

The School of Engineering Student Travel Policy

The School of Engineering allocates a limited budget each year for student travel. Good stewardship of these funds is very important as we continue to limit costs for students, the College, and the taxpayer.

Forms are available at <http://engineering.pages.tcnj.edu/senior-projects/senior-project-information/>

All Travel - requires: *Student Travel Request Form*

Students requesting travel must have a faculty supervisor (e.g. club advisor, senior project advisor, etc.) approve the *Student Travel Request Form*. This form includes a detailed budget estimate listing costs for transportation, hotel, and other items. Please estimate these costs carefully. In order to maximize the number of students who can travel in a given year, every effort should be made to find the most cost-efficient solutions. The faculty advisor will forward the travel request form to their department chair for approval who then forwards it to the dean for final approval. Each request will be considered in light of the various limited travel budgets available. The approved budget may be reduced based on availability of funds and the scope of the request. ***Once the travel is approved, the students are able to expend funds. No travel funds should be expended without the approval of a Student Travel Request Form. Variances from the approved budget will not be reimbursed unless separate approval is sought with a new Student Travel Request Form prior to making the expense.***

Senior Project Travel – requires: 1) *Senior Project Travel Proposal Form*
2) *Student Travel Request Form*

Senior project travel will consist of **two steps**:

Step one: Early in the first semester, the faculty advisor will discuss any possible travel related to the senior project with the students. The students will be asked to prepare a realistic budget for the travel. The faculty advisor will submit a *Senior Project Travel Proposal Form* that will be used to plan the budget for the year – the course instructor will inform the faculty of the exact deadline for this form.

Step two: At least one month prior to traveling, students need to complete the *Student Travel Request Form* as previously described. ***The faculty supervisor will determine that adequate progress has been made on the project to ensure that travel is warranted.*** Since projects can run into unforeseen delays due to a variety of reasons, no travel funds can be expended until this second form is approved by the faculty advisor.

Student Travel Rules:

Groups of students- requires: *Student Travel Request Form*

One student in the group needs to complete a *Student Travel Request Form* attaching a list of students traveling as noted below as this form is also used for liability purposes not just reimbursement. This form needs to be approved by the faculty advisor, the department chair, and the dean and should contain, as an attachment, a list of students traveling, courses missed, and an itemized budget for the entire group.

Reimbursement - requires: *Student Reimbursement Form*

Generally, a student will incur travel expenses and then be reimbursed after the travel has taken place. Registration fees and airfare that are purchased well in advance can be reimbursed prior to the travel. **Warning: If a student makes any travel related expenses prior to receiving the proper approval, the student is at risk of not being reimbursed.**

Within **one week** of returning from travel, students should submit a detailed list of expenses with receipts to the dean's office. **Receipts must show that the individual student incurred the expense.** The total reimbursement amount must be shown on the detailed list and should not exceed the approved amount. Reimbursement for trips that involve a group of students will be processed only when all students have submitted their receipts. For groups of students sharing hotel rooms, a list of occupants for each room is required by the State auditors.

Ground Transportation: Use of College vehicles is encouraged as it is more cost effective. Only employees of the College, either faculty or student workers, may drive a College vehicle for purposes related to their employment. Certain students may become qualified to drive for specific, academically-related events; student drivers need to formally sign up for these positions (see the Lab Technician for details). If these vehicles or drivers are not available or appropriate, students may use their own vehicles to be reimbursed for gas only (save all receipts). Students should save all receipts for incidentals such as tolls. Rental cars are generally not approved unless there is a specific need that is well-justified prior to traveling.

Air or Train Transportation: Occasionally, air or train transportation is needed to travel long distances. Students should shop carefully before purchasing airline tickets and should be aware that many tickets are not refundable if not used. Airline tickets that are purchased for **approved travel** well in advance can be reimbursed prior to the travel.

Hotel Room: Students should shop carefully before reserving hotel rooms. Often there are less expensive hotels near the main event that can offer significant savings, allowing more students to travel. Students are expected to share hotels rooms as gender and hotel rules allow; some hotels allow up to four (or more depending on style) occupants per room. Students should avoid purchasing hotel accommodations or making registrations in advance that require payment (e.g. Priceline.com), as many of these purchases are not refundable if not used.

Meals: *Due to budget constraints, there will be no reimbursement for student meals. Students are expected to provide their own funding for meals while traveling.*