I. Policy Statement

The University's policy is to reimburse employees and non-employees for necessary and reasonable travel expenses incurred for authorized and approved University business. Travelers should be comfortable while traveling, understand all travel related policies, and obtain reimbursement quickly.

II. Purpose

This policy is intended to:
- Ensure compliance Board of Trustee Policy T92-031 and state and federal regulations.
- Establish guidelines for approval, control and accounting for employees who travel on University business.
- Ensure fairness for both the traveler and the University.

III. Scope

This policy pertains to all employees and non-employees traveling on University business, regardless of the source of funds.

Travelers traveling on sponsored funds should follow the most restrictive applicable policy (University policy or sponsor rules). However, if the sponsor has given prior written approval for certain expenses generally not allowed on non-sponsored funds, these costs may be allowed on sponsored funds.

The University will not pay for expenses incurred above the most restrictive policy. At their discretion, colleges, schools, or departments may impose more restrictive guidelines for budgetary or control reasons, but they may not be less restrictive than guidelines stated in this policy.

General Expense Guidelines

Travel is a necessary operation of the University. The University has no intention of denying any employee reimbursement for official University travel. Similarly, the University does not intend to compensate employees for the inconvenience of travel, per se, or for personal (non-University) expenses incurred while traveling on behalf of the University. Travel expenses must be directly related to the University's interest. When deciding whether or not to request
reimbursement for an item, an employee should be able to answer yes to each of the following questions:

1. Was the expenditure necessary to the conduct of University business?
2. Would a prudent employee have incurred this expense?
3. Did I actually spend this amount of money?
4. Is it reasonable to request and to expect travel reimbursement?

Questionable items must be resolved with the appropriate Business Manager or Dean and with Accounts Payable before the expense is incurred.

IV. Definitions

A. Travel Responsibility & Accountability

1. **Traveler** - A traveler on University-related business has the responsibility to act prudently and incur expenses that are necessary, appropriate, and reasonable. Travel arrangements should use the most cost-efficient means available to meet the programmatic requirements of the trip. The traveler is responsible for prompt submission of travel-related expenses.

Travelers are liable for overpayments that may be discovered in a post-audit review. Discovery of fraudulent practice by travelers while on authorized University business is cause for dismissal as well as other consequences that may be determined.

2. **Department/Approver** - Authority and responsibility for approval and control of travel by employees may be delegated. The campus is responsible for issuing appropriate delegation authorization.

   a. Employees may not authorize travel or approve travel expenses for themselves, a supervisor or other employees of equal or higher position without appropriate campus authorization.

   b. Accountability for administering the requirements of the travel policy rests with the individual approving the travel. Required documentation of travel expenses will be physically retained or imaged in accordance with the written procedures adopted by the campus, and is subject to audit.

   c. Travel expense reimbursements are payable only when required approval(s) are appropriately obtained.

   d. Delegation of Permissions

      i. If you wish to delegate your permission to create travel reimbursement requests within Financial Production Travel and Expense Center, please contact Accounts Payable.

      ii. Approvals may not be delegated.
V. Procedures

A. Travel Pre-Authorization

1. Pre-approval of all international and domestic overnight travel is required. **Failure to obtain the required pre-approvals may result in the denial of any reimbursement claims to the traveler.**

2. All pertinent forms designating travel approvals should be submitted through the Financial Production Travel & Expense Center workflow tool whenever possible.

3. **Domestic** - Travel Authorization Form A for all overnight travel - must be completed and signed by the traveler and their direct supervisor or appropriate Approver prior to travel. The original, signed authorization form should be kept within the department but a copy must be submitted with the Travel/Business Expense Reimbursement Form and/or the Procard Reconciliation Log, depending on how expenses were paid during travel.

4. **International** – Travel Authorization Form A (as noted above) and Travel Authorization Form B for international travel - must be completed and signed by the traveler and the Dean or appropriate Approver **AND** by the Office of Institutional Compliance prior to travel. The original, signed authorization form should be kept within the department but a copy must be submitted with the Travel/Business Expense Reimbursement Form and/or the Procard Reconciliation Log, depending on how expenses were paid during travel.

5. Travel with University Electronic Device
   When researchers travel internationally for research or University-related activities that involve hand carrying electronic equipment such as laptops, PDAs, smartphones, etc. questions may arise about the origin, content, or value of the devices. Most computers are allowed to be temporarily exported under the TMP license exception provision of the Export Administration Regulations. Filing a request for an export provision will provide sufficient information for the Compliance Office to issue a letter for the traveler to take with them.

6. Request to Ship Material Outside the U.S.
   a. Equipment and materials **may not** be sent outside the U.S. or used by a foreign person until it is determined whether an export license, material transfer agreement, or other agreement is required.

   b. The Office of Institutional Compliance will make these determinations. The request should be submitted as far in advance of shipping date as possible, as it can take up to 6 months to obtain a license, if required.

   c. Until you receive notification of approval from OIC, NO materials may be transferred to a foreign destination or a foreign national. For more information, see the University’s Export Control Guidelines.
B. **Travel Status**

Unless they are attending a local conference or retreat, employees and non-employees are considered to be on travel status only if they are traveling on approved University business away from both home and the traveler’s normal campus address. For the purpose of clarifying policy for overnight travel, “away” will be defined as a distance of fifty (50) miles. This means that an employee may be reimbursed for both lodging and meals only if the destination is fifty (50) miles or more from either the employee’s home or assigned campus address.

When personal and business travel is combined, expenses must be clearly documented and may not exceed the lowest available cost of a direct or uninterrupted route. If the traveler uses an indirect route or interrupts travel for personal convenience, any additional expenses incurred are the sole responsibility of the traveler.

C. **Spousal Travel/Domestic Partner Travel**

Travel expenses for an employee’s spouse/domestic partner are not reimbursable except as allowed in specific campus policies such as the University Executive Compensation Policy.

- When an employee traveler and a guest occupy a double room, the single room rate will be reimbursed and must be noted as such on the travel expense voucher.
- Airline mileage and other fares will only be reimbursed at an amount equal to the most economical direct route.

D. **Ground Transportation**

Travelers are expected to utilize the least expensive, most direct and efficient means of transportation available. This includes rental vehicles, University-owned vehicles, taxis, limousines, and transporter services. Employees traveling to the same destination should consider sharing ground transportation when possible.

1. **Personal Vehicle**

   a. Personal use of automobiles is permitted and reimbursed on a mileage basis at the effective Internal Revenue Service mileage rate. This mileage rate covers all automobile expenses such as fuel, maintenance, towing, repairs, tires, depreciation, and insurance. No reimbursement will be made for vehicle repair costs regardless of whether it results from the traveler’s act or acts of others.

   b. In addition to the standard mileage allowance, tolls and parking fees are also reimbursable expenses.

   c. The University will not reimburse employees for parking tickets, fines for moving violations or vehicle towing charges.

   d. Mileage is measured from the employee’s home to the destination and return Or, from the University or Department Address to the destination and return, whichever is less. Mileage between an employee’s residence and place of work is not reimbursed.

   e. When **two or more passengers** travel in one private automobile on official University business, only one employee may claim reimbursement for mileage.
f. Personal vehicles may be used in lieu of commercial airline travel. Mileage will be reimbursed at the established current rate but should cost the university no more than the commercial coach/economy airline fare. Similarly, transportation by bus, train, or other means will be reimbursed for the actual cost but no more than the commercial coach/economy airline fare.

g. If an employee uses their personal car on University business and is in an accident, their personal insurance is primary and they are responsible for any deductibles. If their personal insurance limits are exhausted, the University has an excess policy that could then be available.

h. Employees should contact Financial Services when involved in an accident on University business.

2. University Vehicle

a. Only University employees should be driving University/State owned vehicles.

b. When available, the traveler should utilize state owned vehicles. Any operator driving a University-owned vehicle must be employed by, or working on behalf of, the University. The operator must also have a valid driver's license, comply with all traffic laws, and obtain approval as required by the department who owns the vehicle. University-owned vehicles are to be used for official business only. Operators of such vehicles should only transport passengers who are also traveling on official business.

c. A mileage log must be maintained for each University-owned vehicle, identifying the date and purpose of each trip and the beginning and ending odometer reading.

d. Reimbursement will be allowed for necessary expenses incurred while using a University-owned vehicle. These include: fuel, oil, windshield washer fluid, parking fees, toll charges, and reasonable charges for car washing. All fuel receipts for state vehicles that are submitted for reimbursement must have the vehicle registration number written on the receipt.

e. The University of Massachusetts is self-insured in accordance with Chapter 258 of the Massachusetts General Laws for automobile liability with respect to vehicles that are owned by the University. The University is self-insured for both Liability and Physical Damage. Visit the UMass President’s Office for more information.

3. Taxi/Limousine/Transporter Services

a. The costs of taxis or other transportation to and from hotels, airports, or railroad stations in connection with business activities is reimbursable.

b. The costs of limousine or transporter services are allowed as a reimbursable expense only if the cost is less than, or equal to, the cost of a customary taxi charge.

c. Long-term airport parking should be avoided.
d. Alternative arrangements for travel to airports should be considered when airport parking charges would exceed the cost of a round-trip taxi or limousine service.

4. Rental Vehicles

a. The use of a rental car should be justified as an economical and/or business necessity. Travelers will be reimbursed for the rental of a compact, economy, or mid-sized car. Travelers who choose to upgrade to a full-size, luxury, or sport utility vehicle will not be reimbursed for the difference in price unless the traveler provides a specific business or medical reason for the upgrade, which must be explained on the travel reimbursement form.

b. Reimbursable items include the rental fee, fuel charges, tolls, and parking.

c. Non-reimbursable items include tickets, fines, and car repairs.

d. When University employees rent vehicles for University business, the vehicle should be rented in the name of the University. Additionally, they must include the "University of Massachusetts" next to their names on rental applications. This helps to ensure that the University's Hired and Non-owned Excess Liability policy, which is described below, will provide excess liability coverage, if warranted. This Insurance Policy is only applicable to University Employees and University sponsored groups. Non-employees are not covered under this policy. Visit The UMass President’s Office for more information.

5. Leased Vehicles

a. Before a vehicle is leased, the lease agreement must be approved and signed by the University Treasurer's Office. The University purchases Liability Insurance and Physical Damage Insurance (Collision and Comprehensive) for all leased vehicles. The title to a leased vehicle remains with the leasing company and, as a result, the University is required by the lessor to purchase insurance on the vehicle. When leasing a new vehicle, University departments should request that the University Treasurer's Office add the leased vehicle to our existing policy, a yearly premium would be assessed to the department, and coverage would extend to anyone driving the vehicle with permission.

b. If you are driving a vehicle leased by UMass, and are involved in an accident, you should contact the police department and file a police report. You must also contact the Senior Insurance Analyst in the University's Treasurer's Office.

c. The University Treasurer's Office will coordinate the claim with our leased vehicle insurance carrier.

E. Air Travel

1. Travelers are expected to book the lowest-priced economy class rates available. It is the responsibility of the traveler to obtain the most economical airfare and lodging accommodations available, consistent with the purpose of the trip. Whenever possible, travelers should take advantage of discounts and purchase airline tickets at least 21 days in advance, if possible and use the University approved Travel Agencies to book their
airfare.

2. The University will not reimburse for business, first class or other seat upgrades. Travelers who choose to upgrade must pay the difference between the lowest priced nonstop economy class fare and the final fare. Complete documentation of such arrangements must be submitted with the travel reimbursement form. Air carrier selection cannot be biased by the traveler’s frequent flyer affiliation. The lowest cost air travel should take precedence.

3. The University will not reimburse travelers for tickets purchased with frequent flyer miles.

4. Detailed receipts that show the date, departure and arrival locations, class of service and cost of airfare must be provided with expense reimbursement and/or Procard Transaction Log.

5. The University will reimburse individuals for change or cancellation penalties imposed by the airlines provided the change or cancellation was caused by unavoidable circumstances. Individuals must submit supporting documentation with their expense report along with a Refund/Exchange Notice showing the amount of penalty.

6. If an employee chooses to arrive early or stay at a location after a conference has ended for personal reasons, the employee will not be reimbursed for hotel or meals for the time not spent on University business.

7. An employee is allowed to depart the day before the conference or meeting begins and stay one day after the conference ends if the conference ends late in the day.

F. Meals/Per diem

1. Employees traveling on University business are eligible for reimbursement for their personal meal expenses. Employees may choose to submit receipts for their actual meal expenses or they may opt to use the per diem rate; they cannot combine both methods on the same trip. Actual meal expenses will be reimbursed only up to the maximum amount of the per diem rate.

2. Determining Per Diem Amounts

   a. Per diem is calculated using the traveler’s time of departure and time of return. The IRS does not consider per diem for travel that is not accompanied by an overnight stay as a reimbursable expense. The university will continue to reimburse these requests, but they will be considered a taxable benefit.

   b. Continental United States: The daily per diem meal allowance rate for University of Massachusetts employees traveling on university business within the continental United States will correspond with the current rates listed by the General Services Administration (GSA) for meals and incidentals only. GSA establishes the maximum CONUS (Continental United States) per diem rates for federal travel customers. [NOTE: The GSA website also lists locality hotel/lodging reimbursement rates; at this time, the University of Massachusetts only utilizes the GSA’s published rates for per diem expenses. Hotel and lodging will continue to be reimbursed per the section of this policy on “Lodging”, pp. 9-10)]. The breakdown of domestic per diem
rates per meal may also be found on the GSA website.

c. **For travel to Alaska, Hawaii, U.S. Territories and Possessions and all International travel:** The International per diem rates for meals and incidental expenses can be found at the U.S. Department of State website, with per diem breakdowns by meal and incidental cost by international locale.

d. Employees traveling over 12 hours but with no overnight stay are eligible for up to 75% per diem, since that would be the first and only day of travel. This is always considered taxable travel because there is no period for rest (which is required by the IRS to be considered non-taxable.)

e. Employees traveling for two days are eligible for up to 75% per diem for the first day and up to 75% per diem for the second day (first and last day of travel.)

f. Employees traveling for three days or more are eligible for up to 75% per diem for the first day, up to 100% per diem for the middle days, and up to 75% per diem for the last day.

   For instance, if a traveler left for a trip at 6 a.m. on January 1 and returned at 4 p.m. on January 4, the traveler would be entitled to three days per diem. The traveler would not be eligible for a half-day per diem on January 4 because it is only 10 hours from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m., and therefore does not meet the 12-hour, half-day requirement.

g. Tips and other incidentals will not be reimbursed separately to university employees. Furthermore, please note that the per diem allowance will not be granted to travelers who are provided meals as part of their official university business. Reimbursement on a per diem basis is the payment of a flat sum to cover meal and incidental expenses each day. All tips and gratuities are included in the per diem amounts.

3. **Exception - Conference Meals**

   a. Conferences frequently provide meals to attendees as part of the registration fee. The traveler is not entitled to a meal per diem allowance for meals that are included as part of the registration fee. The same is true for any meetings attended where a catered meal is provided or where the traveler has been included on a list of attendees for a business expense.

   b. To assist with the determination of which meals were provided during a conference, a copy of the agenda (meeting schedule) must be included with the travel reimbursement request. Travel submissions must also include the actual time of departure from the traveler’s home or place of business for the trip and time the traveler arrived home (or ended their University business if using personal time while on their trip.)

   c. If certain circumstances, such as unique dietary needs, make it necessary for the traveler to forego the provided meal, the traveler may then claim up to the maximum meal allowance. In such cases, receipt(s) and a written explanation are required.

4. **Exception - Business Meals Incurred While in Travel Status**

   Per diem may not be claimed for any meals that are reimbursed by the filing of a

5. **Use of ProCard for Meals While in Travel Status**

Use of the University ProCard is not allowed for a Traveler’s meals while traveling. It may be allowed for meals associated with a business meeting while on travel that includes attendees from outside the University System. In this case, the per diem should be adjusted accordingly per Conference Meal Exception instructions, above, for any University traveler attending the meeting. Please see ProCard User’s Guide for additional information.

**G. Lodging**

1. The University will pay actual room costs for each day that lodging away from home is required for business purposes. Travelers are entitled to accommodations that are suitably located and meet reasonable standards for safety, cleanliness, and comfort. Travelers should choose good quality, but reasonable priced hotels or motels whenever practical. However, when attending a conference, travelers may stay at the conference hotel even if it is not the most economical option available. If there is a choice of hosting hotels, travelers are expected to stay at the least expensive one.

2. **Reservations**
   a. When securing reservations, travelers should ask if there is a discounted university/college rate available. When traveling on federally funded projects, travelers may request the hotel's government rate. A letter from the project sponsor may be required upon check-in to confirm funding source.

   b. Since hotel reservations are usually guaranteed to assure lodging for late arrivals, travelers are required to cancel these reservations in a timely manner to prevent “no show” charges.

   c. Hotel receipts are required for both domestic and international travel. The receipt should state the dates of stay, room rate and applicable taxes, and any additional charges. A credit card receipt is not acceptable. When requesting reimbursement, the original itemized hotel bill and the original receipt showing proof of payment must be provided.
      * The name of the traveler
      * The lodging date(s)
      * The name, address, and telephone number of the lodging establishment
      * The per night cost
      * The total cost of lodging

d. **Other Reimbursable Expenses:**
   - Computer access charges for laptops
   - Business fax charges
   - Parking
   - Business telephone calls

e. **Non-reimbursable Expenses:**
   - In-room movies or pay TV
   - Laundry
- Personal telephone calls in excess of $20 per trip
- Personal toiletries
- Mini-bar refreshments
- Recreational Activities
- Newspapers

H. International Travel

1. Employees traveling internationally on University business are reimbursed for the same travel expenses as someone who travels domestically. They may also be reimbursed for passport fees, exchange rate fees, and other items necessary for conducting University business.

2. All reimbursement amounts should be converted from foreign currency to U.S. dollars before submitting the documents to Accounts Payable.

3. The applicable exchange rate for the dates of travel can be found at www.x-rates.com. Rates that were current at the time of travel can be found at the site’s “Historical Lookup.” Receipts should have an explanation and translation in addition to being converted to US dollars.

4. The International per diem rates for meals and incidental expenses can be found at the U.S. Department of State website.

5. Federally Funded International Travel - The Fly America Act was enacted in 1974 to mandate the use of U.S. flag air carriers for federally funded international travel. Federally sponsored trips must utilize U.S. flag carriers at the lowest available rates. A letter of justification must be included with the travel expense voucher and submitted to the travel audit section of the traveler’s department if other than lowest rates are charged.

6. Federal regulations prohibit the charging of business class or first class air travel to federally sponsored projects. They also prohibit the inclusion in indirect costs.

I. Reimbursements

1. **Electronic Submission** - All requests for reimbursement should be submitted electronically using the Financial Production Travel and Expense Center online workflow tool. All pertinent receipts should be attached through the tool. If fully authorized Pre-Authorization Travel forms were not submitted prior to the reimbursement request, then a copy must be attached at the reimbursement request.

2. **Timeliness of Travel Reimbursement Submissions**
   a. The University requires all reimbursements to be submitted within a reasonable period following expense incurred. All travel expense reimbursements to employees should be submitted within 30 days of trip completion to allow prompt accounting of employee travel.
   b. Any Travel Reimbursement requests which are submitted after 120 days may still be accepted, but the IRS requires that the reimbursement be treated as taxable to the individual receiving payment. This will result in those amounts being added to the employee’s W-2 at the end of the year.
3. **Missing Receipts** - In the rare occasion that a receipt has been lost or cannot be regenerated by a vendor, a Missing Receipt Affidavit must be attached to the request for reimbursement. A bank statement may not be submitted in lieu of a detailed receipt from the vendor.

4. **Reimbursement Processing** - Employee reimbursements are processed every two weeks in conjunction with payroll. The deadline for all complete paperwork to be received in the Accounts Payable Office is the Tuesday immediately following the last payroll run.

VI. **Responsibility**

Procurement Services is responsible for the administration of this policy.

VII. **Attachments**

- Travel Pre-Authorization Form A (All travel)
- Travel Pre-Authorization Form B (International Travel)
- Request for Annual Certification for Travel with UML-Issued Electronic Device
- Request to Ship Equipment/Materials Outside the U.S.

VIII. **Related Policies, Procedures and Announcements**

- BOT Doc. T92-031 (Appendix B), and UMPO Standard, rev. 9/18/13
- UMass Lowell Export Controls Guidelines
- Business Expense & Reimbursement Policy, FS-2-104

IX. **Approval and Effective Date**

On file with the Policy Office.