



## **Xavier University**

### **Travel, Meals and Entertainment Expense Policy**

**Effective: August 1, 2021**

**Responsible University Office: Central Procurement and Accounts Payable**

**Responsible Executive: VP, Financial Administration and Chief Business Officer**

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#### **A. REASON FOR POLICY**

This policy applies to all Xavier faculty, staff, administrators, and students traveling on behalf of or utilizing funds administered by the University as well as University guests, visitors, independent contractors and other individuals who incur expenses on behalf of or are utilizing funds administered by the University.

The purposes of this policy are to:

- provide guidance to individuals and University units regarding the types of travel, meals, and entertainment expenses that may be paid or reimbursed with University funds;
- promote good stewardship of University resources;
- enable the university to meet its duty of care to those traveling on University business; and
- define the relevant requirements and guidelines for travel, meals and entertainment expenses to be paid or reimbursed.

Study abroad programs and student club or organization travel are not covered under the guidelines of this policy but must adhere to established student travel policies

#### **B. POLICY**

Travelers are required to book airfare, hotels and rental cars through the University's Travel Management Company (TMC). This provides the University the opportunity to aggregate these expenditures in order to reduce costs and will also allow the University to quickly locate travelers in an emergency situation. Travelers are also requested to utilize the TMC's online booking tool, hereinafter referred to as "online booking tool," whenever possible to make such reservations. The University will pay for or reimburse all reasonable, appropriately documented travel, meals and entertainment expenses as outlined in this policy. Employees traveling internationally are required to enroll in the University's international insurance plan. Enrollment is facilitated by the Center for International Education.

The traveler is responsible for understanding this policy before planning travel, meals or entertainment on behalf of the University. Travel, meals and entertainment expense reimbursements will be based on Internal Revenue Service (IRS) accountable plan guidelines and limits or standard government rates for items such as meal per diem (<https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>) and mileage reimbursements (<https://www.irs.gov/tax-professionals/standard-mileage-rates>); unless otherwise noted in this policy, these limits will be strictly enforced. (See Related Policies/Documents for link.)

Any exceptions to this Policy must be approved by the President or a Direct Report of the President.

## **B.1 AIR TRAVEL**

Travel by air must be coach or economy fare consistent with scheduling needs. The University will not pay for first class or business class fare. Exceptions to this restriction for flights longer than six (6) hours may be made if approved in advance by the President or a Direct Report of the President.

Air travel should be booked at least 14 days prior to departure as that will provide the best value to the University whenever possible. Every effort should be made to book the lowest cost airfare and the actual flights selected should not be more than \$200.00 more than the lowest available airfare.

The University will not pay for seating upgrades of any kind, including but not limited to first class or business class upgrades, premium seats, or comfort plus seats; upgrades to seating selection must be paid for with personal funds or personal frequent flyer miles. If the traveler has specific needs that require special seating or travel accommodations, such exceptions will be handled on a case-by-case basis. When traveling on airlines where pre-assigned seats are not offered, the University will pay for early check-in or other charges that guarantee an assigned seat or boarding privilege. The University will pay for the cost of one checked bag for domestic flights.

The University will not reimburse the costs for TSA Pre-Check, Global Entry, CLEAR or similar expedited security clearance programs without the express approval of the President or a Direct Report of the President. The University will not reimburse the costs for memberships in airline frequent flyer programs or other programs that provide lounge access or other traveler benefits

unless approved by the Vice President, Financial Administration and Chief Business Officer or the President.

In accordance with the Fly America Act, commercial air travel funded by a federal grant must use a United States flag air carrier service.

Vouchers or credits for unused air tickets that have been paid for by the University are the property of the University and must be used for University business. Whenever possible, such vouchers or credits will revert back to the University and may be used by other university travelers at the sole discretion of the TMC.

All air travel MUST be booked through the University's designated TMC and should be booked using the online booking tool whenever possible. All airfare for University travel will be charged directly to the University by the TMC. Airfare cannot be paid with a personal credit card.

Except as noted in section B.8 of this policy, all companion travel must be paid for with a personal credit card. If a companion is booked using the online booking tool, they must be booked as a GUEST and a personal credit card must be used for the booking. Companion travel can also be booked directly with the TMC. The University employee must advise the TMC agent that they are traveling with a companion. The TMC agent will request a personal credit card as the form of payment for the companion.

It is permissible for flights to be scheduled with earlier arrival or later departure (return) times than the scheduled time of the university business being conducted in order to allow for personal time at the destination location. However, such schedule deviations cannot increase the cost of air travel and the traveler is responsible for all other expenses (lodging, ground transportation, meals, etc.) during such personal time.

Travel by private charter flight must be pre-approved via formal contract execution. Xavier's Central Procurement Office must be involved in all charter service planning and procurement.

## **B.2 GROUND TRANSPORTATION AND VEHICLE RENTALS**

The University will pay for or reimburse ground transportation and related travel expenses, such as a shuttle bus, taxi, subway, train, ride-sharing service and parking. The University encourages the use of this type of transportation in lieu of car rental.

In cases where other means of ground transportation are not practical, car rental may be used. Reimbursement for car rental is limited to the cost of an intermediate size vehicle for individual travelers. Full-size vehicles or vans are allowed for groups of more than four (4) people. Only vehicle rental charges and actual fuel expenses are reimbursable; mileage will not be reimbursed when a rented vehicle is used.

The University and the TMC may identify preferred vendors for ground transportation and vehicle rental services. These preferred vendors must be used whenever possible. These vendors will be

noted in the online booking tool as Preferred and TMC travel counselors will offer the preferred vendors first for call-in reservations.

For domestic travel, only the cost of renting an automobile will be reimbursed; no other insurance or additional coverages offered by the car rental agencies will be reimbursed. Insurance coverage is provided by the University's insurance policy. All drivers must be authorized by Xavier's Risk Management Department. Drivers can register via the attached link:

<https://www.xavier.edu/insurance/vehicle-use-and-driver-information/new-driver-authorizationform>.

All car rentals MUST be booked through the University's designated TMC and must be paid for with a University credit card or P-Card unless the traveler has not been issued a P-Card. If the University employee does not have a University issued P-Card, a personal credit card may be used.

When renting an automobile in a foreign country, it is required that all local, statutory, and optional coverages, including collision damage waiver insurance, be purchased. The University's insurance policy will provide excess coverage over any applicable local insurance purchased. The University will pay for or reimburse for these required rental coverages with appropriate documentation.

This policy does not apply to ground transportation for team travel or other university-approved travel for large groups that is contracted through bus, limousine or other commercial transportation carriers. However, those arrangements must comply with other University policies regarding contract review and execution.

### **B.3 MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT**

For local or regional business travel when airline or other forms of travel are not used, the University will reimburse mileage for business use of a personally owned vehicle. The University will reimburse at a rate per mile that does not exceed the standard mileage rate published annually by the IRS. Mileage reimbursement cannot exceed the mileage from the primary work location to the destination. Commuting between home and the primary work location will not be reimbursed. Mileage is not reimbursable when traveling using a University-owned vehicle, a leased vehicle provided by the University, a courtesy car, or if the employee received a university vehicle allowance or stipend.

For travel other than local or regional travel, the University will reimburse mileage for business use of a personally owned vehicle when traveling on University business provided that the reimbursement does not exceed the cost of the least expensive airfare or rental car to the destination location. Additional expenses including, but not limited to, taxi, lodging and meal expenses should be considered when comparing costs of travel using a personally owned vehicle. The University will reimburse at a rate per mile that does not exceed the standard mileage rate published annually by the Internal Revenue Service. Mileage reimbursement cannot exceed the mileage from the primary work location to the destination. Commuting between home and the primary work location will not be reimbursed. Mileage is not reimbursable when traveling using a

University-owned vehicle, a leased vehicle provided by the University, a courtesy car, or if the employee receives a university vehicle allowance or stipend.

The mileage reimbursement rate will be periodically updated by the University and listed on the University Travel website. (<https://www.irs.gov/tax-professionals/standard-mileage-rates>)

The University requires employees to utilize air travel or a rental vehicle for all long-distance travel unless the mileage reimbursement provides a lower cost to the University. Any traveler choosing to use a personal vehicle when other less expensive forms of transportation are available will only be reimbursed up to the amount of the available air fare.

Tolls, parking charges and other incidental costs are not included in the mileage reimbursement rate and should be submitted as separate reimbursable expenses. Charges for traffic citations, moving violations or parking violations will not be reimbursed under any circumstances. **B.4**

#### **LODGING**

The University will pay for reasonable, documented, itemized expenses for lodging. Accommodations should be prudently planned so that the best interests of the University are served at the most reasonable cost. Where possible, lodging accommodations should be made using preferred hotels with which the University has negotiated rates and as recommended by the TMC. These preferred vendors will be noted in the online booking tool as Preferred. Exceptions may be made if those accommodations are not convenient for the purpose of the trip.

All attempts should be made to book lodging with the online booking tool or a TMC counselor. If lodging is booked outside of the online booking tool, the employee is asked to add the lodging to their existing air reservation for duty of care purposes. This can be done directly in the booking tool or with a TMC counselor.

Movies and other entertainment charged to the room will not be reimbursed and should not be charged to a University P-card. Health Club charges and other personal services will not be reimbursed. The traveler is responsible for any additional charges above the single occupancy room rate.

The detailed itemized bill from the hotel must be submitted as supporting documentation when reconciling P-card charges or when requesting reimbursement for charges to a personal credit card.

All hotel/lodging should be booked through the University's official TMC or the online booking tool whenever possible; A University-issued P-card or travel card should be used to book and pay for all lodging accommodations. Lodging accommodations can only be paid with a personal credit card if the traveler does not have a University P-Card.

When special negotiated hotel rates are included as part of conference registrations, it is permissible to utilize conference lodging options.

It is permissible to utilize non-hotel lodging options for group travel (e.g. Airbnb, VRBO, etc.), however, the use of such options must be financially equivalent to or less than the cost of booking options provided by the TMC.

### **B.5.i MEALS WHILE TRAVELING FOR UNIVERSITY BUSINESS**

#### ***PER DIEM NOTICE effective 09/08/21:***

*Until further notice section B.5.i of the Travel, Meals, and Entertainment Expense policy is temporarily suspended while we investigate a more efficient processing method for per diem allowances. The Business Travel and Expense Report form is no longer required. All meal receipts will need to be turned in, in accordance with regular Pcard and Expense Claim procedures. Pcards may be used for payment of meals or they may be reimbursed. Note: all other terms of the policy remain in effect. Please direct questions to Beth Boland in Accounts Payable at [bolande@xavier.edu](mailto:bolande@xavier.edu)*

Faculty lead academic trips will be handled in a manner consistent with prior travel experiences. Contact Beth Boland in Accounts Payable for procedures.

The University will provide a per diem reimbursement for meals when traveling away from their normal place of work on business within the United States.

For travel within the United States, per diem rates are based on U.S. General Services Administration rates: <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates> for traveler's destination. University funds or P-Cards are **not** to be used to purchase meals. Travelers must pay for meals and incidentals with their own funds and will be only reimbursed the appropriate per diem rate. No receipts are required to claim per diem reimbursement.

For travel outside of the United States, actual expenses will be reimbursed upon submission of an itemized receipt that includes the amount, date, and place.

University funds may be used to pay for registration fees for conferences, seminars or other meetings that provide lunch and/or refreshments during the program.

### **B.5.ii MEALS FOR GROUPS WHILE TRAVELING FOR UNIVERSITY BUSINESS**

Group or team meals while traveling on university business are permissible and will be paid for by the University. Such meals should be planned in advance and should be charged directly to the University or paid for using a P-card whenever possible. Amounts allowed should coincide with the per diem for the destination of travel. Per diem reimbursement will not be made in these circumstances, and care should be taken to ensure that the actual cost of the meals provided does not exceed what would have been paid under a per diem reimbursement.

Where applicable, NCAA regulations supersede this section for athletic team meals while traveling.

## **B.6 MEALS FOR BUSINESS RELATED EXPENSES**

This section addresses circumstances under which the University will pay for meals via an expense reimbursement.

Except for meals during overnight travel, which are reimbursed with per diems noted elsewhere in this policy, the University will reimburse for properly documented meal expenses that fall into one of the following categories:

- Business Meals
- University functions and catered meals

### **B.6.i BUSINESS MEALS**

The University will reimburse properly documented expenditures for meals for which the primary purpose is a discussion related to normal University operations (hereinafter referred to as “business meals”). Business meals must include at least one non-University individual whose presence is necessary to the business discussion; meetings attended solely by University employees do not qualify for reimbursement as business meals. Except as noted in section B.8 of this policy, expenses for meals of companion travelers will not be reimbursed; only meal expenses for those individuals whose presence is required to further the purpose of the discussion will be reimbursed.

Reimbursement of the cost of business meals requires an itemized receipt documenting the cost, time, date, place, business purpose, and attendees at the meals. This applies to all on-campus or off-campus business meals. The University will **not** reimburse meal expenses that lack proper documentation of the expenditure or a clearly documented business purpose. Receipts are required for all business meals. Payment should be made using a University P-Card; if the traveler does not have a University P-card, personal payment and subsequent expense reimbursement is permitted.

The consumption of alcohol at business meals during business hours is strictly prohibited and will not be reimbursed. The consumption of alcohol during evening meals and other events outside of normal working hours is permitted, but travelers must use prudent personal and business judgement in all cases, and excessive costs for alcohol will not be reimbursed.

### **B.6.ii UNIVERSITY FUNCTIONS AND CATERED MEALS**

University funds may be used to provide food at seminars, departmental and or divisional meetings, retreats, workshops, orientations, or other University functions. Under this policy, the University may pay for expenses for food and/or refreshments at meetings with external stakeholders (e.g., alumni, donors or prospects, advisory board members), activities involving volunteers, activities at which a majority of the participants are students, and special events involving university employees. This includes official dinners, receptions, and University-sanctioned events intended to honor or show appreciation to employees.



Outside of parameters listed above, employees are discouraged from using University funds for meals that include only Xavier employees. Employees should refrain from scheduling internal meetings and events during mealtime hours, thus reducing the need to provide food. Any expenditures for meals where only University employees are present must be approved by the President or a Direct Report of the President. Invoices or original P-card original receipts for these expenditures must include a description of the business purpose and a list of attendees, if feasible. Payment can be made with University P-card or a direct bill/invoice from the service provider.

Any departments or employees purchasing meals or food for on campus meals/events are encouraged to use the University's contracted dining services provider whenever it is practical to do so.

### **B.7 ENTERTAINMENT EXPENSES:**

The University may pay for or reimburse expenditures for entertainment when the purpose is promotion of the University (fundraising, recruitment, Alumni engagement, etc.), or the entertainment of University guests by designated University officials. For purposes of this policy, "designated University officials" include deans, vice presidents, development officers, senior administrators and other employees who have been asked to serve in a host capacity. Expenses incurred solely for the entertainment of faculty, staff or administrators will not be reimbursed.

Examples of entertainment include expenditures associated with performances, shows, sporting events, hospitality, food, beverages, flowers, mementos, and other miscellaneous expenses. Entertainment expenses under this section of this policy that have a total estimated cost in excess of \$5,000 must be pre-approved by the President or a Direct Report of the President.

Entertainment expenditures must be reasonable, fiscally prudent, appropriate to the occasion and consistent with the University's mission. Original, itemized receipts are required for payment or reimbursement. Payment can be made with a University P-Card or a personal payment and subsequent expense reimbursement.

### **B.8 COMPANION TRAVEL**

Reimbursement of expenses for companion travel, meals and entertainment is generally prohibited. However, if it is determined that the attendance of an employee's companion is necessary in order to effectively conduct university business, such expenses may be reimbursed by the University upon approval of the President or Vice President, Financial Administration and Chief Business Officer; such approval should be obtained before travel arrangements are made. Reimbursement of expenses for companions is considered taxable income to the employee by the Internal Revenue Service, and the University will include the cost of such companion expenses in the employee's annual income on Form W-2-Wage and Tax Statement. **B.9 NON-REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES:**

The following items will NOT be reimbursed by the University except as noted:



- Fines for parking or moving violations
- Personal vehicle repairs/routine maintenance or locksmith charges
- Movies, health club fees, other personal entertainment
- Laundry services (if trip is less than five days)
- Lost or stolen personal property (including cash)
- Costs incurred at home, such as childcare, pet care or lawn/home maintenance
- Personal expenses such as haircut, toiletries, clothing, etc.
- Costs incurred for trip cancellation that is not due to bona fide business reasons, or is not due to personal or family illness or bereavement
- Companion expenses (including travel, meals and additional driver costs on rental cars) (Except as noted in section B.8 of this policy)
- Life, flight or baggage insurance
- Excess baggage charges for personal items (e.g., pets, golf clubs, skis) unless approved by the President or a Direct Report of the President
- Meals or entertainment for political events
- Meals or entertainment for charitable events unless approved by the President or Direct Report of the President

## **B.10 TIMELY SUBMISSION OF REIMBURSEMENT DOCUMENTATION**

For travel, meals and entertainment expenditures made with a University P-card, all receipts and related documentation must be submitted as part of the monthly P-card reconciliation.

For travel, meals and entertainment that is made with a personal credit card, all receipts and related documentation must be submitted within 30 days of the last date of travel. Failure to submit appropriate supporting documentation within this time period will result in disallowance of the reimbursement.

## **C. RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**University Relations Travel Policy Student Activities and Organizations Policy P-Card Procedure Student Domestic Travel Student International Travel Other Controller Policy/Procedure Per Diem link Athletics NCAA travel guidelines**