

Psychology Graduate Student Travel Funding

January 2026

The department recognizes that conference attendance is important to graduate students' growth as researchers and has allocated funds to help pay for travel costs when they are attending a professional conference. The ability of the department to offer support to graduate students is closely tied to the matching programs available from the Graduate School and from the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences (CSBS).

There are currently two established mechanisms available for graduate students to receive travel funding which includes department support, depending upon activity, and source of support:

- **Graduate School Graduate Student Professional Development Supplement Award (GSPDSA)**
- **CSBS Graduate Travel Award**

Eligibility requirements and department matching funds vary for each mechanism, and are detailed below.

Graduate School Graduate Student Professional Development Supplement Award (GSPDSA). The GSPDSA is available for graduate students in their second year and beyond, who are in good standing, to support expenses associated with an individual professional development activity (i.e., to attend an academic conference or skill-building workshop that supports scholarly goals and career preparation). This award provides up to \$300 to support activity expenses; should the proposed activity include travel, the award may be up to \$500. The department will match the GSPDSA award, up to \$500. Graduate students are eligible to receive one GSPDSA during their graduate career. More information on the GSPDSA may be found here: <https://www.gradschool.utah.edu/funding/professional-development-award/index.php>. The GSPDSA will accept applications during a limited window, typically open for one month only, two months prior to the month that the activity will be held. Applications for the GSPDSA should be submitted to Cindy White (cindy.white@psych.utah.edu) for department approval prior to uploading to the Graduate School portal.

CSBS Graduate Travel Award. The CSBS Travel Award is available to all graduate students in good standing. This award provides students with the opportunity to attend an academic conference; support is provided for FUTURE conference travel only. The department will match the CSBS award, up to \$500. Graduate students may receive only one CSBS award per year, and are eligible to receive two CSBS Travel Awards over the course of their graduate career. Students may apply for the CSBS Travel Award here: <https://csbs.utah.edu/students/grad-travel.php>

The GSPDSA and CSBS Travel Awards provide funding for conference registration, airfare, ground transportation, and hotel accommodation costs only; meal expenses and poster printing costs are not covered. Because of this, the department will cover up to \$50 of the cost of poster printing and up to \$128 for two days of per diem for meals for recipients of either award.

The department will provide funds for a maximum of three conferences where physical travel is involved per graduate student over their graduate career.

The GSPDSA and CSBS Travel Awards are awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis. If a student has applied, in good faith, to either of the two preceding funding options, but does not receive an award because funds from the Graduate School or CSBS have been exhausted, the department will provide up to \$1000 to cover conference-related travel expenses (**this holds for one trip only**).

If a student does not apply for travel support from either the Graduate School or CSBS, OR does not apply within the required time frame and does not receive funds, the department will not provide travel support of any kind.

To petition the department for this last option, please send an email to Cindy White (cindy.white@psych.utah.edu) explaining which of the travel awards have been applied for and the outcome of that application.

Beyond the GSPDSA and CSBS awards, students may find other options for funding through targeted sources linked to their research interests, professional society memberships, etc. If a student applies for and receives support from one of these more “niche” sources, the Department will match that funding, up to \$500.

*****Please note: Rules for obtaining conference travel awards and the funding available from sources such as the Graduate School change frequently. Because of this, department policies regarding travel support are subject to frequent updates. Make sure that you base your travel decisions and applications on the most recent policies and instructions. If you are unsure, contact Cindy White at cindy.white@psych.utah.edu or Angela Newman at angela.newman@psych.utah.edu or the Director of Graduate Studies at cynthia.berg@psych.utah.edu .***

Graduate student travel costs – Direct pay and reimbursement options for funded travel

We want to minimize the financial burden to graduate students for their conference-related travel, so here is a list of best practices for paying for travel subsidized by the department.

Conference Registration

The Department can pay for your conference registration directly. Just reach out to Cindy and she will use her university credit card to pay the registration.

If you choose to pay conference registration yourself, you will need to send Angela the documentation and have her submit for reimbursement using the Concur System after the conference ends.

Airline Tickets

The Department can book and pay for your airline tickets directly. Just reach out to Angela and let her know the details of your trip and she will connect with the university travel agency to book and pay for the tickets.

If you choose to make your airline reservations on your own, you will need to pay the cost yourself and then submit the documentation to Angela for Concur reimbursement after your travel dates. But please be aware of any cancellation policies for tickets purchased from online or discount sites, as typically you cannot be reimbursed for cancellation fees.

Accommodations

The Department can book and pay for your lodging directly. Just reach out to Angela and let her know the details of your trip and where you will be staying and she will connect with the hotel/site to make the reservation and provide credit card information.

If you choose to make your lodging reservations and pay on your own, you will need to submit the documentation to Angela for Concur reimbursement after your travel dates. Even though most hotels will want your credit card info to secure the reservation, they do not typically require payment in advance, so you should not be out-of-pocket for these costs for any substantial length of time. Most hotels also do not charge a fee for cancelled reservations unless it is at the last minute (less than 48 hours from check-in). Airbnb sites generally require upfront payment, so you may be out-of-pocket for quite a while. Please also note that Airbnb charges substantial cancellation fees, and typically you cannot be reimbursed for any such fees.

Poster printing

If the total cost of your poster is \$50 or less, the Department can pay for it directly. Just reach out to Wendy or Cindy and they will use their university credit cards to pay. If the cost is more than \$50 or you wish to pay yourself, you will need to send Angela the receipt for reimbursement after the conference ends.

Please let us know of any questions:

- Angela, angela.newman@psych.utah.edu
- Cindy, cindy.white@psych.utah.edu

****Documentation requirements for ALL travel reimbursements****

Airfare: (1) detailed itinerary to include airline, flight dates, flight numbers, and detailed breakdown of costs, (2) proof of payment (receipt showing credit card used)

Lodging: itemized hotel/airbnb receipt which includes credit card proof of payment

Ground transportation/parking: receipt showing credit card proof of payment

Conference registration: receipt showing credit card proof of payment; if there is a presentation requirement, a copy of the conference program which must include listing of the presentation (or a link to the online version of the program)

Meals: itemized receipt, must also show proof of payment (credit card or cash) – please note: per diem payment is preferable to individual meal reimbursement; the department will not reimburse for alcohol purchased

Poster: receipt showing proof of payment (credit card or cash)

<p>Lodging and transportation taxes are reimbursable. Utah State sales tax paid on any purchase is NOT reimbursable.</p>
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*****Please note: any required Concur expense report fees will be deducted from the overall award amount available (typically \$10 for airfare/lodging booked by Angela; \$40 for airfare/lodging booked independently).***