

Policy Analysis: Travel #2.11 – 12/2010

Policy Objective:

To ensure efficiency and fiscal accountability for University business travel.

Applies To:

All individuals who travel on behalf of the University.

Explicit Policy Requirements (Items for which non-compliance will result in a policy Exception):

The following items are explicitly defined in the policy and should be considered as policy requirements; items which if not followed, will result in policy “exceptions.”

Ref #	Description	Page	Para
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Ohio State University will pay for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred by faculty, staff, students, and eligible guests for authorized business travel on behalf of the University.An individual is considered in “travel status” when traveling on official University business whether or not expenses are to be paid by the University. For daily commuting to and from home/work location (s), an individual is not considered in travel status and therefore not eligible for travel payments.	1	II. A &B
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The college/VP area is responsible for exercising discretion in determining that travel expenses are reasonable and appropriate and may deny payment or reimbursement of travel expenses when deemed necessary.	2	II. D.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Prepayment or reimbursement of travel expenses are allowed only when payment for the expenses has not been and will not be received by the traveler from a third party.	2	II. E
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">First class tickets will not be prepaid or reimbursed by the University.	2	II. F
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The traveler must submit a request for reimbursement with supporting documentation within 90 days of completion of the trip to obtain reimbursement of travel expenses.	2	II. G
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Approval – approval for University business travel and its estimated costs must be documented prior to the trip. Individuals may not approve their own travel.	3	IV.
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Travel Incentives – University travelers may accrue frequent flyer miles, hotel points, rental car enticements, or other travel industry inducements from University related business travel, however, the incentives must be redeemed for University related business travel only.	3	VI.
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Vacation in Conjunction with Business Travel – Travel expenses to and from alternate vacation destinations while on business travel are not eligible for payment. In cases where vacation time is added to a	3	VII.

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	business trip, any cost variance in expenses such as airfare, car rental and/or lodging must be clearly identified and documented.		
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceptions – occasional and non-recurring exceptions to the Travel Policy must be documented in the travel system and approved by the Dean/VP or their designated approval authority. 	4	IX.
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group travel – group travel purchased from one of the University's designated travel agencies is exempt from bidding requirements. • Competitive bids must be solicited if the designated agencies are not used and the total cost of the trip exceeds the bid thresholds for University funds and/or federally sponsored contracts/grants. 	3	VIII.
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest travel – University Travel and Expenditure Policies also apply to individuals who are not University faculty, staff, or students but whose approved travel expenses are eligible to be paid or reimbursed by the University (i.e., lecturers, consultants, prospective faculty, staff, and student). • Travel expenses for spouses, companions, dependents or other family members of University faculty and staff are not eligible for advance payment or reimbursement unless the individual has a bona fide University purpose for engaging in the travel or attending the event. Documentation of business purpose is required. 	5	II.
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance Payments – Travel must be approved by designated individual and a "T" number must be issued prior to the trip. • Expenses associated with a cash advance must be documented by original, itemized receipts and must be reconciled and substantiated within one month of the return date. Any cash in excess of the approved reimbursable expenses must be returned to the appropriate departmental account or sponsored project. 	5	III.
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reimbursements – Reimbursement of travel expenses is based on actual expenses supported by original, itemized receipts where required. On an occasional basis, if original receipts are not available, a substitute document can be used. 	6	IV.A.
14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel expenses that have been or will be reimbursed to a traveler by a 3rd party must be referenced in the travel system and will not be paid by the University. 	6	IV.B.
15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reimbursements are processed and approved in the travel system. The reimbursement form and supporting documentation must be retained in the department or College/VP area. 	6	IV.C.
16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reimbursements that exceed the travel estimate by 20% or more must be approved by the designated approval authority. 	6	IV.D.
17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airfare – The University's designated travel agencies are the preferred suppliers. Coach class or economy tickets should be purchased for domestic or international flights with flight times totaling less than 5 consecutive hours (excluding layovers). Reimbursement of airfare 	7	V.

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	should include an original, itemized receipt, e-Ticket, internet receipt/statement or equivalent documentation unless the airfare purchased is pre-paid through the travel system. Receipt must show the method of payment and indicate that payment was made.		
18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rail – The University will prepay or reimburse rail transportation providing the cost does not exceed the cost of the least expensive airfare. 	7	V.
19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal Vehicles – Mileage will be reimbursed as the primary mode of transportation if the cost does not exceed the least expensive airfare. Reimbursement for usage of a personal automobile is based on the IRS mileage rate or the actual cost of gasoline. IRS mileage rates include all vehicle related expenses (i.e. gasoline, wear and tear, and personal auto insurance). Mileage or actual cost of gasoline may be reimbursed in the travel system after the trip is completed. Mileage reimbursements should include a mileage log (including date, business purpose, odometer readings, and destination) or other supporting documentation to document mileage distance of trip (e.g. MapQuest). Original, itemized receipts are required for reimbursement of gasoline. 	7	V.
20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rental Car Services – Use of an automobile as a primary mode of transportation is authorized only if driving is more economical than any other type of transportation or if the destination is not otherwise accessible. Documentation (e.g. airfare quote) is required to demonstrate cost comparison when considering driving over flying. Damage Waiver (DW)/Collision Damage Waiver (CDW)/Loss Damage Waiver (LDW), and Liability insurance coverage are required. The University will not reimburse any other type of supplemental insurance. Rentals through T&P and contracted rental car agencies will include all above insurance coverage at no extra cost. Rental agencies not under contract require all above insurance coverage to be purchased. Original, itemized receipts and fully executed rental agreements signed by the traveler indicating insurance coverage must be provided for reimbursement. 	8	V.
21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charter Bus / Motor Coach – Rentals must go through T&P or a contracted agency. If rental is through T&P, the department must keep a copy of the 100W form or eRequest and the Charter Confirmation Form from T&P. If the rental is through a contracted company, the department must obtain the original itemized receipt. If it is not feasible to use the above agencies, a non-contracted company may be used and the department must obtain the original, itemized receipt and the fully executed rental agreement (signed by Purchasing). 	9	V.

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22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conference Registration Fees – May be reimbursed after the trip is completed or prepaid through the travel system. The conference registration form and the original, itemized receipt should be kept on file. If a receipt is not provided, documentation showing that the amount was paid is required for reimbursement (e.g. cancelled check, credit card statement). • Business related banquets or meals that are considered part of the conference can be paid with the registration fee or reimbursed as appropriate. Activities such as golf outings, sightseeing tours and other entertainment costs will not be paid by the University. 	9	V.
23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Meal Allowances – Meal allowances are paid after the trip is completed and are based upon the federal meal and incidental (Per Diem) rates that vary by city location. These rates include incidental expenses such as service tips, housekeeping, baggage carriers, porters, etc. • Per Diem allowances for the first and last days of travel is up to 75% of the full Per Diem rate, however, Per Diem allowances for the first and last days for travel can be adjusted using the applicable meal percentages (25%-breakfast, 25%-lunch, 50% dinner) at the College/VP area's discretion. • Travelers may be paid at 100% of the Per Diem allowance for the applicable city location. Full meal allowances while on travel status will not be paid if a meal is served on the plane, included in a conference registration fee, built into the hotel room rate, or replaced by a legitimate business meal. The allowance must be adjusted by deducting the appropriate meal percentage (25%-breakfast, 25%-lunch, 50% dinner) from the full Per Diem allowance for the applicable city location. 	10	V.
24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Meals – Original, itemized receipts are required. Business meals (while in travel status) must be documented in the travel system. 	10	V.
25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lodging – The University will permit payment of lodging expenses at reasonable, single occupancy or standard business room rates. The cost of overnight lodging (room rate and tax only) will be paid if the authorized travel is 45 miles or more from the traveler's home or primary work site. Payment will be limited to the conference rate when the hotel is the conference/convention site. • Original, itemized receipts or equivalent documentation should be maintained by the department. • Non-commercial lodging may only be reimbursed after the trip is completed. Written documentation that includes the length of stay, 	11	V.

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	associated fees, and signatures of both the traveler and the payee should be obtained. Must be pre-arranged and authorized prior to departure.		
26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miscellaneous Business Expenses – Expenses considered necessary for business travel (e.g. baggage fees, parking, tolls, internet connectivity, Visas, immunizations, etc.) may be reimbursed. • Original, itemized receipts or equivalent documentation for each individual business travel expense in excess of \$50 must be obtained. • Detailed description and associated business travel purpose must be documented for each individual travel expense of \$50 or less. 	11	V.

Summary of Potential Policy Exceptions:

- Individuals are reimbursed for travel expenses when they are not in “travel status.”
- Individuals are reimbursed for travel expenses they have or will be receiving from 3rd parties (duplicate reimbursements).
- First class tickets are reimbursed.
- Missing receipts and/or supporting documentation.
- Receipts that do not meet the criteria of original, itemized receipts or equivalent documentation.
- Traveler did not submit their travel reimbursement request within 90 days of completion of their trip.
- Cash advances are not properly documented and/or reconciled within one month of the return date.
- Travel request/reimbursement was not appropriately approved.
- Travel expenses to and from alternate vacation destinations while on business travel are reimbursed. Cost variances in expenses due to vacation arrangements are not clearly identified and documented.
- Exceptions to the travel policy are not documented in the travel system and are not approved by an appropriate designee.
- Group travel purchased from non-designated travel agencies that meets the bidding requirements did not go through the bidding process.
- Travel expenses for spouses, companions, dependents or other family members of University faculty and staff are reimbursed without a bona fide business purpose.
- Charter Bus / Motor Coach rental did not go through T&P or a contracted agency.
- Travel incentives earned on University travel are not redeemed for University travel.
- Reimbursements that exceed the travel estimate by 20% or more are not properly re-approved.
- Mileage reimbursements exceeded the cost of the least expensive airfare.

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- Rentals through T&P and/or University contracted agencies include costs for insurance coverage (duplicate payment).
- Activities such as golf outings, sightseeing tours and other entertainment costs during a conference were reimbursed.
- Individuals were reimbursed more than the allowable per diem rate .
- Individuals were reimbursed for lodging that was less than 45 miles away from the traveler's home or primary work site.

Policy Areas of Potential Student Life Interpretations and/or Follow-up with Business & Finance:

The following items are potential areas of policy interpretation, left to the discretion of Student Life:

Ref #	Description	Page	Para
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do we know when a staff member is in travel status (i.e., traveling on official university business)?	1	II. B.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do we determine that travel expenses are reasonable and appropriate?		
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Travel Incentives – How can we be sure travel incentives earned while on University business are only redeemed while on University business?	3	VI. A.
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vacation in Conjunction with Business Travel – In cases where vacation time is added to a business trip, what documentation is required to identify and document cost variances in expenses?	3	VII. B
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cash Advance Payments – What determines “undue financial hardship?”	5	III. B. 1
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reimbursements – On an occasional basis if original receipts are not available, a substitute document can be used. What additional documentation can be used in place of a receipt?	6	IV. A
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reimbursements – Travel expenses that have been or will be reimbursed to a traveler by a third party must be referenced in the travel system and will not be paid by the University. How do we know if an individual is being reimbursed by a third party?	6	IV. B
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lodging – The University will permit payment of lodging expenses at reasonable, single occupancy or standard business room rates. What determines reasonable, standard business room rates?	11	V. Lodging

Areas of Consideration for Defining as “Reasonable” in the ICS:

- Necessary expenses, particularly those categorized as miscellaneous (e.g. baggage fees, parking, tolls, internet connectivity, Visas, immunizations, etc.)
- Lodging rates

Potential Training Topics:

- Business Responsibilities
- Business Expenditures
- Travel Policy
- Traveler Training
- Travel Approver
- Travel Portal & Search Tool
- Pcard, Travel, and GET Card Holder