Combining Business and Personal Travel

General Guidelines
A traveler may be reimbursed for uninterrupted business travel by the most direct route. When a traveler interrupts travel or deviates from the direct route for personal reasons, a reimbursement may not exceed the cost of the most direct route. If the traveler extends the duration of the trip for nonbusiness reasons and the alternate rate is lower than the direct rate for the comparable period, the reimbursement shall be for the lower rate. It is possible that the traveler may combine personal travel with a business trip that would reduce the overall cost to the University. This is acceptable provided the University’s cost is not more than the business portion alone. In the event the traveler leaves the business destination, the University will not pay any expenses at the personal destination.

Documentation Required
The traveler is responsible for documentation to prove that any personal travel did not result in additional costs for the University. The traveler must provide comparable price quotes from either Travel Services Online or from one of the contract travel agencies to document the difference in cost. The comparable quote must be obtained at the same time that the travel reservation is booked. This comparison is necessary to ensure University expenditures comply with federal travel regulations. The documentation must accompany the request for travel settlement. Failure to follow this procedure will require review by the Corporate Controller, which may delay reimbursement and may result in denial of the claim.

Car Rental Involving Personal Use
To be eligible for reimbursement, a rental vehicle must be required for business purposes or be an economical choice to meet business needs. If the personal use of the rental vehicle incurs costs greater than that required for business purposes, the additional cost will be the responsibility of the traveler and will not be reimbursed by the University. To determine the appropriate cost sharing, the traveler should submit price quotes for the cost of car rental for the business portion only. Any rental costs in excess of the quote for business days will be paid by the traveler. If no price quotes are provided for the business portion alone, then the cost will be prorated by day, with only the cost per business day eligible for reimbursement.

A common example would be the use of a rental car for travel between the airport and hotel at one’s destination. In the case of just one traveler, shuttle service or taxi may be more economical, especially when one considers the cost of parking the car at the hotel. With a larger party traveling as a group, then a rental car might be cheaper than the sum of the individual shuttle fares. When the need for the car is not self evident, the traveler must explain the rationale and be aware that a portion of the car rental may be classified as a personal expense.
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Extended Stay to Save Airfare
It is sometimes possible to save airfare by scheduling an additional night's stay in one's travel itinerary. When compared to a normal schedule for the business purpose of the trip, if the documented savings in airfare offsets the increased cost of the trip to be incurred by the University, then the extended stay is acceptable. If the extended stay will not incur additional lodging, meal, or other expense to the University and the airfare is equal to or less than the normal schedule for business purposes, this is also acceptable. If the trip extends beyond the requirements for the business purpose and airfare savings do not compensate for the extension, then the additional expense of the extended trip is not allowable for reimbursement. The traveler may still select to include the personal aspect of the trip, but must assume the additional expense as personal.