

Managing Student Travel

University Standards: STN-U5348.10B

Effective:

Authority

[POL-U5348.10](#) Traveling for Official University Business Policy

See Also

Document #:	Document Title:
FRM-U5348.10	Travel Authorization Form for Students
PRO-U5348.10A	Requesting Travel Authorization for Employees - Procedure
POL-U2105.01	Traveling Abroad for Educational Experiences - Policy
	Associated Students Travel Policy

Policy Owner

Policy Owner: Director of Business Services/Chief Procurement Officer
Responsible Department: Travel Services

Purpose of Standards

To assist departments in complying with state rules and mitigating risks involving WWU graduate and undergraduate student travel for University related purposes. Such purposes include, but are not limited to, field trips or other academic related activities, athletic or other competitive activities, and research.

Students Traveling as Student Employees

These standards **do not** apply to student employees who need to travel for their University job. For student employment-related travel, student employees and their supervisors are to follow the [Traveling for Official University Business Policy](#) and associated standards and procedures for employees.

Student Travel Funded by Associated Students (AS) Funds

These standards **do not** apply to student travel funded with Associated Students funds. These travelers are to follow the [AS Travel Policy](#).

Where these standards are silent on any situation occurring with student travel, the travel policies, standards, and procedures for employees apply.

Definitions

Student Group Travel

When a group of two or more students with the same travel purpose and general itinerary travel as a unit. A student group may or may not include employees, as well as a designated employee travel leader, such as an athletics coach or a faculty member.

Non-Employee

An individual that is traveling with a student group that is not a current employee or enrolled student (e.g., volunteer, research assistant).

Sponsor

Financial Manager(s) of the applicable funding or department facilitating the trip. The role of a sponsor for the purpose of these standards may be delegated to department staff.

Required Standards

1. All Travelers and Sponsoring Departments Must Comply with University Rules

All travelers must comply with all relevant University policies, standards, and procedures. Although tasks may be delegated to department staff to comply with these standards, the applicable financial managers are responsible for ensuring appropriate internal controls and oversight of travel-related expenditures and distribution of funds.

When students are not accompanied by a University employee, the University department sponsor(s) is responsible for communicating applicable travel rules, including department and program rules to students.

2. Prior Approval to Travel Required

Department sponsor, delegate, or travel leader obtains prior approval as required for all overnight and/or out of state student travel as follows:

- a) Group student travel with an employee leader is to be approved via a [Concur Request](#) (Request).
- b) Individual or group student travel without an employee leader is to be approved via a [Travel Authorization Form for Students](#) (TA).

The names of **all anticipated travelers** are to be included on the TA/Request. If the TA/Request is submitted prior to finalization of the travel roster, a final attendee list must be attached to the travel leader's expense report.

3. Sponsors Should Consult Risk Management Resources

The health and safety of WWU students while traveling is a high priority for the University. University employees responsible for mitigating the risk of student travel may contact the following areas for consultation:

- a) International Travel – Refer to [POL-U2105.01 Traveling Abroad for Educational Experiences](#) and consult with the University’s Director of Education Abroad.
- b) Domestic Travel – Consult with the University’s Director of Risk Management.

4. Chart 1 Funds Not Permitted when Student is Primary Beneficiary of the Travel Purpose

A student’s travel expenses may be paid for or reimbursed using Chart 1 funds only if it is determined that the University is the primary beneficiary of that expense. Payments are not allowed if the student is the primary beneficiary with some exceptions depending on the types of funds used. [Click here](#) to see examples to determine if WWU or the student is the primary beneficiary.

Exception: Chart 1 funds are considered public funds with some exceptions, including but not limited to, certain grant funds, course fees, and student service and activity fees.

Departments are encouraged to contact their Division Budget Officer, the Office of Student Life, or Financial Aid to inquire about alternative resources for funding student travel.

5. Per Diem Rates Recommended for Students

Students are considered clients of the University; therefore, state and federal per diem rates do not apply to them. However, in order to maintain financial stewardship over University funds, it is recommended to use the same per diem rates, rules on meal periods, and meal breakdown percentages applied to employees or use flat rates that are lower than federal per diem for group travelers. Employee meals paid with Chart 1 funds are not to exceed per diem rates.

Groups traveling with students are exempted from the eleven-hour rule (SAAM 10.40.50) for meals on day trips.

6. Student Travel Expenses Should Be Purchased Directly by the Department/Sponsor

Student travel expenses should be purchased directly by the department/sponsor rather than purchased by and reimbursed to a student when feasible. The preferred payment method is the University PCard.

If a student needs to be reimbursed, the [Payment to Student Request Form](#) is to be used.

7. Student Signatures Required When Cash Given to Students to Pay for Their Meals

If a group leader distributes cash to each student to purchase their own meals (e.g., at a food court) a per diem verification sheet is required to be completed. A group per diem verification sheet must include the destination, travel dates and times, each student traveler's name, the cash amount given to that student for per diem meals, the dates and specific meals covered by the cash payment, and the student's wet signature acknowledging their participation in the travel activity and the receipt of the cash amount.

The per diem verification sheet must be attached to the group leader's travel expense report. See [Meal/Lodging Per Diem – Group Travel](#) for sample per diem verification sheets.

8. Receipt Required When an Individual Pays for a Group Meal

If an individual purchases groceries or a restaurant meal for a group, they must obtain and submit an official receipt showing proof of payment. This receipt must **detail** the meal items and cost plus any tax or gratuity. A list of meal attendees must be included with the receipt.

9. Emergent Expenditures to Ensure Student Health and Safety May be Made

Student health and safety are paramount and related travel expenses may be paid. These include, but are not limited to, required travel-related health insurance costs, reasonable medical supplies that become necessary to purchase while traveling, and ground transportation to and from medical facilities while in travel status. The reason for authorizing the additional expense should be included in Travel Expense Report.

10. Travel Cash Advances May be Made to Employees Only

Students and non-employees are not eligible to receive cash travel advances even when traveling without a University employee. University employees (including student employees) who are given cash travel advances must follow the *Reporting and Reconciling Travel Expenses and Advances Procedures* ([PRO-U5348.10B](#)).

11. Departments to Report Student Travel to Clery Coordinator if Trip Meets Certain Criteria

The Clery Act requires the University to track student travel for the purpose of collecting certain crime statistics. Departments with activities that involve student travel must [understand the required reporting criteria and submit reports](#) by March 1st of each year for trips taken during the previous calendar year.