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Northwestern Engineering

Detailed Expense Report Procedures – ESAM Department Conference Travel

1. Log into the NUPortal at https://nuportal.northwestern.edu/.
2. Click on **Financial** on the left menu bar.
3. Click the **Payments** tab.
4. Click **Create a new Expense Report**.
5. Fill in a brief **Description** that describes the expenses on this report.
6. Select a **Business Purpose** from the drop-down menu. For travel to conferences, select "Professional Development."
7. In the **Comment** box, enter additional details about the expense to enable a reviewer to fully understand the background and nature of the expense. For conference travel, always include the conference title, location and dates of travel.
8. Click on **Accounting Defaults** and enter the chart string. The **Fund**, **Dept**, and **PC Bus Unit** fields are required. Enter "NWUNV" as the value for **PC Bus Unit**. Enter **Project** and **Activity** (←usually "01"). Leave **Program** and **ChartField 1** blank.
   a. Example chart string breakdown → 171-4737000-10004323-01
      i. Fund = 171
      ii. Department = 4737000
      iii. Project = 10004323
      iv. Activity = 01
9. Click **OK** and return to the Expense Report Entry page. There are two methods if you need to split the costs between two or more chart strings:
   a. Percentage: Click on **Accounting Defaults**. Click **Add ChartField Line** for as many chart strings as you wish to add. In the first column you will see a **%** sign. Change to the desired percentage for each chart string. This method applies to the entire expense report.
   b. Amount: You can also change the chart string or enter additional chart strings for individual expense lines. Click on the **Accounting Detail** icon next to the **Billing Type** column. From this new screen, you can edit the chart string for this particular expense. You can also click the **Add ChartField Line** button to split the cost into multiple chart strings. This method allows you to adjust the **Amount** charged to each chart string. Click **OK** and return to the Expense Report Entry page.
10. Select the appropriate **Expenses Supervisor**. The Expenses Supervisor should be your faculty adviser, regardless of the funding source that is being used to reimburse your purchase(s).
11. Select an **Expense Type** from the drop-down menu, enter the **Date** the expense occurred, and enter the **Amount Spent**.
    a. Enter your expenses in chronological order.
    b. If you purchased a conference registration fee or plane ticket, enter the date of the conference or date of travel, respectively. Do not use the date of purchase.

   c. Fill out the **Amount Spent** in terms of US dollars. If you went abroad, please go to www.oanda.com/currency/converter/ and print out the conversation calculator for the date of transaction. Credit card statements that show the purchase in US Dollars may also be submitted as proof of conversion. Write the amount in US Dollars on the receipt if not originally in USD.
   d. If per diem is being used, check with the Department Business Coordinator for instructions.
12. To add additional expense lines, click the **Add** button next to "New Expense" or click the **+** in the right hand column. Repeat step 11 for all expenses.
13. If you are submitting expenses for a group meal, click the icon with two people (add'l attendees) to enter the required information.
    a. Enter **Name** (Last, First), **Company**, and **Title** for each attendee. Your name should be listed first.
    b. Click **+** to add additional attendees as needed. Enter all attendees and print this page to submit with your documentation.
    c. Click **OK** to return to the Expense Report Entry Page.
14. Click on the **Detail** tab and enter a **Description** for each expense type. This should include name of business, destination, or purpose.
    a. Click the **Non-Reimbursable** checkbox for non-reimbursable and pre-paid expenses. Be sure to note the reason an item is non-reimbursable in the **Description**. Pre-paid and non-reimbursable expenses include, but are not limited to, conference fees purchased on a department credit (procurement) card and airfare booked through University-designated Travel Agencies that are directly charged to a chart string.
    b. Do not use the **No Receipt** checkbox. Instead, enter "missing receipt" in **Description** if you cannot produce a receipt.
    c. Be sure to attach payment documentation for any expenses that were pre-paid by the department to your report (e.g., airline ticket, registration fees, etc.).
15. Do not use the **Location** and **Merchant** tabs, unless otherwise instructed.
16. If you stayed at a hotel, the cost of consecutive nights spent at the same hotel should be combined into one expense line.
    a. Do not include meals, room service, internet, or parking fees in this expense line. List each of these expenses on their own separate line. As with hotel expenses, consecutive charges of the same expense type can be aggregated into one line, with the exception of meals. Please list each individual meal in a line of its own.
    b. Ignore the **Ticket Number** field in this tab.
17. If a private automobile was used for travel, click on the **Mileage** tab and enter the **Miles** traveled in whole numbers only.
    a. Effective January 1, 2015, the rate for mileage reimbursement is $0.575 per mile. This covers all fuel, maintenance, insurance, transportation, and operating costs. Fuel costs are included in the per-mile reimbursement rate and are not reimbursed separately for use of privately owned vehicles.
    b. When submitting proof of mileage, you may use Google Maps or MapQuest to calculate the mileage. Please submit only the page that shows (in text) the names of the start and end points as well as the number of miles driven.
18. When complete, click the **Save For Later** button in the bottom left corner. Click **OK** on the new pop-up screen that appears. Also, an expense report may be saved at any time after the first Expense Line has been filled out by clicking **Save For Later**.

19. Once saved, **Check Budget**. Click **OK** on the new pop-up screen that appears. The Budget Checking Status should display as "Valid."
    a. If Budget Check Errors occur, please refer to pages 8-12 of the Common Errors for Expense Transactions training guide at http://cafe.northwestern.edu/documents/training/supplychain/807/CommonErrorsExpenseTransactions.pdf.
20. Click on **Printable View** and print the Expense Report Screen.
21. If you have receipts, click on the **Expense Receipt** tab while still in the **Printable View** page. Print as many as you need to attach all receipts to the Expense Report.
    a. Tape all four sides of each receipt to the Expense Receipt page(s). DO NOT cover any information on the receipt with tape as it will block out information when scanned.
    b. Multiple receipts may be taped to the same page if there is sufficient space, but make sure the Expense Report number is visible. Place receipts on the front side of the page only.
    c. For full-page receipts and other supporting documentation, write the Expense Report # in the top right corner instead of taping them to an Expense Receipt page.
    d. Circle the reimbursable amounts on each receipt in pen or pencil (please remember that sales tax is **not** reimbursable). Do not use highlighter on the receipts, as it causes the ink to fade.
22. Click **Attachments** to scan and upload a copy of your expense report cover page, itemized receipts and supporting documentation. These documents should be attached in a single scan. For conference travel, supporting documentation may include your name badge, a copy of the meeting schedule(s), a printout of your abstract, etc.
23. Ask the Department Business Coordinator to review the hard copy of your finished report before submitting it online. This will speed up the approval process and payment turnaround time.
24. Once your report is in its final form, click **Submit**. A certification message will appear for your consent. Follow the steps to certify your report.
25. Bring the expense report cover page, receipts and supporting documentation to the Department Program Assistant for further processing.

Other Notes:

- Alcohol charges will be reimbursed by the department in very rare cases. Alcohol charges are unallowable on sponsored projects.
- Make a note in the **Comment** box if you are not requesting reimbursement for meals or lodging (e.g., "Meals and hotel room charges were covered by the host from 12/2 – 12/6." **OR** "Meals and hotel charges were included in the conference registration fee.")
- Include explanatory notes in your expense report for special circumstances. *If you are unsure about whether further explanation is needed, check with the Department Business Coordinator.* For instance, if you did not book a direct round-trip flight to and from a conference site, be sure to note this in your report. You should also attach a quote for a direct round-trip flight that has the same departure/return dates and times as your actual flight. You will need to show that your actual flight was less expensive than or comparable in price to that direct round-trip flight.
    - If your actual flight cost more than a direct round-trip flight, up to the amount of the direct round-trip flight will be reimbursed.
    - If you can show that your actual flight was less expensive than a direct round-trip flight, the full amount of your actual ticket can be reimbursed.