

Policy on Travel and Poster Expenses for Medical Students April 23, 2024

Purpose: This policy informs faculty mentors and staff regarding support of travel and poster printing expenses associated with presentations by medical students resulting from summer research under the mentorship of faculty in the Department of Surgery.

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The Department of Surgery is committed to training the next generation of surgeons and encouraging medical students to consider research careers. Therefore, faculty are encouraged to provide mentored summer research opportunities to medical students. The Department of Surgery also encourages students to submit an abstract of their research results to a regional or national meeting. Students may apply for travel awards to support this travel. Travel awards for students attending the following meetings are typically approved; however, funding is not guaranteed and pre-approval prior to travel is required.

- Academic Surgical Congress
- American College of Surgeons Clinical Congress
- American Surgical Association
- Society of Asian Academic Surgeons
- Society of Black Academic Surgery
- Surgical Education Week
- Southern Surgical Association

Students attending other meetings not listed above should apply for funding through the Heersink SOM Physician Scientist Development Office (PSDO) first. If the funding request to PSDO is declined, students may submit a request to the Department of Surgery for other meetings not listed above. Funds may be limited and will be reviewed and approved on a case by case basis.

UAB students who have an abstract accepted for oral or poster presentation at a regional or national meeting are eligible for up to \$1000 in travel reimbursement per calendar year from the Department of Surgery. Non-UAB medical students who were supported by a departmental NIH training grant are also eligible. The abstract must be first-authored by the student and the student must be the presenting author. Students must complete the required travel pre-approval form, abide by UAB travel rules and expense limitations, minimize costs to the extent possible by using most cost effective form or transportation and sharing hotel rooms with other students when possible, obtain prior approval to be excused from class, and submit request for reimbursement within 2 weeks of returning from travel. Travel outside of the continental United States is not allowed.

Expenses exceeding \$1000 will not be reimbursed from Department of Surgery funds. Any overage may be covered by alternative funding held by the mentor, at the mentor's discretion. Students should discuss anticipated overages with their mentor in advance.

Expenses associated with poster printing for presentations at national or local meetings are the responsibility of the mentor.

Prior approval is required and can be requested via the Department of Surgery website.