

CENTER FOR UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH & SCHOLARSHIP CURAS UNDERGRADUATE TRAVEL AWARD POLICY

Background

Since 2002, Creighton's College of Arts and Sciences has underwritten student travel for scholarly purposes. As of 2015, the Center for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship (CURAS) now serves as the primary source of travel funds for ALL undergraduate students across all schools and colleges. This document outlines how students (in conjunction with support from their faculty mentor) may apply for funding to travel to a meeting/conference to present their scholarly work. Generally speaking, the goal of the following guidelines is to offer the available funds in as flexible a way as possible while still preserving an appropriate measure of accountability.

Guidelines

1. **Individuals Eligible for Support.** Funds may be used to defray covered expenses (see 3 below) for undergraduate students who are traveling to a meeting/conference to present their scholarly work. The undergraduate research/scholarly project must have a faculty mentor that has been involved with the student project. [Faculty members accompanying students may also receive financial support for their travel, but they should apply separately under their own standard travel policy for faculty in their school/college.]
2. **Travel Qualifying for Support.** Students may seek support to travel to any venue in which they will be publicly presenting scholarly work that they have undertaken or contributed to. This provision will be interpreted as liberally as possible, but simply attending a conference as an audience member will not qualify. No travel directly related to the pursuit of a Faculty Led Program Abroad (FLPA) will be supported, though subsequent travel to present the results of research undertaken as part of such an experience is eligible.

Travel funded by CURAS must comply with all relevant policies and procedures of the University. Even where an award has been approved before the travel takes place, reimbursement for some or all participants may be disallowed if it is established that any applicable policy or procedure was violated.

3. **Covered Expenses.** CURAS will reimburse:
 - a. Transportation costs for individuals (e.g., plane tickets) or for groups (e.g., van charges)
 - b. Lodging (e.g., hotel rooms, dorm rooms)
 - c. Meal expenses (excluding alcohol; please provide an itemized receipt)
 - d. Registration fees
 - e. Miscellaneous costs associated with a presentation.

**Note: students are invited to print a poster on the CURAS poster printer for free if their travel request is approved. Please inquire with Dr. Julie Soukup (jksoukup@creighton.edu) for further details.
4. **Application Process.**
 - a. From the process of applying for an award, students should learn about the expectations that grantors have regarding stewardship of their funds. For this reason, all applications for support must be written by the student or students requesting the monies. When a single student will be traveling, she or he should apply individually. When several students will travel to the same event together, they should apply as a group, but each student should sign the application to indicate her or his willingness to accept responsibility.
 - b. Although students will be held to the highest possible standards regarding their use of CURAS funds, it is prudent for CURAS to insist that a faculty member endorse the purpose of their travel as being academically sound. For this reason, each student application must carry the signature of a faculty sponsor who will accept responsibility for working with the students on the logistics and funding of their travel. (This does not necessarily entail that the faculty sponsor will her- or himself travel with the students, though that is often the case.)
 - c. Since the details of eligible travel will vary quite widely, there is no application form to fill out.

Minimally, however, the proposal should include the following items. **It should generally be possible to present all of the required information in one or two single-spaced pages.**

- i. basic information about the event students will be attending (sponsor, location, dates, purpose, invitees)
 - ii. an explanation of each student's role at the event (poster or paper presenter, panelist, officer, organizer)
 - iii. a brief explanation of how the travel is important for the student's research, academic, or career goals.
 - iv. a straightforward budget showing how requested funds will be spent
 - v. a brief discussion of what efforts have been made to keep costs reasonably low and mention of any other sources that the student has approached or will approach for funding.
 - vi. **confirmation that the student's abstract has been accepted to the conference/meeting**
 - vii. signatures of all participating students (see **a** above) and of the faculty sponsor (see **b** above)
- d. Applications should be submitted as soon as all relevant information is available and, except in extraordinary circumstances, at least two weeks before the travel will occur. Inevitably, funding will be made available to eligible applicants on a modified "first come, first serve" basis.
- e. The CURAS Director, who may consult further with the faculty sponsor, will review applications promptly and convey her or his decision to the student and faculty sponsor.
- 5. Obtaining Award Funds.**
- a. **Receipts:** Students and faculty sponsors also share in responsibility for documenting awardee travel in appropriate ways. Students should particularly note that they need to **keep receipts for all expenses paid** in order to be reimbursed for those expenses. **Paper receipts must be submitted in their original paper form. Digital copies cannot be accepted. Receipts must also be itemized (that is, they must include a description of each item/service purchased.)**
 - b. **Conference Photo:** Along with receipts, students must submit a photo of themselves at the conference—e.g. while giving the talk, standing by their poster, etc. This photo may be used on the CURAS website or in other media (Facebook, the CURAS brochure, etc.) to promote undergraduate research at Creighton.
 - c. University policies and procedures provide various ways to cover travel costs (e.g., purchase on a University credit card, budget transfer for van costs, Travel Expense Reports for personal out-of-pocket costs). The CURAS Program Planner will assist awardees in ensuring that all parties comply with the necessary University policies and procedures.