



## Expense Reimbursement Guidelines

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**Related policies:** Faculty Travel and Professional Development Policy ; Advocacy Coaches Training ; Missing/Inadequate Documentation Report Form ; Credit Card Policy for Employees ; Credit Card Policy for Students

**Scheduled Review Date:** March 2026 (Accounting Office and General Counsel's Office)

### Table of Contents

A. Background .....	2
B. Responsibilities .....	2
1. Individuals seeking reimbursement .....	3
2. Department heads, deans, and employees with student organization oversight duties .....	3
3. Accounting office .....	3
C. Eligible Expenses and Substantiation .....	3
1. Eligible business expense .....	3
2. Itemization and receipts .....	3
3. Southwestern corporate credit card .....	4
4. International travel .....	4
D. IRS Accountable Plan, Timely Submission, and Taxable Income .....	4
E. Refunds .....	5
F. High -Risk Payment Processors .....	5
G. Travel Expenses .....	5

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responsible for promoting an understanding of this policy and taking appropriate steps



**E. Refunds**

If an employee or student receives a refund for any amount paid for or reimbursed by Southwestern, the employee or student must promptly pay the refund amount to Southwestern.

**F. High -Risk Payment Processors**

Southwestern does not encourage the use of high-risk payment processors, such as PayPal and Venmo, which allow electronic fund transfers to private parties. Using a high-risk payment processor is not allowed if the vendor:

- x requires a Form 1099 from Southwestern;
- x accepts payments via check or ACH deposits; or
- x can process credit card payments via different methods.

In the unusual case, when payment is made via mobile or online payment processors (such as PayPal, Venmo, etc.), all transactions must be supported with receipts that meet Southwestern's receipt requirements, regardless of the transaction amount. Detailed transaction descriptions must be included with all transactions.

**G. Travel Expenses**

Any mode of transportation should be the most economical one suitable for the purpose of the trip.

**1. Air travel**

Southwestern will cover the reasonable cost of a non-refundable, roundtrip coach or economy ticket (whether direct, nonstop, or connecting) to the event, which typically means that the ticket was purchased at least 21 days in advance of travel. If multi-city travel is anticipated, employees must provide advance notice to their department head, and faculty should include that information in their advance notice to the Associate Dean for Academic Innovation and Administration.

Southwestern will reimburse only the cost of flights, fees paid for seat selection in the economy section, in-flight wifi when the employee or student certifies in the reimbursement request they were working on Southwestern projects, and 8

considered travel advances. To clear the advance, the faculty member should submit an expense report within 60 days of completing the travel and should submit evidence that the travel occurred (e.g., boarding passes, hotel folio, conference badge).

Any frequent-flier miles or other travel incentives earned accrue to the traveler, not to Southwestern.

2. Rail travel

Southwestern will reimburse an employee or student for the cost of economy class rail travel. However, absent advance approval by the Dean, Southwestern will not reimburse the employee or student more than it would have cost to travel using coach or economy air travel. The receipt for the train ticket is required for reimbursement.

3. Personal vehicle

Southwestern will reimburse employees and students for mileage when a personal vehicle is used on Southwestern-related business that is properly authorized, reasonable, and appropriately documented.

If the mileage is not connected with an overnight business trip, the mileage reimbursement will be calculated using the AAA (Automobile Club of Southern California) mileage estimate or the roundtrip coach or economy airfare amount, whichever is less, and will be reduced by the employee's or student's standard commute when traveling between their residence and Southwestern.

Southwestern will reimburse the employee or student at the current rate approved by the IRS on the date of travel. Fuel and other vehicle expenses are not eligible expenses, as the mileage allowance includes these expenses.

An employee's or student's personal vehicle liability insurance is the primary coverage when using a personal vehicle on school-related business. If the liability limits become exhausted following an accident occurring while on school-related business, Southwestern will reimburse the employee or student for the cost of the liability insurance up to the policy limit.

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reimburse an employee for a vehicle rental that exceeds the maximum cost of allowable air travel.

Moreover, Southwestern typically will not reimburse an employee or student for a rental vehicle in cities where rideshares and public transportation are readily available (e.g., New York City; Washington, D.C.; etc.). To avoid doubt, faculty members should consult in advance with the Associate Dean for Academic Innovation and Administration; staff should consult with the Chief Financial Officer; and students should consult with the Student Affairs Office.

An employee or student should purchase the liability insurance offered by the rental vehicle company, including supplemental liability protection, and should purchase any loss damage waiver.

Southwestern will not reimburse employees or students for pre-purchased fuel options or charges associated with the employee or student not refilling the gas tank before returning the vehicle.

The car rental agreement receipt is required for reimbursement.

**5. Ground transportation and parking**

Southwestern will reimburse reasonable ground transportation costs, e.g., airport parking, hotel parking, taxis, rideshares (unless the traveler has a rental vehicle), shuttles, buses, and metro/subway.

**6. Lodging**

Southwestern will reimburse employees or students for the cost of a single room in the conference hotel or another hotel that allows easy access to the event or activities. If the event offers a special rate with one or more hotels, this rate will serve as the cap for reimbursement, unless the room block sold out. The room booked must be at the conference rate. Travelers will not be reimbursed for “no show” charges except under extenuating circumstances, which must be documented in the expense report. If t.9 (vel)1. h o e hotre hovel as

may refuse to reimburse an employee or student for no-show charges for peer-to-









**K. Violations**

**1. Employees**

An employee who fails to comply with this policy and related policies may be subject to disciplinary action. Disciplinary action could include a warning, termination of employment, and referral to law enforcement. Expenses submitted for reimbursement that are deemed in violation of this policy may not be approved or reimbursed.

**2. Students**

A student who fails to comply with this policy and related policies may be subject to disciplinary action. Disciplinary action could include a warning, referral for disciplinary process under the Student Honor Code, suspension, expulsion, and referral to law enforcement. Expenses submitted for reimbursement that are deemed in violation of this policy may not be approved or reimbursed.

**L. Policy Revisions**

Southwestern expressly reserves the right to change or modify any aspect of this policy at any time, with or without notice.