

FSM/BSA Entertainment Guidelines

Updated July 2023

The following guidelines do not supersede existing FSM or University policies. They provide further specificity for categories that are otherwise undefined in the University's policy. An exception should be completed in cases where the expense is over the maximum cost per person. When exceptions are requested, we cannot guarantee FSM will approve them.

Please contact BSA Procurement (bsa-procurement@northwestern.edu) if there is a need to use a p-card for student travel reservations specifically when Egencia is more expensive. If the below does not address a specific expense type, please reach out to BSA Procurement for prior approval.

Travel & Entertainment Category	NU Policy	FSM Maximum Cost Per Person Guideline ¹²
General On-Campus Faculty/Staff Meals	Not allowed; expectation that each employee pays for their own meal if discussing University business while "in town"	Follow NU Policy
Student/Researcher Refreshments & Lunches (i.e., Journal Clubs) <i>(Should occur no more than once or possibly twice per month)</i>	Purchase of food on a continual basis for employees or students is unallowable	\$15 per person for catered meals Follow NU Policy
Department Meeting Refreshments & Lunches <i>(Monthly or quarterly intervals)</i>	\$15 per person for lunch and other refreshments are to be kept to a minimum.	\$15 per person for catered meals; no attendee limit (be reasonable)
On-Campus Hosted Seminar Meeting Lunches (catered)	No specific guidance	\$30 per person for catered meals; no attendee limit (be reasonable)
Restaurant Hosted Seminar/Visitor Meeting/Recruitment Meals (Breakfast & Lunch)	No specific guidance	Limit to 6 attendees; \$30 per person
Annual Holiday/Appreciation Parties <i>(Maximum 2 events total per year per unit or lab)</i>	\$30 per person; includes facility charges; additional guests such as spouses not allowed	\$40 per person
Student Qualifier or Thesis Refreshments, other lab celebrations	Not allowed	Follow NU Policy
Hosted Conference Reception	No specific guidance	Event and per person cost requires approval in advance from Dean's Office
Speaker/Visitor Dinners	\$90 per person; limit to 3 NU attendees for every 1 non-NU attendee	Limit to 6 attendees; \$90 per person \$135 per person only when the chair is in attendance and approves; No bottles of wine
Faculty/Postdoc Recruitment Dinner	\$90 per person; \$130/per person with Chair present; limit to 3 NU attendees for every 1 non-NU attendee	Limit to 6 attendees; \$90 per person \$135 per person only when the chair is in attendance; No bottles of wine

¹ All listed per person limits include tax, tip, and facility charges.

² Sales tax for catered meetings and events cannot be reimbursed per the University tax exempt policy. If you pay for a catered meal with personal funds (i.e., "takeout food"), you will not be reimbursed for sales tax. Please contact BSA Procurement (or your departments administrative assistant) in advance to coordinate charging catered meal expenses to a corporate card. Please note, we cannot charge takeout meals to a corporate card.

Annual Department Faculty Retreat	\$30 per person	Event and per person cost requires approval in advance from Dean's Office; Cannot be out of state or overnight; Labs are prohibited from conducting individual retreats
Economy Plus and Business Class Airfare	<p>Economy Plus is allowed when the additional cost is reasonable, charged to a non-sponsored account, and provides for certain benefits to improve travel experience.</p> <p>Business class is permitted when scheduled flight time, including stopovers and change of planes, is more than 7 hours, and when using non-sponsored sources of funds.</p> <p>If travel is on a sponsored program, the sponsoring agency may have additional restrictions and requires advance written approval. Generally, Economy Plus and Business Class are not allowable on sponsored programs.</p>	Follow NU Policy
International Airfare	<p>Foreign carriers are allowed on non-sponsored funds.</p> <p>Foreign Carriers are restricted on sponsored programs due to the Fly America Act. A Foreign Carrier is allowed if they code share the flight with a US carrier.</p>	Follow NU Policy
Inter-Campus and In-Town Travel	Intercampus and in-town travel is generally not reimbursable as the University provides transportation solutions to address this need, but in limited cases with business justification, Deans and Vice Presidents may elect to approve such in-town or inter-campus expenses.	Parking, ridesharing, or taxis cannot be reimbursed; expected to use campus shuttle or public transportation.
In-town Conferences	Meals for in-town conferences are unallowable on a sponsored program. Hotels for attendance are not allowable.	Follow NU Policy