

# Travel Policy Questions and Answers

October 31, 2013

## **General Policy**

### **Why does Canisius need a travel policy?**

Canisius College has established a travel policy to accomplish three main objectives:

1. Create consistent expectations and practices across the college for what constitutes fair, reasonable and appropriate travel procedures and expenditures.
2. Reflect a duty of care for students, faculty and administrators who are traveling or organizing travel for others. The policy ensures that the college is aware of who is traveling and their location. If necessary, The Travel Team, the college's designated travel agency, will notify the college of any risks or emergencies and provide us with the support services needed to take care of travelers in those situations. This is especially important when students and faculty travel to remote locations where there are increased health and safety risks or where language is a barrier.
3. Monitor and manage travel expenditures. Implementing a consistent approval process and booking through a single travel agency gives us a base of information about our travel practices and spending. Partnership with The Travel Team enables the college's travelers to access discounted rates for all forms of transportation and hotels and provides the college a more effective way to monitor travel – a function not available through Banner.

### **What is duty of care?**

In legal terms, “duty of care” refers to the obligations of an employer to its employees, and anyone affiliated with the organization, for their well-being, security and safety.

For Canisius, it is the college's responsibility to establish and monitor the necessary policies and practices to avoid the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm to our faculty, staff and students who are traveling. This is especially of concern for international travelers.

### **Why is the policy being revised now?**

The original policy was developed by a team comprised of frequent travelers and Senior Operating Team (SOT) members, and then vetted by the full SOT and the Deans. After considerable questions and feedback from the Canisius community, the college determined that the policy required revision and clarification.

### **What's new and different since the first time this was announced last fall?**

1. A college-wide travel approval process has been established.
2. The Travel Team website has been modified to include a broader range of hotels and special negotiated rates. It now also sorts results according to lowest price instead of schedule.

3. The recognition of the college's duty of care is a driving purpose of the policy.
4. All means of travel, including train and bus travel, are now available through The Travel Team.
5. The Travel Team fees will no longer be paid from departmental budgets.

**How were these changes made?**

A substantial number of meetings were held with our most frequent travelers and other stakeholders to evaluate the policy and the Concur website. The college worked closely with The Travel Team to make necessary adjustments.

**Does this policy apply to everyone?**

Yes, the policy applies to all students, faculty and staff.

**Does this policy apply to travel regardless of the source of funds (such as student funds, personal resources, agency funds, grants, or endowed funds)?**

Yes, it applies to any Canisius-related travel because the college's duty of care, and therefore legal risk, applies to any Canisius-sponsored travel regardless of the source of funds.

**Are we required to utilize the travel policy for guests such as speakers and applicants? What if they want to make the arrangements themselves?**

It is preferred that Canisius book travel for guests through the Concur website. However, if guests prefer to make the arrangements themselves, they are able to do so. Canisius reimbursement is limited to direct travel and the policy's per diem limits for lodging and meals, unless a contract with a speaker or guest provides otherwise.

**What about personal guests who travel with me?**

A spouse or personal guest may accompany you on your Canisius-sponsored travel; however, any expenses related to their travel must be paid for with a personal credit card. The personal guest's travel can be booked on Concur.

**What if I am the guest of another institution and that institution is paying for the trip?**

If you are traveling in your professional capacity, you are a representative of the College, and your travel is thus covered by the policy. If the other institution insists on your making arrangements through a different method, note that on the authorization form.

**Does the policy require that I use The Travel Team?**

Yes, The Travel Team is the exclusive vendor. Our analysis of the vendors demonstrated that the Travel Team provides us with competitive rates for hotel and transportation, including low-cost air carriers. The Travel Team also has considerable experience in supporting the travel needs of organizations of our size and complexity.

**Will this cost the college more?**

No. There has been significant analysis on our spending, rates, and comparable websites' prices throughout this year. In fact, we found that in aggregate, The Travel Team saves Canisius money.

**What about the fees?**

Booking and service fees from The Travel Team will be paid by the college from a central account and not be charged to individual departments.

**Will using the Travel Team restrict my options?**

No. Modifications have been made to the Concur website to expand options. In fact, utilizing The Travel Team provides the college with access to a wide variety of option not always available elsewhere.

**How do I preserve the previously negotiated rates that I have arranged?**

If such arrangements exist, you should share this information with The Travel Team prior to booking to replicate or possibly improve on those rates.

**If I take groups of students to remote locations and stay in special accommodations such as Jesuit residences, hostels, or with families, can we continue to do this under the policy?**

Yes. You must indicate these types of arrangements when seeking travel approval.

**Planning Travel**

**I'd like to schedule a trip; what do I need to do?**

The new policy requires that all travel be approved in advance by the appropriate Vice President. Individual travelers or those coordinating group travel must complete the Travel Authorization form available on myCanisius.

**Why does my travel request have to be approved at the VP level?**

Vice presidents will approve travel to improve management and oversight of travel and to ensure equity in travel expenditures.

**Is approval required if I am traveling on student funds, personal resources, agency funds, grants, or endowed funds?**

Yes, the policy applies regardless of the source of funding because of the college's duty of care is involved.

**Are there special requirements for traveling internationally?**

All standard policy requirements apply. The travel should be booked through The Travel Team's international agents via their phone line.

### **How is group travel handled under the policy?**

The Concur website can be used for smaller groups and simpler travel. Larger groups, or trips that involve your own knowledge of the destination, trips that are complicated, or where working with an agent would be helpful, call the Travel Team group agent.

### **How do I book my travel arrangements?**

1. Obtain approval for travel by completing the Travel Authorization Form.
2. If you have not established a travel profile, visit [www.Concursolutions.com/registration/register\\_form.asp](http://www.Concursolutions.com/registration/register_form.asp).
3. Book individual and small group travel through the Concur website.
4. If you have a complicated travel itinerary, traveling with a large group, or have an international destination, please contact a Travel Team agent.
5. If you are not sure how to handle your travel or having problems with the website, please contact Online Support Services at 716-332-5055 or toll free at 855-418-8392. At no cost, they will guide you on the best method to complete your arrangements.

For more complete guidelines, refer to the Travel Policy and associated procedures.

### **How do I pay for my travel?**

Frequent travelers will pay all travel expenses with their individual Canisius purchasing cards. Other travelers will book air, train and bus tickets using their respective department's purchasing cards, and pay all other expenses using personal funds to be reimbursed after filing a travel expense report.

### **Can The Travel Team help me with personal leisure travel?**

Yes, The Travel Team is your gateway to Employee Travel Specials via the Canisius Travel Resources page. Employee Travel Specials is a service that offers low rates for booking hotels for vacation travel as well as notification of special offers.

### **If I have other questions, what should I do?**

For other questions, refer to the travel policy on the myCanisius portal under "General Policies." Training sessions will be provided as well.

