

College of Business Administration Travel Guidelines for Faculty and Staff

I. Purpose

These guidelines provide direction to the College of Business Administration (COBA) faculty and staff regarding business related travel processes, documentation, and information in order to comply with state regulations and institutional policies.

II. State of Texas Regulations and UTEP's Institutional Policies

A. Institutional Travel Policy

These guidance and internal processes at COBA are built on rules and regulations established by the State of Texas and The University of Texas at El Paso. The Handbook of Operating Procedures (HoOP), Section 7 Chapter 6 outlines the institutional travel policy, which expands on and incorporates regulation by the State of Texas. The subsections in the travel policy section of the HoOP (Section 7, Chapter 6) are:

6.1 Introduction

6.2 Travel Authorization

6.3 Travel Expense Reimbursement

6.4 Transportation

6.5 Corporate Cards

6.6 Cancellation or Change Charges

6.7 Lost or Stolen Tickets

6.9 Death of an Employee

6.9 Washington D.C. Travel

6.10 Travel Fund Advances

B. General Information

1. Please be aware that per HoOP (Section 7 Chapter 6.1.1 Employee's Responsibility): "All University employees are Texas state employees, and therefore required to be aware of the state laws and the rules and regulations governing travel by state employees. Failure to comply with these laws, rules and regulations could result in non-reimbursement of travel expenses and/or disciplinary action up to termination, and/or prosecution in the case of fraudulent misrepresentation of travel expenses. Additional information regarding travel regulations is available from the University Accounts Payable Office. Stricter guidelines may be imposed by individual departments and, in addition, some sources of funds may impose additional restrictions, (e.g. contract and grant funding).

2. Read carefully Section 7, Chapter 6.2 Travel Authorization:

6.2.1 Prior Approval, states that “Prior supervisory approval for all business travel is required for absences from the University campus (or other designated headquarters) for periods of half a day or more during the normal working period, whether or not there is a cost to The University”.

6.2.2 Request for Travel Authorization, states that “(6.2.2.1) A Request for Travel Authorization must be completed prior to travel, and approval is delegated to the immediate supervisor. Approved requests must be routed through the department chair or director and forwarded to the appropriate Dean or other administrative officer for approval.”

“(6.2.2.2) a request for Travel Authorization must state the traveler's name, dates of travel, destination, purpose and benefit of travel, and the cost center/project to be charged. Appropriate arrangements for disposition of duties must be made in advance of the travel. Travel requests by faculty members must contain a statement describing the disposition of work and/or classes missed during the period of travel. If classes are to be missed, a qualified member of the instructional staff shall be identified and approved by the departmental Chair as a substitute instructor. Under normal circumstances, classes should not be rescheduled.”

3. Ensure all University travel is arranged through Anthony Travel (domestic and international travel) or Anthony Travel’s SAP Concur online booking website (domestic travel only).
4. Submit travel reimbursement requests within 90 days after completion of travel. If the reimbursement is requested after the 90-day period, it will be reported as taxable income on employee’s W-2, per IRS regulations.
5. For In-State Travel (State of Texas): Employees are required to use State contracted hotels (some exemptions apply) and are exempt from Texas state hotel occupancy tax. Employee must present completed tax exemption certificate when checking-in.
6. All University employees are responsible for assessing the health, safety, and security risks of University-sponsored **international travel**, with special consideration for High Risk travel. General Rules:
 - a. State funds cannot be used to for International Travel.
 - b. Employees must have advance approval by the University International Oversight Committee (IOC) when traveling to countries on the U.S. Department of State’s warning list, including daily travel to Mexico.
 - c. Employee must register with International SOS.
 - d. Employee must book travel arrangements through Anthony Travel unless travel is paid by an outside entity (no cost to the University). This includes airfare, hotel, and car rentals.
 - e. The Business Center will convert travel expenses to US dollars on expense report using the exchange rate (www.xe.com) applicable on travel dates.
 - f. Foreign per diem rates are based on U.S. Department of State per diem tables.
 - g. No overage can be paid on “Meals and Incidentals” as it is accounted for on the expense per diem rate.

C. Student Travel Policy

There is additional documentation required for student travel as well as policies policies that are established by the Vice President of Student Affairs (VPSA) when it comes to student travel. All faculty and staff must comply with these policies and complete their required documentation before a student trip takes place. For more information visit VPSA's website or contact them directly.

III. Travel Authorization and Reimbursement Process

Please note that failure to comply with these policies and procedures outlined below could result in non-reimbursement of travel expenses.

Step 1: Travel Authorization Form

*The travel authorization in **People Soft** must be fully approved before any travel arrangements are made. To request a travel authorization, all faculty and staff must submit their request through the College's Business Center by using the travel authorization form located in the Business Center website.*

Travel Authorization Form – The following items must be attached to the Business Center "Travel Authorization" form when requesting approval to travel:

1. **Funding Approval.** Email or letter from funding approver detailing amount, funding source (cost center number or cost center name) and any details as to what will be funded (especially if there is a limited amount that will be allotted for the trip, e.g. \$500 to cover only airfare, etc.). All travelers must ensure that funding is available prior to submitting a travel authorization. The funding approver may vary depending on the purpose of the trip and the traveler, but the traveler's direct supervisor is the best person to consult first. See section IV below.
2. **Travel Budget Worksheet.** This worksheet is mandatory and must be attached to the travel authorization form. (See example on Appendix I, the actual document can be found in the Business Center website under "Useful Resources") This worksheet must be filled out completely and estimated expenses must be listed for each travel day. The traveler must indicate which days are for business and personal purposes when applicable, please note that a day before or after the business days of the trip are considered business days, dependent of travel destination. If there are personal travel dates included in the entire itinerary, the traveler might be responsible for a portion of the flight expense (constructive airfare cost vs. actual airfare cost). Per state regulation and institutional policy reimbursements on personal days are not allowed.
3. **Conference/ Meeting Agenda.** Required for each business-related day. The agenda must present a clear reason for the meeting and how it reflects your position at UTEP. If it is research based, please explain how this meeting benefits your research. For conferences, please include a copy of the conference itinerary and if you are presenting a paper, a copy of your acceptance letter/email.
4. **Additional documentation required on the Business Center "Travel Authorization" form:**
 - a. **For International Travel.** Employees must have advance approval by the University International Oversight Committee (IOC) when traveling to countries on the U.S. Department of State's warning list, including daily travel to Mexico. The IOC form must be attached to the Business Center "Travel Authorization" for international travel.

- b. **For Faculty - Departmental Approval.** An email with the approval from the traveler's department chair is required and must be attached to the travel authorization form. This email should include the requested travel dates and the travel purpose. Also, the email should include a statement from the faculty member ensuring that all teaching and other duties are not being affected by the time being away. Cancelling class because of travel plans is not acceptable under any circumstances.
 - i. Department Chairs will follow the same process and obtain approval from the Dean.
 - ii. Associate Deans will obtain approval from the Dean and notify Department Chairs on teaching duties.
 - iii. If the faculty member is taking a group of students to a trip, a list of students' names and student ID numbers must also be attached. The faculty member is responsible for complying with the student travel guidelines and must submit the required documents to VPSA. Please visit VPSA website for more information.
- c. **For PhD Student Travel.** The trip has to be discussed and approved by the PhD Program Director; therefore, an email with the approval from the PhD Program Director is required and must be attached to the travel authorization form. The email should include the requested travel dates and travel purpose. If the PhD student is teaching a class, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that class duties are adequately handled. Therefore, the PhD student is required to also attach to the travel authorization form, an email from the Department Chair of the class, in which the Department Chair accepts the plan presented to ensure that the teaching commitments are met and are not affected by the travel request. Cancelling class because of travel plans is not acceptable under any circumstances.
- d. **For Staff Travel.** The staff member must ensure that the trip is pre-approved by his/her direct supervisor (Department Chairs must pre-approve for the staff in their respective departments) and must include the approval email on the travel authorization form. If the staff member is taking a group of students to a trip, a list of students' names and student ID numbers must also be attached. The staff member is responsible for complying with the student travel guidelines and must submit the required documents to VPSA. Please visit VPSA website for more information.

After the Travel Authorization form is submitted with the required documents listed above, the Business Center will process the travel request in People Soft. Once the travel authorization is completed by the Business Center, an automatic email will be sent to the traveler, explaining that the travel authorization was processed and is pending at the central administration office (Accounts Payable Office) for review and approval. After the travel authorization in People Soft is fully approved, another email will be sent to notify the traveler that he or she may contact **Anthony Travel** to make their travel arrangements. Please be aware of the following:

1. All state employees are required to use at all times the UT System contacted travel agency: **Anthony Travel**. Deviating from this policy will result in non-reimbursement of travel expense for flight purchase.
2. Once the traveler receives the flight itinerary from Anthony Travel, the traveler must forward the itinerary and the reservation number to the Business Center.
3. If any changes need to be made to a traveler's flight itinerary (e.g. cancel a flight, booked the wrong flight, etc.) the traveler must contact Anthony Travel directly, please **do not** contact the airline. When a trip consists of multiple destinations, a Travel Authorization form must be completed for each travel location. Traveler must ensure that all destinations are detailed on the travel budget worksheet.

4. If the traveler is driving rather than flying to the travel destination, please note that per institutional policies, he or she will only be reimbursed the **lesser** of these three:
 - a. Constructive airfare
 - b. Constructive rental car quote (including estimated gas price information)
 - c. If personal vehicle will be used, total mileage will be calculated by using MapQuest. Please note that gas receipts are not included when using personal vehicle.

Therefore, it's the traveler's responsibility to review these costs before making any travel arrangements to know what amount will be allowed for reimbursement.

Step 2: Travel Reimbursement

Once the traveler returns from the trip, they may submit the required documentation through the Business Center "Reimbursement" form. Please note that in compliance with IRS Publication 463, the Accounts Payable Office at UTEP requests that reimbursement requests must be submitted to their office within 90 days of the return date of a business trip to remain non-taxable. An explanation for the delay in submission will be required for all reimbursements in excess of 90 days.

Please attach all of the applicable documentation listed below to the "Reimbursement" form.

Required documentation for reimbursement:

1. **Flight Itinerary.** Received from Anthony Travel. Flight itinerary is always required, even if it was purchased with personal funds or by an outside entity. If a personal or rental vehicle was used, include the following information:
 - a. Constructive airfare
 - b. Constructive rental car quote (including estimated gas price information)
 - c. If personal vehicle was used, please submit total mileage from MapQuest directions.
Please note that gas receipts are not included when using personal vehicle.
2. **Conference Receipt.** If seeking reimbursement for conference fees, please attach the receipt from the conference registration. Conference fees cannot be reimbursed until after the conference. The receipt must show the amount, method of payment, the name of conference, and dates of conference. If the traveler is requesting that the university pay the conference fee, it is their responsibility to acquire an invoice and submit it to the Business Center in a timely manner.
3. **Conference/ Meeting Agenda.** Required for each business-related day. The agenda must present a clear reason for the meeting and how it reflects your position at UTEP. If it is research based, please explain how this meeting benefits your research. For conferences, please include a copy of the conference itinerary, and if you are presenting a paper, a copy of your acceptance letter/email.
4. **Lodging Itemized Receipt.** Must indicate expenses and taxes for each day and method of payment. This is acquired from the hotel; website bookings/confirmations will not be accepted (e.g. booking.com, expedia.com, etc.).
5. **Transportation Receipts.** Taxi receipts (Uber, Lyft, etc.), public transportation receipts, and car rental itemized receipt and gas receipts (only when renting a car). Please note that transportation from your personal residence to the El Paso International Airport is not reimbursable. Only transportation from UTEP to the El Paso International Airport is accepted.
6. **Parking Receipts.** This includes parking at El Paso International Airport, parking at the hotel, and street parking.

7. **Incidental Receipts.** This includes all other minor expenses incurred during business related travel such as baggage fees. Please be aware that there are some expenses that are not allowed per institutional policies; please review these on the HoOP.

Please Note that all receipts submitted for reimbursement must include the method of payment used. If the method of payment is not shown on a receipt, a copy of your bank statement showing the charge with all other account information/expenses blocked out is required.

Step 3: Reimbursement Approval Process

Once the Business Center staff completes the traveler's reimbursement in People Soft ("Expense Report"), the traveler will receive an automated email from People Soft that includes a link to review the reimbursement. The traveler must review the document and if everything is correct and all is completed, the traveler must click the "Reviewed" button in order for it to continue processing.

Once the reimbursement document in People Soft ("expense report") has been reviewed by the traveler, the traveler WILL NOT have the option to add any additional expenses for reimbursement. Please ensure that all applicable documents are attached on the initial request.

When the travel reimbursement is fully approved, the traveler will receive an automated email notification. These funds will be issued via direct deposit if this has been previously set up by the employee being reimbursed. If direct deposit is not set up, the check will be mailed to the address set up on the employee's records.

IV. Travel Funding

Faculty Research Funds

1. **"College Support" funds** Based on available funds; the College will financially support a faculty member for two conferences per fiscal year (\$1,500 per conference for a total of \$3,000). Eligibility will be determined by the following:
 - a. The Faculty member must be presenting a paper in a conference (of a prestige and recognized professional organization) for which he/she is the main author. Being co-author of a paper does not qualify for this financial support.
 - b. Endowed professors do not qualify for this financial support as they are encouraged to use their endowment funds for professional/research travel. (Ensuring that the use of endowment funds comply with their respective endowment agreement and state and institutional policies).
 - c. Productivity in terms of peer-reviewed articles successfully placed in each discipline's targeted journals will be reviewed by the Associate Dean for Faculty to assess continued travel support after the faculty member's first three years of service at UTEP.

The Dean's office reserves the right to pull these funds at any time during the fiscal year due to budget cuts, availability of funds, or any other circumstance that the Dean of the College considers important in order to continue the enhancement of the College as a whole.

2. **Startup Funds** Contractual agreements for travel to support research efforts of new faculty members will be covered based on the written agreements only.

Funding for Staff Travel

Staff of the college may travel for three purposes:

- a. Lead a Group of Students. Examples include study abroad programs, corporate tours, case competitions. Availability of funds must be confirmed with the CAO; Dean's approval is needed before travel authorizations are requested.
- b. Trips for Specific Business Purposes. Examples are, but not limited to, meeting with corporations, attend meetings or conferences to present projects or work being done in the College, AACSB meetings and conferences, and student recruiting (PhD Program, etc.) Availability of funds must be confirmed with the CAO; Dean's approval is needed before travel authorizations are requested.
- c. Professional Development. Conferences and/or trainings must be relevant to the position of the staff member travelling. The direct supervisor must have a professional development plan for the employee to fully detail the benefit of the trip and ensure that this is included in the staff member's performance evaluation's goals.

The Dean's office reserves the right to pull these funds at any time during the fiscal year due to budget cuts, availability of funds, or any other circumstance that the Dean of the College considers important in order to continue the enhancement of the College as a whole.

Funding for Student Travel

1. Undergraduate Faculty Led Programs funding. COBA's undergraduate students are encouraged to participate in the Faculty Led Programs that the college organizes. The College will fund \$1,500 per student for one experience in the Faculty Led programs during their time in the undergraduate program. The College will not support other study abroad programs from other colleges, even if the student is from COBA.
2. Corporate Tours. COBA students are encouraged to participate in corporate tours organized by the College. The College may be able to support some of the corporate tours based on availability of funds.
3. Student Organization Travel. The College may be able to support student organization travel to conferences that support their professional development. Funding is dependent upon availability.
4. Case Competitions and Conferences. Students are encouraged to apply for travel support by submitting the Professional Development Travel Support form. Each request will be reviewed, and funds will be awarded based on availability of funds and eligibility of the student.
5. PhD students Travel to Academic Conferences. These may be funded by the college or faculty members. The PhD student is encouraged to review financial support opportunities with PhD Program Director for more information and guidance.

For any funding provided by the College, the Dean's office reserves the right to pull or reallocate these funds at any time during the fiscal year due to budget cuts, availability of funds, or any other circumstance that the Dean of the College considers important in order to continue the enhancement of the College as a whole.

Appendix I

Travel Budget											
Name:											
Date of travel:											
Destination:											
Cost Center:											
Purpose:											
Benefit to UTEP:											
Additional Comments:											
Traveling Dates	Business or Personal day?	Description of business travel on specified date	Lodging	Lodging Tax	Meals	Registration Fees	Airfare Cost	Car Rental, Parking, etc.	Ground transport: Taxi, bus, train, etc.	Other Mileage: (if personal vehicle used)	Total Estimated Expenses
			\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -