

Definition of Essential Travel in response to COVID-19

What is essential travel?

Faculty, researchers, graduate students: Essential travel is defined as travel that is required to:

- Preserve the safety of a research subject and cannot be postponed; or
- Preserve the results of a research activity and cannot be postponed.

For faculty, researchers and graduate students, travel to attend professional or educational conferences is defined as non-essential.

Employees in this group with questions about whether specific proposed travel is essential, or seeking approval to engage in essential travel, should confer with their department chair. If the department chair agrees travel should be evaluated as essential the employee should submit a travel request through the online Concur Travel & Expense platform. A justification supporting the essential nature should be included with the request and will be evaluated by all approvers. The President will make the final determination.

Staff (includes MPP's): Staff travel is considered non-essential except when accompanying students on approved essential travel or when not traveling will cause harm to the operations of the university.

Employees in this group seeking approval to travel should confer with their unit Director. If the Director agrees travel should be evaluated as essential the employee should submit a travel request through the online Concur Travel & Expense platform. A justification supporting the essential nature should be included with the request and will be evaluated by all approvers. The President will make the final determination.

Students: Student essential travel is defined as travel for academic credit that is necessary to meet a graduation requirement, cannot be postponed or achieved through an alternative assignment.

Students traveling should confer with their responsible faculty member. The faculty member may recommend a student's travel as essential to the responsible department chair. If the department chair agrees travel should be evaluated as essential the department will assist students in submission of a paper travel request. Supporting documents and approval flow will mirror those of employees noted above, in a paper format.