



TRAVEL POLICY #52004

Effective Date: July 1, 2017

Reviewed Date: October 30, 2025

Responsible Office: CONTROLLER AND TRAVEL OFFICE

Division: FINANCE AND PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

I. PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear and consistent guidelines governing travel on behalf of Grambling State University (hereinafter the "University" "Grambling" or "GSU") in compliance with the State of Louisiana Travel Guide also known as the Policy and Procedures Memorandum No. 49, ("PPM 49") as issued by the Division of Administration for the State of Louisiana.

II. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all Grambling State University departments, including the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics and provides additional procedures and exceptions specific to athletic travel. All University travel shall be conducted in a manner that is fiscally responsible, transparent and compliant with applicable state, UL System and governing body requirements. This policy applies to:

1. All employees, faculty, students, and contractors of Grambling State University who travel on official University business;
2. All departments, offices, and units utilizing University or state funds for travel-related purposes; and
3. Athletic teams and associated personnel traveling on behalf of GSU.

Specific exceptions and/or guidelines for athletics are also outlined in this policy. Athletics exceptions shall be in accordance with policies and procedures issued by the University of Louisiana System ("ULS"), National Collegiate Athletic Association ("NCAA"), Southwestern Athletic Conference ("SWAC") or any other team travel provisions as may be applicable to the fall, winter or spring sports programs at the University.

III. LEGAL AUTHORITY

This policy is issued under the authority of:

- A. Policy and Procedures Memorandum No. 49 (PPM 49), Division of Administration, State of Louisiana;
- B. University of Louisiana System (ULS) travel policies;
- C. National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and Southwestern Athletic Conference (SWAC) travel bylaws and competition regulations

IV. STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. Travel Guidelines

All Grambling State University (GSU) employees who request or engage in official University travel are required to attend Travel Training once per fiscal year. Participation ensures compliance with State of Louisiana PPM-49 travel regulations and University travel procedures. All In-State Conference, all Out-of-State and all International travel must be authorized and approved in writing by the appropriate Vice President or President. The President will approve travel for his staff and all Vice Presidents. A file shall be maintained on all approved travel authorizations. For International travel, the completed Travel Authorization (TA) must be sent to the applicable Vice President for approval along with the approved letter of request to the President's Office. Again, this approval must be received prior to the travel time. The State of Louisiana has contracted travel agency services with Christopherson Business Travel. It is mandatory that employees use Christopherson for airfares unless exemptions have been granted by the Division of Administration prior to travel.

B. Authorization to Travel

All non-routine travel must receive approved travel authorization from the department head or their designee responsible for the funding source. Departments must maintain records of all approved travel authorizations. Electronic records and approvals are acceptable when certified electronic signatures are used.

C. Travel eligibility

To be eligible for official university travel in a state-owned, personally owned, or rented vehicle, an employee must meet and maintain the following criteria which are verified annually.

1. Pass the state's driver safety course (update required every three years),
2. Have a valid U.S. driver's license,
3. Employees must be listed on the Authorized Drivers List

D. Travel Forms & approval notification

1. All employees on official university travel anticipating incurring an expense associated with that travel must submit a "Request for Authorization to Travel Form" (travel request form) approved by all required personnel at least 30 days prior to the date of travel. Until the form has been processed by the Travel Office and the traveler has been notified as such, a travel is not considered approved. In order to travel, an employee must complete the form and have his/her department head and the appropriate senior official (Vice President or President) approve. Approval must also be given for certification that funds are available for travel expenses from the appropriate Approving Agent. An employee must have an approved TA form for the trip which he/she is requesting reimbursement. This form must be approved in advance of the travel. For those employees requesting a rental vehicle as part of their domestic travel, insurance purchased with the rental vehicle is not reimbursable by the State or GSU. Authorization for a rental vehicle must also be approved by the appropriate senior official (Vice Presidents or President). Please discuss International travel insurance in advance with the Department of Safety and Risk Management in coordination with the Office of Risk Management.
2. Approval notification – The Travel Department will communicate approvals, denials, or adjustments to an employee's travel request form via email.

E. Funds for Travel Expenses shall be in accordance with PPM 49

- a. Travel Advance – Advance of funds for travel shall only be made in extraordinary circumstances and any excess funds should be promptly repaid upon return. Cash advances meeting the exception requirement(s) listed below must have an original and itemized receipt to support all expenditures in which a cash advance was given, including meals. At the University's discretion, cash advances may be allowed for:
 - i. University employee travelers whose salary is less than \$40,000/year.
 - ii. University employee travelers who accompany and/or are responsible for students or athletes for group travel. For group travel advancements, a roster with signatures of each group member along with the amount of funds received by each group member may be substituted for individual receipts.
 - iii. University employee travelers who accompany and/or are responsible for client travel.
 - iv. University new employee who has not had time to apply for and receive the state's corporate travel card if applicable.
 - v. University employees traveling for extended periods, defined as a period exceeding 30 or more consecutive days. University employees traveling to remote destinations in foreign countries.
 - vi. Lodging costs if the hotel(s) will not allow direct bill or charges to agency's CBA and the traveler's salary is less than \$40,000/year.
 - vii. Registration for seminars, conferences, and conventions.
- b. Travel Request – All travel forms must be submitted 30 days in advance of travel.
- c. Travel advance related approvals by the Controller's Office are within (3) business days.

F. Methods of Transportation shall be in accordance with PPM 49

1. Air Travel – Privately Owned or Charter Planes and Commercial Airlines – shall be in accordance with PPM 49. The State of Louisiana's contracted travel agency for air travel services is with Christopherson Business Travel. It is mandatory that employees use Christopherson for airfares unless exemptions have been granted by the Division of Administration prior to travel.

2. Unused Tickets, Motor Vehicles, State-Owned Vehicles and Personally-Owned Vehicles – shall be in accordance with PPM 49
3. State-Rented Vehicles – In-State and Out-of-State Vehicle Rentals, Payments, Approvals, Vehicle Rental Size, Fuel, Insurance and Navigation Equipment – shall be in accordance with PPM 49. To be eligible for official university travel in a state-owned, personally owned, or rented vehicle, an employee must meet and maintain the following criteria which are verified annually.
 - a. Pass the state's driver safety course (update required every three years),
 - b. Have a valid U.S. driver's license,
 - c. Employees must be listed on the Authorized Drivers List.
 - d. **PERSONAL USE OF A STATE-RENTED VEHICLE IS NOT ALLOWED.**
4. Public Ground Transportation – shall be in accordance with PPM 49
5. Parking and Related Parking Expenses – shall be in accordance with PPM 49

G. Meals shall be in accordance with PPM 49

Meal and Incidental rates are based on the GSA meal rates. Allowance- Includes Tax and Tips– Receipts are not required for routine meals within these allowances, **unless a cash advance was received**. Number of meals claimed must be shown on travel expense form.

1. Single day meals
 - a. Must be in travel status for more than 12 hours and less than 24 hours
 - b. Amount limited by the State Travel Guide and GSA rate
 - c. Reimbursable as wages through the Payroll Office
2. Meal and incidental reimbursement for Travel Overnight Stay shall be in accordance with PPM 49

H. Lodging shall be in accordance with PPM 49

1. Lodging rates are based on the GSA lodging rates.
2. Conference Lodging – Employees may be allowed the conference lodging rates, plus tax (other than Louisiana Sales Tax) and any mandatory surcharge. Receipts are required along with documentation showing the actual conference rate from the conference organizers.
3. Conference Lodging rate, Extended stays, Lodging fees, Louisiana sales tax, Lodging with relative or friends, Hotel Reward Points, Lodging Exceptions shall be in accordance with PPM 49. If lodging expenses exceed the GSA authorized rate, prior approval from the President is required. If the rate exceeds the President's authorization, prior approval from the Commissioner is required.
4. Louisiana Sales Tax
 - a. Employees are responsible for reimbursing the University for any Louisiana sales taxes when the University's tax exemption form is not presented at time of check-in at hotel. Contractors are subject to Louisiana sales tax and can be reimbursed for this expense.
 - b. Employees should use the tax-exempt form located on the State Travel Office website for all in-state lodging.

I. Travel Expense Report

All employees are required to submit a "Travel Expense Report" within seven (7) business days from the return travel date. The required documentation must be attached for processing:

- a. All hotel receipts for lodging must be submitted to the Travel Office within three (3) business days from the return travel date.
 - i. Original receipts for lodging (zero balance receipt), transportation, meals, and other approved expenses.
 - ii. A copy of the conference agenda (if applicable), and
 - iii. A copy of the approved travel request.
 - iv. The employee must provide receipts for **all** items paid by the CBA and Gas Card (i.e. conference registration, vehicle rental, lodging, and gas).

- b. Employees have 7 business days to resolve any issue regarding their submitted Travel Expense Report after receipt of notification from the travel office.
- c. If an expense report cannot be submitted within seven (7) business days from the return travel date due to pending supporting information from 3rd parties, please document your attempt(s) to obtain the information and the date the information was actually received and this situation will be evaluated on a case by case basis.
- d. Receipts/Document Requirements – Supporting documentation, including original receipts, must be retained according to record retention laws.
- e. Travelers who receive a cash advance are required to return any unused funds and submit them to the Cashier's Office within three (3) business days. Please attach a copy of the receipt to the travel expense report.

J. Athletics Travel Policy & Procedure**A. Authorization/Approval**

- 1. The Athletic Director has the authority to authorize travel subject to final approval by the President or his designee.
- 2. In accordance with PPM 49, a quarterly authorization for routine administrative in-state travel for Athletic Department staff who must travel in the course of performing his or her duties may be given by the Athletic Director once each quarter and must be renewed each quarter. Team travel and other out-of-state travel must be approved by the Athletic Director and the campus President or his or her designee.

B. Team Travel

- 1. Authorization for Payment of Team Travel Expenses for Team Members and Individuals Accompanying Teams on Road Trips:
 - a.) Only student athletes who are eligible and who have been officially certified by the University to compete as per the NCAA regulations may be allowed to travel.
 - b.) Approval of the Annual Athletic Budget shall include the approval for team travel, including practice games. The Athletic Director's approval of the Team Travel Budgets will constitute authorization for the advance purchase of team travel, as authorized and designated by the Board of Supervisors for the University of Louisiana System.
 - c.) Individual travel requisitions submitted for team travel will require appropriate documentation in accordance with University purchasing and travel policies. Subject to this approval, the Athletic Department shall be authorized to provide transportation, lodging, and meals for team members when in travel status for road games and also for other University personnel who are members of the official University team party.
 - d.) The official University team party may include the following: team members, coaches, graduate assistants, student assistants, team managers, team doctors, team trainers, administrative assistants, members of the Board of Supervisors and Board staff, University President, Faculty Athletic Representative(s), two (2) members of the faculty or campus administration, the Athletic Director, Associate Athletic Director, Academic Counselor(s), photographer, Athletic Business Manager, Sports Information Director, Assistant Sports Information Directors, cinematographer, a two-person film crew, one communications person, security personnel as required, travel coordinator, sound technician, coaches, show cameramen and producer, two- (2) person radio crew, the cheerleaders/spirit groups and their sponsor, mascot, the band and band staff, and up to two (2) announcers, and a statistician.
 - e.) In addition, the Athletic Director, with approval of the President as authorized by the Board of Supervisors, may authorize team travel for other athletic personnel not listed above if he/she feels his/her services are essential to the traveling team.
 - f.) Whenever a University-owned bus is used to transport a team, the bus driver is considered a member of the official University team party and travel expenses are authorized for the bus driver. Travel expenses are also authorized for non-University personnel who provide security and escort for the official team party and the band. Meals may also be provided for bus drivers and security personnel traveling with the team.

- g.) Depending upon the sport, the size of the official University team party may range to 170 persons, excluding the band and band staff, cheerleaders/spirit groups, mascot, and their sponsor(s). However, it is the policy of the Athletic Department to keep the size of the team party to a minimum and only personnel whose services are essential to the traveling team are allowed to travel.
- h.) The Athletic Director is responsible for the use of available transportation, lodging, and meals in the most cost-effective way. When space is available on charter flights or buses, the Athletic Director is authorized to provide transportation for other invited guests to accompany the team on road trips if there is no increase in the cost of the charter or buses.
- i.) All expenses for lodging and meals are the sole responsibility of the invited guest and not the University. On commercial flights, invited guests must pay for their own tickets and all other travel, lodging and meal costs. Invited guests should be selected from the following categories:
 - 1. Contributors to the university
 - 2. Potential contributors
 - 3. University employees not otherwise covered under the provisions of this policy.
 - 4. Selected non-University guests

NOTE: Invited guests ARE NOT members of the official team party and SHALL BE responsible for any and all expenses incurred.

- j. The Department must identify by name and above category each individual for whom transportation is provided. For charter flights, a flight manifest must be provided identifying by name and category each passenger on the charter.
 - k. All travel expenses to be paid for team travel must be submitted by the Athletic Department to the appropriate Business Officer via travel expense vouchers to be audited and processed. Invoices, passenger manifests, lodging records, rooming lists, meal lists, and/or other supporting documentation as are appropriate should be provided with all such travel expense vouchers.
 - l. Any expenses for invited guests will be deducted from the travel expense account. The Athletic Department has the responsibility to recover any expenses paid on behalf of any invited guest. The Athletic Department must have such reimbursement records on file for audit review.
- 2. Transportation and Lodging Expenses for Team Travel Arrangements for charter services must be made by purchase order through the University's Purchasing Officer. Chartering a privately-owned aircraft must be in accordance with the Procurement Code. Team lodging and meal expenses may also be charged to the University when in travel status. This authorization to charge transportation, lodging, and meal expenses only extends to team travel, to include team members and members of the official team party for whom expenses are authorized to be paid by the University.
 - 3. Meal Expenses for Team Travel by the Athletic Department shall be authorized to provide all necessary team meals on an actual expense basis, not to exceed GSA per diem rates – U.S. General Services Administration Per Diem Rates <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates> plus 25%. Due to the irregularity of meal schedules, the DOA Travel PPM-49 daily rate will be the inclusive meal cost calculated on a daily basis. When in travel status, this will include team members and members of the official team party for whom expenses are authorized to be paid by the University. Team meals should be prearranged meals, when appropriate, with a set cost per person. The 75% limitation noted in PPM-49 for the first and last day of travel is not applicable to athletics. The cost of such meals may be charged directly to the University or reimbursed on travel vouchers. All meals are to be paid on an actual cost basis (subject to above PPM-49 limits) and must be documented with an itemized cash register or itemized credit card receipt and a meal list identifying all participants (the team travel roster will satisfy this requirement). The "tear type" receipts are not acceptable for this type of meals. Cash meal allowances provided directly to members of the official travel party during travel status must be supported by statements signed by the individuals receiving the funds.

4. Authorization of Expenses for Team Rooms by the Athletic Department

- a. The Athletic Department negotiates room rates with hotels and strives to get the lowest rate possible for team travel. Negotiated rates are typically flat rates (same rate double or single occupancy) and rarely exceed allowable state rates for double occupancy; however, there are times when the negotiated rate exceeds the allowable state rate for single occupancy.
- b. The Athletic Department shall be authorized to provide rooms for team travel on an actual expense basis when in travel status, not to exceed the per person GSA lodging rate plus 50%. This will include team members and members of the official party for whom expenses are authorized to be paid by the University. The cost of such rooms may be directly charged to the University or reimbursed on the travel expense report. If approved in advance by the President or his or her designee, the lodging

5. Team Entertainment

- a. The Athletic Director is authorized to approve reasonable expenditures for team entertainment when in travel status for road games, to include team members and members of the official team party for whom expenses are authorized to be paid by the University. Local entertainment of team members prior to competition may be approved by the Athletic Director for reasonable entertainment expenditures on game day or the day before the game. Reimbursement cannot be made for souvenir type items.
- b. In no case will more than one entertainment expense be allowed per sports event or game, unless prior approval from the President or his designee has been obtained. All expenses for team entertainment must be supported by itemized receipts and a listing identifying all participants (the official team travel roster will satisfy this requirement). Team entertainment expenditures shall not exceed the NCAA's recommendations.

6. Miscellaneous

- a. Reasonable laundry expenses for cleaning team uniforms will be allowed. Such expenditures must be supported by itemized receipts or other appropriate substantiation.
- b. Reasonable expenses for snacks, pre-game and post-game meals for teams in competition will be allowed and reimbursed on an actual basis, not to exceed GSA rates plus 25% when supported by itemized receipts or appropriate explanation. Pre-game and post-game meals provided as cash meal allowances will be allowed when accompanied by signed statements by the individuals receiving the funds. This statement replaces the need for receipts for cash advances as otherwise required by PPM-49. Meal allowances may not exceed GSA rates plus 25%.

V. VIOLATIONS

Individuals who violate this policy are subject to the following repercussions:

- A.** Ineligible to receive travel advances
- B.** Ineligible to travel
- C.** Full travel advance amount payroll deducted
- D.** Ineligible to receive reimbursement for travel expenses incurred
- E.** Disciplinary actions including but not limited to termination

VI. ACCREDITATION

GSU is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate, baccalaureate, master's, and doctorate degrees. GSU also may offer credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels. Questions about the accreditation of GSU may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website (www.sacscoc.org).

VII. REVISION/REVISED HISTORY

June 5, 2017

March 15, 2022

April 8, 2025

