

2022-2023 Reimbursement Policy for Student Research Grant Expenses

Student researchers may receive grants to cover expenses incurred while conducting authorized research projects if these expenses are approved in advance and comply with the grant intention, Amherst College policies, and IRS regulations. The Office of the Dean of the Faculty as well as the College Controller's Office will review all reimbursement requests for eligibility prior to reimbursement payments. This policy complies with Internal Revenue Service regulations, which provide guidance to ordinary and necessary business expenses. [GSA.gov](https://www.gsa.gov) provides a guide when incurring lodging and meal costs.

It is the responsibility of the *student* incurring the expense to know the rules related to allowable research expenses and to report these in a manner consistent with this policy. Failure to follow this policy and/or incurring costs outside of the policy may result in the expense not being reimbursed.

In some cases, students must have receipts in order to receive reimbursement. For expenditures where procuring a receipt is impossible, students should have a detailed notation of expenditures (date, item, and amount). Please note that students are expected to spend grant funds prudently.

Air, Train, Bus Travel

Students are expected to travel at the lowest logical fare and have receipts for their travel. For electronic tickets, the receipt can be the web page or confirmation letter.

Generally, expenses not considered for reimbursement include but are not limited to:

- tickets for classes other than coach class
- on-board incidental costs, such as movies, alcoholic beverages, etc.
- cancellation penalties for unreasonable changes in plans
- tickets for companions
- reimbursement for frequent flyer miles used
- baggage insurance
- travel protection plan

Taxi/Uber Travel

Receipts are necessary for reasonable costs of ground transportation.

Travel using a personally-owned car

Amherst College reimburses at the mileage rate approved by the [IRS](https://www.irs.gov), currently \$.56 per mile. This rate typically changes annually, but can change more often if conditions dictate.

The cost incurred for parking is eligible for reimbursement and generally requires a receipt.

Costs incurred for tolls are also reimbursable expenses and should include receipts.

Vehicle expenses not considered for reimbursement include but are not limited to:

- fines and penalties associated with speeding tickets or other vehicle infractions
- damage to a vehicle, including damaged tires, vandalism, etc.
- car wash
- personal items stolen from a student's vehicle
- fuel costs in addition to mileage reimbursement

Travel using a rental car

In accordance with [Five College Risk Management Policy](#), a rental car is not authorized for any student under the age of 21. Students over 21 are expected to rent a vehicle at the lowest class necessary for the intended use. Generally, this is a standard-economy or compact vehicle. Students must carefully inspect the car prior to leaving the rental agency. Costs for damages to rental cars are the student's responsibility.

For non-US rentals, students must opt for the rental company's insurance policy for comprehensive costs and collision. Students are expected to refuel rental cars by the most inexpensive means offered to them. This is generally by using local gas stations in the area visited instead of paying the rental agency contracted amount.

Car rental expenses not considered for reimbursement include but are not limited to:

- navigation systems (unless need is clearly demonstrated)
- excessive refueling costs

Travel using an Amherst College-owned "Pool Vehicle"

Amherst College owns and operates various vehicles that can be utilized by students under certain conditions. There are specific policies and procedures dependent on the vehicle needed:

[*Credentialing*](#)

[*Amherst College Vehicle Safety Policy*](#)

[*Amherst College Pool Vehicle Policy*](#)

[*Amherst College Fifteen Passenger Van Policy*](#)

Students are expected to review and understand the full set of policies when utilizing a college-owned vehicle, including the [*Five College insurance/accident policies*](#).

Vehicle expenses not considered for reimbursement include but are not limited to:

- fines and penalties associated with speeding tickets or other infractions
- damage to a vehicle, including damaged tires, vandalism, etc.
- car wash
- personal items stolen from an employees' vehicle
- fuel costs in addition to mileage

Meals Reimbursement Policy

Amherst College will reimburse reasonable expenses of meals and gratuities that comply with IRS

regulations. Additionally, the IRS requires the following information for reimbursement:

- cost, supported by a receipt
- location of the meal
- date of the meal
- description of meal (breakfast, lunch or dinner)

Expenses not considered for reimbursement include but are not limited to:

- tips in excess of 18%
- alcoholic beverages
- snacks and mini-bar items
- food beyond the three meals/day

Lodging Reimbursement Policy

Hotel costs should be kept in the moderate range. To qualify for reimbursement, students should have an itemized hotel invoice and a property address and receipt for an apartment rental.

Expenses not eligible for reimbursement include but are not limited, to:

- rates incurred outside of single occupancy
- upgrades for larger rooms, concierge level, etc.
- movies and entertainment charged to the room
- costs related to health clubs
- unreasonable personal telephone calls
- calls made directly from a hotel room phone since they are generally very expensive
- damages to the hotel room
- snacks, mini-bar items and incidentals such as toiletries
- newspapers/magazines and similar periodicals not directly related to the student's research
- Clothing purchased on a trip
- Gifts for friends and family
- Personal items for daily life—for example, contact lens solution, toothpaste, etc.

Host Meal/Gift

When it is convenient and preferred, a student may stay overnight with family/friends in lieu of a hotel room. In these cases, students can request that the college cover the reasonable cost of a meal/gift in return for such hospitality, but this must be approved in advance and supported by a detailed receipt from the restaurant/vendor. Travelers are eligible for reimbursement for one host meal/gift per trip.

International Travel

Amherst College provides emergency evacuation and repatriation insurance to all travelers, through the [Five College Risk Management AIG/Travel Guard program](#). If a traveler believes that other travel or flight

insurance is needed (for example, the trip has a complex itinerary of several flights through several countries with a high risk of strikes and cancellations), the need and coverage should be approved in advance. Otherwise, students are responsible for trip insurance expenses.

Students whose research requires international travel must include a signed [International Travel Waiver of Liability](#). If students are under 18 years old, both the student and the student's parents must sign the waiver. International travelers must also submit a signed statement indicating registration with [AIG/Travel Guard](#). (Students applying online for Gregory S. Call and ADP funds will find a section in the application requiring registration acknowledgement.) For further information and a link to registration, please see [Five College Risk Management AIG/Travel Guard program](#).

In addition to registering travel through the Five College site, students must register on the [Amherst College Travel Registry](#). Additional information on Health and Emergency Medical Assistance may be found on the [Office of Global Education](#) website.