Information/FAQ’s for Travel Involving Students

Permission forms:

First step, for any school-related event involving students traveling off campus:
- Complete a Student Travel Information Form
  This form is available from Heidi Walker in the Crane Dean’s office, or using the “Information for Crane Faculty” link on the Crane webpage
- The form lists the names of all students traveling, the faculty member(s) sponsoring the trip, the destination, purpose, departure/return time and date, mode of travel, and funding source (if any). The appropriate department chair’s signature is required before the form is submitted.

If the requested trip is approved, the Dean will issue a Student Travel Memo indicating departmental and school endorsement; this will be sent to the sponsoring faculty member, who should distribute it as appropriate to students traveling for their use if the trip involves conflicts with scheduled classes or other obligations.

A note about obligations to scheduled academic commitments:

Only a “College-Sponsored Activity” approved by the President requires faculty members to release students from an expectation of attendance for any registered academic obligation (and even then students are responsible to notify the faculty member at least two weeks in advance of the absence and make up work missed). College-Sponsored Activity approvals are very rare.

Most Crane events involving student travel are not College-Sponsored Activities, but are simply endorsed as worthwhile by the department and Dean. Students are responsible for notifying other faculty members for whom the travel represents a conflict well in advance (again, at least two weeks), and must make up work missed; it is up to the discretion of individual faculty members as to how they will treat such requests. It is hoped that, in a spirit of collegiality, faculty members will work with students in ways that allow them to participate in a reasonable number of such events that are worthwhile to their educational experience.

The Dean will only distribute travel endorsement memos to the entire School by e-mail when the travel involves a very large number of students. In all other cases, it is the responsibility of the sponsoring faculty member and the students involved to notify other faculty members well in advance of the planned trip.

Funding:

Important: if a proposed student trip requires funding, all funding questions should be resolved fully in advance, including what source(s) are involved, how payment will be made, and what documentation is required.

Unless a trip requires no funding or unless funding has already been secured at the departmental level or from some other source, the sponsoring faculty member and/or student travelers should complete a Student Travel Funding Request Form, available from Heidi Walker in the Dean’s office. The Dean then may ask to meet with the sponsoring faculty member and/or students involved.
Travel arrangements should be made directly by the sponsoring faculty member and/or students.

Ms. Walker in the Dean’s Office can assist with the following:
- Information about and requests for state vehicle reservations
- If warranted by the size of the group traveling and authorized by the Dean, inquiries about bus travel (if buses are to be chartered, contract arrangements will be handled in the Dean’s office).
- If warranted by the size of the group traveling and authorized by the Dean, inquiries about group hotel reservations at the destination (if approved, arrangements and payment would then be handled by the Dean’s Office).

The Crane Special Events Coordinator may also, at the Dean’s request, be involved in such arrangements.

About state vehicles: Authorized student drivers may drive state vehicles only if they are in the company of faculty or staff members; “in the company of” can also mean “in a vehicle convoy with.” In some cases it is possible for students who are on the College’s state payroll to be deemed authorized to drive as staff members. Please be explicit about such plans and ask if a student can be authorized to drive.

Border crossings: If a trip involves crossing the international border, the organizer of the trip and individual travelers are responsible to ensure in advance that all travelers have appropriate documentation.

Transporting instruments/equipment: If a trip involves the transportation of College-owned instruments or other equipment, the organizer of the trip must inform the Dean and obtain permission in advance to remove the instruments/equipment from the campus, and is responsible to ensure that everything taken is returned to its proper location in the condition in which it left.

If funding is approved, the organizer should be certain to understand whether it is from a state or Foundation source; if this is not known, ask the person who approved funding. This will inform a number of issues with regard to payment and reimbursement.

Transportation:

See the “Faculty Travel Information/FAQ’s” document; the options and restrictions listed there for various transportation options apply in this case as well. Note that the funding source, whether state or Foundation, has implications for certain travel options (especially airfare; if funded by state sources, airfare must be booked through a state-contracted travel agency and paid with a state travel card in the name of the individual traveler).

Hotels:

See “Faculty Travel Information/FAQ’s” for specifics. Note especially that in-state hotels rates should be within allowable maximums and should be booked using the tax-exempt form. In most cases, hotel stays will be reimbursed to the individuals traveling through receipts, but as noted above in approved circumstances Crane may book hotel stays and pay for them, especially when larger groups are involved.
Meals:

Again, see “Faculty Travel Information/FAQ’s.” Faculty members sponsoring large groups traveling should consult in advance with the Dean’s Office about arrangements for meals, as a number of options need to be considered, in part depending on the funding source.

Note about CSA funding: If funding from the Crane Student Association is involved and approved by CSA, issues related to this must be dealt with through CSA, not the Dean’s Office.

What to do after travel is complete?
Complete a Travel Expense Form (Travel Voucher, http://www.potsdam.edu/offices/purchasing/upload/ReportofTravelExpenses.pdf), if funded by state sources, and/or a Crane Foundation Funded Travel Reimbursement Claim Form (available on the “Information for Crane Faculty” portion of the Crane website), if funded from a Foundation source; then submit clearly organized, dated and labeled receipts, and, if applicable, mileage statements, for all expenses where reimbursement is expected. Submit this material to Heidi Walker and she will forward it for approval and submission. Foundation checks will be available for pick up in the Dean’s office normally a week following the submission of all forms, receipts and documentation (if these are submitted early in the week); state reimbursements are processed through the state system and distributed within approximately 3 weeks.

PLEASE NOTE: If you currently are paid via direct deposit, you will also be reimbursed via direct deposit to the same account as your paycheck. If you receive a paper paycheck, you will be reimbursed via a paper check, mailed directly from Albany to your home address.

In the case of either state or Foundation funding, travel receipts and documentation must be submitted to the Dean’s Office within thirty days of the completion of travel. If a state travel card is authorized to be used for any expenses, documentation must be submitted within five days of the completion of travel.