

[ccapp-students] advice regarding travel expenses

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To: ccapp-postdocs@physics.osu.edu <ccapp-postdocs@groups.asc.ohio-state.edu>; ccapp-students@physics.osu.edu <ccapp-students@groups.asc.ohio-state.edu>;

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Hi all,

Here is some general advice on travel expenses. If your trip is being paid for by someone besides CCAPP, that person may have different opinions, and those should take precedence.

1. On travel authorization, it's wise to estimate the expenses in a conservative way, meaning to estimate high. There is no penalty if you over-estimate, but there can be if you under-estimate. As one detail, I recommend always listing the full per diem amount.
2. On travel expenses, the only part that may require judgment is the per diem expenses, which are for "meals and incidentals." Often, the listed per diem amounts are much more than typical actual costs. For example, in a city like Columbus, where the rate is near \$60/day, I would probably spend \$30--40/day.

Here are the principles I use for my own travel:

I should not lose money by paying for business expenses with personal funds.

I should not make money by getting reimbursed more than I need.

I try to keep costs down but do not deprive myself of reasonable meals in favor of Clif bars, etc.

I estimate my actual costs and request an appropriate amount of per diem to cover those costs.

These practices are fair to me and preserve funds for future trips.

You may wish to follow similar principles. I emphasize that the amount of per diem to request is up to you.

Best regards,
John

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