliations
  - Large Purchase Training Template: Provides assistance with tracking large purchases
  - Salary Expense Review Template: Provides assistance with reviewing salary activity
- Refer to FMOGs page for the following operational guidelines:
  - Department Financial Reviews
- Additional training available:
  - AM 0711.01 SAHARA Open Lab (optional)
    - This lab gives reconcilers and approvers an opportunity to discuss questions about SAHARA reconciliations or issues they have encountered during their reconciliations.

Who can help with access or any other issues?

- For access and navigation issues:
  - Tech Café at ext. 7762
- For all other items:
  - Accounting Services at ext. 4212 or Accounting.Office@utsa.edu
Navigating to SAHARA

- Log in to PeopleSoft
- To use tile navigation
  - Choose Accounting and Financial Reports in the drop down
  - Choose SAHARA Monthly Reconciliation
- To use breadcrumb navigation: Financials/UTZ Customization/General Ledger/SAHARA/ Process/ARA Process/ ARA-Accounts Reconciliation
On this tab, you will search for reconciliations by choosing the period, fiscal year, cost center/project id or department ID. Then click Search.

Reconciliations can only be run for one period, not cumulatively.
- After clicking **Search**, various information will populate (see diagram below.)
- Then, click the hyperlink of the cost center or project you will reconcile to drill into the reconciliation.

![Diagram of Account Reconciliation](image-url)

- **Click here to drill into the reconciliation**
- **Cost center or Project owner/Department**
- **Reconciliation or approval status**
- **Monthly totals**
There are six tabs in SAHARA:

- **Search Page**: To return to the Search Page
- **Approval Page**: Where approvers can electronically approve reconciliations
- **Budget Information**: To review budget information
- **Actuals Reconciliation**: To review actuals transactions and where reconcilers can electronically sign reconciliation
- **Encumbrance Information**: To review encumbrance information
- **Download Actuals**: To access a listing of actuals transactions that can be exported into Excel (same data as Actuals Reconciliation tab)
The actuals reconciliation tab contains:

- Summaries of year-to-date revenues, expenses, budgets and encumbrances
- Revenue and expense actuals details
- Comment and flag features for the reconciliation
- Comment and flag features for each transaction
- Easy Correct correction journals (details for this are covered in the Easy Correct section)
- The electronic signature section for reconcilers
  - After the reconciler has electronically signed the reconciliation, they must notify the approver (via email, etc.) **PeopleSoft does not automatically notify the approver when reconciliations are ready for approval.**

Below are the details you will find on the Actuals Reconciliation tab.

The **Header Details** will provide the cost center/project, owner, department, accounting period and Fiscal year, as well as the start and end dates of Sponsored and Capital projects.
Month End Summary

Month End Expense Summary
- Expense budget
- Year-to-date actual expenses
- Project –to-date actual expenses (for project IDs only)
- Encumbrance total = total of open encumbrances
- Available expense budget (available funds)

Month End Revenue Summary
- Revenue budget
- Year-to-date actual revenue
- Project-to-date actual revenue (for project IDs only)
- Revenue budget balance

Reconciliation Section

Once the entire reconciliation (all tabs) has been reviewed and all Reviewed boxes are checked on the Actuals Reconciliation tab, reconcilers will check the Reconciliation checkbox and then click Save.

The reconciliation is now ready for approver review, and no further changes can be made.

After the reconciler has electronically signed the reconciliation, they must notify the approver (via email, etc.) PeopleSoft does not automatically notify the approver when reconciliations are ready for approval.
Revenue and expense actuals are listed.

- These are actuals transactions posted within the month being reconciled, for example:
  - Accounts payable vouchers
  - General ledger journals, including IDTs, UTZ/Banner journals, expense sheets, etc.
- Grouped by:
  - General ledger account code
    - 63003 Office Supplies
    - 63601 Computer Time, etc.
  - Document source (type of document that recorded the transaction), for example:
    - Accounts payable
    - Spreadsheet journal
    - UTZ journal

- Comments and flags can be added to each transaction.
- Easy Correct is available to create correcting journals for certain transactions. This will be covered in more detail in the Easy Correct section of this job aid.
- After reviewing account activity within each account code, Reconcilers must check the “Reviewed” checkbox for each account code. This is required in order for the Reconciler to signoff on the reconciliation.
Must check Reviewed checkbox for every account.

Transactions are grouped by account code and document source.

View All (to view all accounts)

View All (to view all transactions)

Easy Correct feature is available for certain transactions.

Comments and flags can be left on transactions. Note: A comment must be left in order to use the flag function.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Actuals Reconciliation Tab</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Review</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Review revenue and expenses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Does the data seem accurate?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Does it include everything you expected?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consider</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Consider the available expense budget.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Is the amount negative?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- If so, a budget transfer or a correction may need to be processed to correct the balance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Are there other planned commitments not included in this balance that need to be considered?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| - Focus on areas requiring more attention:  
  - Was a transaction recorded to the wrong cost center or project?  
  - Was a transaction recorded to the wrong account code?  
- Focus on salary activity: Departments **must** have a method to prove review of salary expense detail against budget.  
  - For period 1, compare original budget in salaries to a list of position budgets and adjust funding as needed.  
  - For all other months, take the salary budget by person, deduct the amount paid by person and deduct encumbrances by person. This should equal zero.  
- If the amount is positive, it is usually an indication of salary savings.  
- If the amount is negative, most likely, additional funding is needed.  
  - Check budget and expenses carefully when there are personnel changes like new hires, terminations or pay rate changes, including additional pay.  
  - Use the Payroll Distribution Report as a supplemental resource.  
  - Use the optional Salary Expense Overview Template created by Financial Affairs.  
- This Excel template can assist in reviewing salary activities.  
- Use of the template is not required, but departments **must** have a method to prove review of salary expense detail against budget. |
Download Actuals Tab

- Enables access to a listing of actuals transactions that can be downloaded into one Excel worksheet
- Lists the same transactions as on the Actuals Reconciliation tab, but with an Excel-friendly layout
- Another option to assist in reviewing actuals

To download the transactions, scroll to the far right of the Download Actuals screen and click on the Excel icon. When the Excel spreadsheet has been downloaded, you will see the listing of revenue and expense transactions for the month. Note: the report runs 100 columns wide.

Below are details you will find on the Download Actuals tab.

SAHARA will export Excel worksheet listing actuals transactions for the month.
Encumbrance Information Tab

- Summarizes the beginning and ending balances of open encumbrances, as well as net encumbrance activity for the month
- Lists details of monthly encumbrance activities, including:
  - Purchase order encumbrances
  - Travel expense encumbrances
  - Salary encumbrances
  - Disencumbrances
- Contains comment and flag features for the **reconciliation**
- Contains comment and flag features for each transaction

Below are details you will find on the Encumbrance Information tab.

Comments and Encumbrance Summary Sections

Reconcilers and approvers can leave comments. Remember to click **Save** to save your comments!

Beginning balance of open encumbrances for this period

Net amount of encumbrance activities for this period. The details behind this amount are listed in the sections below.

Ending balance of open encumbrances for this period
Encumbrance activities are broken into 3 sections:

1. Purchase order encumbrances
2. Travel expense encumbrances
3. All other encumbrance, includes
   - Payroll encumbrances
   - All disencumbrances for:
     - Purchase orders
     - Travel
     - Payroll

This query provides a listing of open encumbrances: Open PO Query – UTS_PO_OPEN_ENC_BY_CC

Comments and flags can be added to transactions
Click Excel icon to export transactions
# Encumbrances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Review</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Review the monthly activities listed in SAHARA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Did you review open encumbrances?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Is the data accurate?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Does it include everything you expected?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Can you close out any purchase orders or travel authorizations?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Email <a href="mailto:Purchasing@utsa.edu">Purchasing@utsa.edu</a> to request closure of POs that are fully finished and paid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Email <a href="mailto:disbursements.travel@utsa.edu">disbursements.travel@utsa.edu</a> with TA number and travel name to close, cancel or delete TAs that should no longer be encumbered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Are there payments that need to be made on purchase orders?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• See the Texas Prompt Payment Law FMOG for guidelines regarding payment timelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Follow up with Disbursements and Travel Services as necessary on outstanding payments.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consider</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Do you have pending purchases over $15,000 or other large commitments not yet encumbered?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Are you maintaining a list of those pending purchases over $15,000 or other large commitments not yet encumbered?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do you know the available balance once you’ve considered the unencumbered commitments?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• See Large Purchase Tracking Template for guidance on tracking large purchases not yet encumbered.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Focus on any other areas needing more attention.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• See Actuals tab information for salary related areas needing analysis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Budget Information Tab

- Summarizes the beginning of:
  - Period budgets
  - Monthly budget activities
  - End-of-period budgets
- Lists details of the monthly budget activities
- Contains comment and flag features for the **reconciliation**
- Contains comment and flag features for each transaction

Below are details you will find on the Budget Information tab

Reconcilers and approvers can leave comments. Remember to hit **Save** to save your comments!
Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Permanent Revenue Budget</th>
<th>Permanent Expense Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$-9,980.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginning of Period Rev Budget Total:</td>
<td>Beginning of Period Exp Budget Total:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$-9,980.00</td>
<td>$14,165.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly Rev Budget Transaction Total:</td>
<td>Monthly Exp Budget Transaction Total:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$22,950.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Period Rev Revised Budget:</td>
<td>End of Period Exp Revised Budget:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$-9,980.00</td>
<td>$37,115.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Revenue Budget
- **Beginning of Period Rev Budget Total**: Prior month ending revenue budget (Agrees to “Revenue Estimate” on Budget Overview screen for this period)
- **Monthly Rev Budget Transaction Total**: Revenue budget adjustments made this period (e.g. budget transfers)
- **End of Period Rev Revised Budget**: This is the Beginning of Period Rev Budget Total + Monthly Rev Budget Transaction Total

Expense Budget
- **Beginning of Period Exp Budget Total**: Prior month end expense budget. (Agrees to Budget in Budget Overview screen for this period)
- **Monthly Exp Budget Transaction Total**: Expense budget adjustments made during this period (e.g., budget transfers)
- **End of Period Exp Revised Budget**: This is the Beginning of Period Exp Budget Total + Monthly Exp Budget Transaction Total.
Comments and flags can be added to transactions

For each budget transaction, the following data is presented:

- **Transaction ID**
  - ID assigned when the budget transfer was processed
- **Tran Date**
  - Date the budget transfer was processed
- **Tran Line**:
  - Line number of the budget transfer
- **Journal ID**
  - Journal number assigned when the budget transfer was processed
- **Ledger Group** (ledger group of the transaction)
  - OPE: Operating Expense
  - OPR: Operating Revenue
  - PLANT: Capital Projects
  - GRANT CHILD: Sponsored Projects
- **Budget Entry Type**:
  - Original: Original budget
  - Adjustment: Budget transfers
  - Roll Fwrd: Roll forward balance from prior year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Flag</th>
<th>Tran ID</th>
<th>Tran Date</th>
<th>Tran Line</th>
<th>Journal ID</th>
<th>Ledger Group</th>
<th>Budget Entry Type</th>
<th>Account</th>
<th>Account Description</th>
<th>Budget Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0005770042</td>
<td>10/09/2019</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0000433875</td>
<td>OPE</td>
<td>Xtra Adj</td>
<td>A4000</td>
<td>Operating Expenses</td>
<td>$12,000.00</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0005778382</td>
<td>11/04/2019</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0000431963</td>
<td>OPE</td>
<td>Xtra Adj</td>
<td>A4000</td>
<td>Operating Expenses</td>
<td>$18,950.00</td>
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<td>Budget Information Tab</td>
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<td>- Review the monthly activity.</td>
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<td>- Does the budget data seem accurate?</td>
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<td>- Are any significant budget transactions missing?</td>
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<td>- Consider the available expense budget.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Is the Revised Expense Budget negative? If so, a budget transfer or expense correction may be needed to correct the balance.</td>
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<td>- Focus on any other areas requiring more attention.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Approval Page Tab

- Electronic signature section for approvers
- Evidence reconcilers’ electronic signature
- Monthly activity summary by type
- Monthly activity summary by account
- Comments that were entered (from other tabs of the reconciliation)

Once a reconciler has electronically signed the reconciliation, they must notify the approver (via email, etc. PeopleSoft does not automatically notify the approver when reconciliations are ready for approval.

After the reconciler notifies the approver, the reconciliation is ready to be approved. The owner/approver goes to the Approval Page tab to approve.

After the approver completes their review of the reconciliation, click on the Approved checkbox, click Save and the approver’s name and employee ID will populate. Once this is done, no further action is needed, and the reconciliation is in Complete status.

Below are the details you will find on the Approval Page tab.
Approvers check this box to electronically sign reconciliations. Remember to click **Save** at the bottom of the screen!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Header Details</th>
<th>Approval Info</th>
<th>Reconciliation Info</th>
<th>Net Monthly Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost Center: DRV123</td>
<td>Description: Rowdy Admin Ops</td>
<td>Approved: [ ] Approved By: [ ] Approval Date: [ ]</td>
<td>Reconciler: Sue Blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects:</td>
<td>Owner:</td>
<td>Start Date:</td>
<td>End Date:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Department: Accounting</td>
<td>Period:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Approver NetID: [ ]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reconciler’s name, date of approval and EMPL ID
Net Monthly Activity and Account Summary

Summary of monthly activity summary by type

Summary of monthly activity summary by account
Comments entered by reconcilers on the **Budget**, **Actuals** or **Encumbrance** tabs will show in this section as well.

Click **Save** after approver has checked the **Approved** box.
Multiple Cost Center or Project Approvals (found on the Search page)

- Allows owners/approvers to approve multiple cost centers or projects at once
- Is not accessible to reconcilers
- Provides high level totals of Actuals, Budget and Encumbrances for the period

Begin at the Search tab and click on the link

Enter the search criteria and click Search

Enter an Existing Value

Search Results
Click on **Approve**, then click on **Approve?** for each cost center or project.

These links will take you to the reconciliation.

Totals of Actuals, Budget and Encumbrances for the period.
Easy Correct General Information

- Enables reconcilers and approvers to initiate correction journals
  - Automatically routes the journal to Accounting Services for review and approval
- Can only be used to correct certain Actuals transactions
- Cannot be used for Budget or Encumbrances transactions

Easy Correct Limitations

- Easy Correct can only be used to correct Actuals, not Budget or Encumbrance transactions.
- Certain types of corrections are excluded from Easy Correct:
  - Payroll expenses
  - Capital account codes (account codes starting with 8XXXX)
  - Sponsored projects
  - Capital projects
  - Corrections where a transaction will be corrected to more than one cost center or account code
  - Corrections on transactions prior to the current month and previous month
- For corrections that cannot be done through Easy Correct, the existing process of emailing the appropriate parties will need to be followed.
- Easy Correct will not prevent duplications of corrections.
  - In an effort to reduce duplicate corrections, before initiating an Easy Correct, review recent activity to ensure the correction has not already been done.
  - This query provides a quick view of transactions on a cost center: UTS_GL_TRANSACTIONS_UTSA_MOD
Not all transactions can be corrected with an Easy Correct journal. See table below for the correct process or department contact based on the transaction type.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Correction</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actuals</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsored project</td>
<td>Complete the Correction Request Form and email applicable RSC administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital project</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Accounting.Office@utsa.edu">Accounting.Office@utsa.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital purchase (account 8XXXX)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payroll expense (account 5XXXX)</td>
<td>Prepare an Eform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transactions not mentioned above</td>
<td>Easy Correct in SAHARA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Encumbrances</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase orders</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Purchasing@utsa.edu">Purchasing@utsa.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel authorizations</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Disbursements.travel@utsa.edu">Disbursements.travel@utsa.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Budget Transactions</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost centers</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Budget@utsa.edu">Budget@utsa.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsored projects</td>
<td>Email applicable RSC administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital projects</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Accounting.Office@utsa.edu">Accounting.Office@utsa.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Easy Correct Step-by-Step

For additional Easy Correct guidance, refer to the video posted to the Financial Affairs training website Easy Correct Video Demonstration.

- In the Actuals tab, scroll to the transaction needing the correction
- Click on Easy Correct and a new window will open
- In that window, you will see the first step in initiating the correction:
  - Business Unit: Defaults to UTSA1
  - Journal ID: Has not yet been assigned and will be labeled “NEXT” until later in the process
  - Journal Date: Defaults to today’s date. Users should not change this date as it can cause problems at month-end. (Easy Correct journals post in the current month, not the month of the original transaction.)

- Transfer From box:
  - Cost Center: Defaults to original cost center/project of transaction being corrected
  - Account: Defaults to original account code of transaction being corrected
  - Amount: Defaults to opposite amount of the transaction reconciler is correcting. If original amount is $30, the amount shown in this section will be -$30.

- Transfer To box:
  - Cost Center: Enter cost center/project to which the transaction should be transferred (if applicable). Only one is allowed on an Easy Correct journal; cannot split a transaction. Projects are not allowed on an Easy Correct journal.
  - Account: Enter the account code to which the transaction should be transferred (if applicable). Only one is allowed on an Easy Correct journal; cannot split a transaction.
  - Amount: Defaults to amount of the original transaction being corrected. This will be opposite of the amount in the Transfer From box above.
  - Analysis Type: Always leave blank

- Description for the transfer: Defaults to “ARA Easy Correct Entry”. Reconcilers are required to change this description to include:
  1. The cost center and/or account the transactions is being transferred
  2. The reason for the transfer
  3. The document ID of the transaction being corrected. This text will carry forward to the correction journal.

Example: “To correct voucher R002245 from account code 63003 to 60106; Voucher was originally coded incorrectly.”

- After information has been entered, click Process. It will run for a few seconds and a message will pop up with the assigned Journal ID.
- Next, you must attach supporting documentation to the Easy Correct journal.
The follow documentation is required to be attached to the Easy Correct Journal:

- A SAHARA screenshot of the transaction being corrected. Indicate with electronic highlighting or text box which transaction is being corrected.
- If the cost is being transferred to a cost center/project outside of your purview, you must attach an email as confirmation they have been informed of the correction.
- Business Expense Forms are required if the correction uses account codes 67107 and 67106.

- To attach the documents:
  - Click Add Attachment
  - Click Choose File
  - Browse for your document
  - When located, click Open
  - Click Upload
  - You can add text in the Description box of the attachment
- After uploading your documents, please verify all of the information that was entered for accuracy
- Click Save and Navigate to COR Journal to Submit
- The Create/Update Journal Entries window will open
  - The Lines tab will display the lines that have been created for the correcting journal
  - The Header tab will show the description that was input and the files that were attached earlier in the Easy Correct process
  - Changes cannot be made in these screens. If changes need to be made, contact Accounting Services
- At this point, the Easy Correct Journal automatically routes to Accounting Services for review and approval. If questions arise, the creator of the Easy Correct journal will be contacted.

This is important because SAHARA does not reference on the journal which transaction is being corrected.