

Group travel procedures

1. If your paper has been accepted to a conference that you will be attending, the FIRST step that has to be taken is filling out a Travel Request form for the department. This form can be found at <http://www.mae.ufl.edu/travel-new/drequest.php>. You will need to talk to Kamran and determine what account your travel funds are coming out of (you need the account number, not the name). This is listed under the "Funding Source" line of the TR form.
 - **If you have never traveled with the group before**, it is extremely important that you fill out this form as early as possible. The department usually takes several days or a week to put you in the system so you need to anticipate this time lag before you start paying for flights, hotels, registration, etc.
2. You will also need to fill out the Estimated Cost Information on the TR. The department just needs to estimate of the total cost of your trip so they can allocate sufficient funds. Spend 10 minutes looking up estimates for flights/miles to drive/rental car costs/etc online. Typically you can find hotel rates and registration rates on the conference website
 - When filling out this section it is better to overestimate than underestimate. For example, if a listed price for a flight is \$250, maybe list it as \$350 to account for taxes/fare increase by the time you buy the flight.
 - If multiple group members are going to the conference and will be sharing hotel rooms, each person should still list the estimated hotel cost on their TR. Again, this is an overestimate but since it probably won't be clear at this stage whose name the hotel room will be charged to, it is better to have the available funds ready.
 - A good meal estimate is for \$10/meal for each day of the conference. So for a 3 day conference, a good estimate for meals might be \$90-\$100.
3. Once you submit the TR (you should get a confirmation email once you send it), it typically takes about a week to get approved. You really shouldn't be making any purchases until this is approved but if absolutely necessary (ie, Early Bird registration rates are about to expire) you can make the purchase. The department just needs a record that you are going to be traveling.
4. Typically, our group charges major costs (conference registration, hotels, flights, gas mileage) to a University Pcard. Usually your only expenditures while on travel are personal meals. These do not require receipts to be submitted as you will just receive a per diem allocation when you return.
 - Some common personal expenditures in addition to meals include taxi rides, tolls (if driving), hotel business center fees (internet/printing/etc).
 - Be sure to retain any receipts for Pcard expenditures! These **must** be submitted on your return
5. Once your travel request is approved, use your Pcard (or Matt or Bobby's Pcard if you don't have one) to book your hotel, flights and conference registration. Use some common sense at this stage; for example, if you're not staying at the conference hotel you don't have to stay the cheapest, sketchiest motel in town but you also shouldn't be staying in the presidential suite of the Four Seasons. Try to find reasonable prices as if you were traveling on your own money.

6. When you return from the conference, you will need to fill out a Travel Reimbursement form as soon as possible. (Any delays here just delay your reimbursement). This form can be found at <http://www.mae.ufl.edu/travel-new/New%20travel%20reimbursement%20form.pdf>. You only need to include personal expenditures; again, this is typically just meals.
- Under the “Meals Provided” section of the form, list any meals you didn’t have to pay for and the corresponding date. So if the conference has a big dinner one night, list “Dinner, *date*”. You will not get reimbursed for this meal since you didn’t have to pay for it yourself.
 - It might be helpful to look at this form before you leave for the conference to get an idea of what sort of items you would need to save your receipts for if you plan on getting reimbursed.

Notes for Pcard holders:

1. A potential problem can arise when registering multiple group members for the same conference using one Pcard. For the APS conference (11/2011), I gave the other 7 members my Pcard info so that they could register individually. The bank actually put a hold on my Pcard, as they saw multiple versions of the same charge and assumed the card had been hacked/stolen. This was actually resolved pretty quickly by the Payroll people at UF, but in the future it is probably a good idea to notify Payroll (ie, Mark Reidy) in advance that multiple registrations will be charged to a single Pcard so that he can clear it with the bank.

Rental cars:

1. First, it should be noted that the department van is NOT authorized to be borrowed by student groups as there is no insurance for student drivers. When we borrowed the van for APS (11/2011) it was a total screwup by Jan Rockey, who should never have rented us the van. We found out later that we were uninsured for the entire drive.
2. If we rent a car/van to drive to the conference, we need to go through Avis as UF has a contract with them. When making the reservation, keep two things in mind:
 - a. UF’s contract with Avis gives us a discount when renting a vehicle for university business. Input the following number for the AWD # when making the reservation: A113400. For a week long minivan rental for AIAA (6/2012), this decreased the cost from \$461 to \$209.
 - b. The contract with Avis covers primary third party liability insurance for \$100,000/300,000 bodily injury and \$200,000 property damage. Loss damage (fire/accident/collision) is covered by Avis. As a result DO NOT use a University Pcard to pay for additional coverage (Loss Damage Waiver/Personal Accident Insurance/Personal Effect Protection/Additional Liability Insurance) available during reservation. You will have to reimburse the department out of your own pocket if you pay for additional coverage.
 - c. Apparently you shouldn’t prepay for a vehicle because then the vendor charges sales tax. If you do, at least show the manager the Pcard when you pick up the vehicle and

request that they take the tax off. This seems very strange but it was explained to me by Racquel.