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MEMORANDUM

Date: October 8, 2018

To: Myron Dosch, UA Chief Finance Officer

From: Chris Fallen, Chair, Faculty Alliance ^{DS} *CTF*

Subject: Faculty Governance feedback on proposed revisions to UA travel regulations and processes

Thank you for seeking feedback from the UA Faculty Alliance (FA) regarding the proposed changes to travel University Regulations and processes. After internal discussions among FA members and tasking members to seek feedback from their respective faculty senates, FA generally welcomes several of the proposed changes.

However, FA has a few concerns or questions that would be helpful to address before implementing the proposed changes to University Regulation and travel processes:

- 1. Faculty Alliance requests that payment and reimbursement of travel expenses be made as flexible as possible, leaving choice of payment method to the traveler.** Faculty and their students are involved in a wide variety of travel activities in domestic and international locations that may be urban or remote. Mandating use of the UA travel card unless no other options are available will add an extra burdens to the traveler to justify use of a non-UA credit card for travel expenses.
- 2. Faculty Alliance is still not clear on mandated use of a travel agency portal for arrangements in a number of situations.** For example, will combined personal and university travel require the use of two separate booking tools, the agency portal and the traveler's choice portal? If faculty or their students are traveling internationally and must make changes to travel arrangements for disruptions or other reasons, will 24-hour toll-free contact options be available at the UA-mandated travel agency? Faculty that must coordinate travel with external collaborators on restricted funds may need to consider options that are not available in the travel agency portal, so will there be reasonable exceptions in place to its use?
- 3. Will students traveling with or without faculty also be issued travel cards?** It is not uncommon for faculty to lead groups of students to a variety of destinations, and those students often must pay expenses (e.g., ground transportation) independent of the faculty organizer.

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4. **The proposed regulations appear to have a contradiction in the definition of travel status.** The regulations state that a traveler is in travel status when leaving the university or the traveler's residence, then shortly afterward state that travel under 50 miles is not considered being in travel status. For example, Faculty Alliance travelers from Fairbanks once spent nearly an entire day at Fairbanks International Airport waiting for a delayed flight that may never have taken off. Would those travelers been on travel status that day if the flight was eventually cancelled?

In conclusion, Faculty Alliance requests that any changes to travel UA regulations and process be evaluated with respect to, first and foremost, impact on the traveler. Cost savings to UA Statewide administration or university travel offices should have secondary consideration. Of course the optimal situation would maximize both ease of processing for administrative staff as well as for the traveler.

Any changes to travel regulation or process that reduce flexibility of the traveler to arrange, conduct, and finance travel activities will increase the total cost of travel in terms of time and energy spent by faculty and students tasked with advancing the university mission, negating any apparent savings recorded on a balance sheet. Furthermore, most faculty and graduate student travel is paid with external restricted funds and any added burden to justifying one form of payment over another simply discourages externally funded research and creative activities.