

## F4: University Sponsored Group Travel

Effective Date: 7/02/03

Prior Date: 6/13/02

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### Purpose and Scope

This procedure provides a uniform method for the accounting of University funds utilized in the performance of University sponsored student group travel. The *Student Activity Travel Authorization Request & Encumbrance* (1118) form serves as the official authorization for faculty, staff, and students on University sponsored business and encumbers the funds to be utilized. University practices and policies are consistent with travel regulations of the Board of Trustees.

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### Authority and Responsibility

1. The adviser/student trip leader will, prior to the departure date, complete and deliver to the Office of University Budgets, the approved *Student Activity Travel Authorization Request & Encumbrance* (1118) form together with a supportive *List of Travelers* (1056). Should a loan (travel advance) be required for the purpose of financing the trip, an approved *Travel Advance* (1042) form is also submitted. The *Group Travel Voucher* (1035) will be completed and approved after conclusion of the travel. The adviser/student trip leader preparing the *Group Travel Voucher* will certify to its accuracy and propriety and supply documentation to substantiate the reimbursement of expenditures.
2. The fiscal agent will insure that the *Student Activity Travel Authorization Request & Encumbrance*, *Travel Advance Form* and *List of Travelers* are accurate, complete and proper, that requested monies meet budgetary requirements and are reasonable, that the trip is related to the stated mission of the group, and that only the *Group Travel Voucher* (supported by an approved *Student Activity Travel Authorization Request & Encumbrance*) is used to claim reimbursement of valid expenses incurred as a result of the travel.
  - a. The burden for obtaining presidential approval for foreign travel 30 days prior to the departure date resides with the student activity sponsoring office.
  - b. The Office of University Budgets will review the *Student Activity Travel Authorization Request & Encumbrance*, *Travel Advance Form* and *List of Travelers* to insure that they are accurate, complete and properly approved and that there are available funds to meet anticipated expenditures before encumbering the funds in the system.
  - c. The travel desk will monitor all travel transactions to insure compliance with established regulations.
  - d. The Director of Financial Affairs/Controller will advise the Procedures and Systems Analyst of all changes to this procedure.

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### Definitions

None

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### References

- a. *Travel Regulations*, Northeastern Illinois University  
([www.neiu.edu/~finanaff/travelre](http://www.neiu.edu/~finanaff/travelre))
- b. Student Organization Guide
- c. F5: [Travel Advance](#)
- d. F6: [List of Travelers](#)
- e. F7: [Class Field Trips](#)
- f. F8: [Student Activity Travel Authorization Request & Encumbrance](#)
- g. F9: [Employee Group Travel](#)
- h. M6: [Group Travel Voucher, 1035](#)
- i. M7: [List of Travelers, 1056](#)
- j. M13: [Travel Advance, 1042](#)
- k. M19: [Student Activities Travel Authorization Request & Encumbrance, 1118](#)

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### Funding Student Sponsored Group Activities

Student group activities are financed from local funds. The activities involved are student club activities, International Study Programs activities and performing arts groups activities. Funding for the approved:

- Club activities is through the assessment of activity fees and receipts from special events sponsored by the various groups. The Student Fees and Allocations Committee distributes these monies in support of approved activities.
- International Study Programs activities is through program fees plus local student funds.
- Performing arts activities is through the assessment of a performing arts fee and receipts from special events sponsored by the group.

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### Authorizing University Sponsored Group Travel

1. The *Student Activity Travel Authorization Request & Encumbrance* is the document that serves as the official authorization for travel on University sponsored business and to encumber the funds to be utilized. Authorizations involving expenditures of University funds must be approved by the fiscal agent or alternate. Should the fiscal agent be the adviser, then signed approval must be received from the person to whom the advisor reports.
2. The President must authorize foreign travel at least 30 days prior to the departure date.

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### Travel Advances

1. The *Travel Advance*, made for the purpose of financing University sponsored student group travel, is considered a personal liability of the adviser/student trip leader that must be co-signed by the fiscal agent or the person to whom the advisor reports. In all instances, the adviser must be an employee of the University.
2. Under no circumstances will a stand alone *Travel Advance* be accepted to finance University sponsored student group travel.

The advance must be supported with an approved *Student Activity Travel Authorization Request & Encumbrance* and a *List of Travelers*. These established controls will insure that travel expenses will always be recorded as normal follow-up activity by the Controller's Office.

3. The dollar limit of the *Travel Advance* must be individually justified for each individual's expense per trip. The advance may be used for all travel. It may not be used for payment to the official University travel agency for air and rail fares. Air and rail travel arrangements may be made through the official University travel agency by the traveler citing the "T" number of the travel authorization.

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### Forms Processing

Normal processing by the Office of University Budgets will include the application of the following tests:

- the total package of documents listed in the table below are on hand,
- the papers are complete and accurate,
- the approval signatures of fiscal agent or alternate are proper and valid, and
- the available funds are adequate to meet anticipated expenditures.

Failure to meet all the above tests results in the documents being returned for corrective action.

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### Forms Distribution

Prior to the departure distribution of University sponsored student group travel documents is made as indicated:

Document	Office of University Budgets	Adviser/ Student Trip Leader	Fiscal Agent
<i>* Student Activities Travel Authorization Request &amp; Encumbrance</i>	Copies 1 & 2	Copy 3	Copy 4
<i>* Travel Advance</i>	Copies 1 & 2	Copy 4 with Advance Check	Copy 3
<i>* List of Travelers</i>	Copy 4	Copies 1 & 2	Copy 3

\*Distribution of form set made by traveler

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### Claiming Reimbursement

1. Upon the conclusion of the trip, the unspent portion of the travel advance is returned to the cashier so that it may be credited to the adviser/student trip leader's account. When the *Miscellaneous Receipt* coupled with the *Group Travel Voucher* is credited, the *Travel Advance* is liquidated.
2. The proper forms to be used are the *Student Activity Travel Authorization Request & Encumbrance* supported by a signed *List of Travelers* and the *Group Travel Voucher*.

The *Direct Payment Voucher* is not to be used to request reimbursement for University sponsored student group travel except for documented and approved unexpected circumstances.

3. The *Group Travel Voucher* is to be prepared by the adviser/student trip leader after conclusion of the trip. The claim must be properly documented with valid expense receipts and a signed *List of Travelers*.

Once the required approvals have been obtained, it is forwarded intact together with supporting documents to the travel desk for further processing.

4. The travel desk will establish the validity of the claim as well as ascertaining compliance with University travel regulations. With these tests successfully met, the *Group Travel Voucher* is prepared for standard input into the system.
5. Claims not prepared in accordance with established practices or failing the tests for validity and compliance are disallowed.

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### Questions

Questions regarding group travel should be referred to the travel desk located in the Controller's Office, E-220, phone extension 5128.

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