

Travel Checklist

Pre-Approval to Travel

- A travel authorization form must be submitted in advance of the trip and signed by the Dean's Office

Air Travel

- Reservations must be booked through the online tool, Concur, or directly with Polk Travel Agency
- Business class or First class seating (even for medical reasons) must be approved in advance by the Provost's Office
- If a spouse/partner drives a traveler to the airport, only one round trip mileage is reimbursable
- When providing flight comparisons, the comparisons must be done at least 2 weeks out and for the same days/time of travel

Hotels

- Travelers should book hotel rooms through Concur, or directly with Polk
- If conference sponsored hotels are available, travelers should stay in one of the conference sponsored hotels, or provide an explanation if a more expensive hotel is selected. Travelers may only be reimbursed at the conference sponsored hotel rates. Documentation of rates should be provided
- Hotel bills must be itemized and a zero balance hotel statement required

Registration Fees

- Registration should be purchased at the early bird/advanced rates- documentation of rates should be provided
- Add-ons such as city tours, donations, etc. are not reimbursable

Car Rental

- Travelers should rent mid-size/economical cars unless a valid business purpose is provided for requiring a larger car, such as carrying equipment or group travel
- Travelers should decline all insurance coverage offered by the rental car company if traveling within the US. It will not be allowed for reimbursement when traveling on domestic university business.
- Pre-paid fuel options offered by the rental car company are not reimbursable
- GPS may be allowed when deemed necessary for safety reasons. A memo explaining the reason for purchasing GPS must accompany the travel report.

Receipt Requirements

- The traveler is expected to provide receipts for all business expenditures, particularly when traveling on behalf of a sponsored project.
- Itemized receipts are required for all expenditures \$25 or more

Meals

- For staff and faculty, no individual meal may exceed \$60 total, including tip and tax. For students, no individual meal may exceed \$50 total, including tip and tax.
- Alcohol consumed without a meal, including happy hours, night caps, mini bar, etc. will be considered personal entertainment and not allowed for reimbursement.
- All alcohol must be reported separately from other travel expenses
- Group meals with:
 - Other VU authorized travelers – travelers attending a group meal are strongly encouraged to pay for their meals separately. In instances where separate checks are not practical, a list of attendees must be documented and added to the travel report.
 - Non-VU travelers and a business purpose – a business purpose and a list of attendees must be documented in writing and attached to the travel report
 - Non-VU travelers and no business purpose – only actual, reasonable items consumed by the traveler will be allowed for reimbursement. Items should be identified by circling them on the receipt or documented in writing- splitting 50/50 is not a valid method of allocation.
- Meal expenses for spouses/partners/children are not allowed for reimbursement
- No tips in excess of 20% will be reimbursed

Daily Limits

- Faculty and staff members are allowed up to \$75 per day including travel days for meals, ground transportation, airport parking, baggage fees, mileage to/from airport, tips, etc. For ground transportation, airport parking, and baggage fees not covered by the daily maximum, an additional \$50 (trip total) is provided as well.

Traveling on Grant Funds

- Internet and personal phone call charges are not allowable
- GPS and other upgrades when renting a car are not allowable
- Airport parking is reimbursed at no more than the Long Term Rate (currently \$14/day)
- The same daily limits above also apply to grant travel
- Itemized receipts for all business expenditures are required
- Include documentation of meeting/conference/speaking engagement/observation/etc.

Mileage Reimbursement

- If a business trip is 600 or more miles round-trip, an airfare comparison is required. The lesser amount, mileage v. airfare, will be allowed for reimbursement.

Miscellaneous

- Expenses for food, snacks, and alcohol from hotel mini bars are not allowed
- Food purchases outside of a meal may be considered a personal expense and not allowed for reimbursement
- Travel reports must be submitted within 60 days to avoid tax implications
- Laundry charges are considered to be a personal expense and not reimbursable except in extenuating circumstances. A memo explaining the circumstances must accompany the travel report.