

# McNair Scholars Travel Guidelines

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### Basic Rules for McNair Supported Travel

- Scholars should make travel request as early as possible – weeks in advance, not days in advance.
- Only McNair staff can review and approve Scholars travel requests.
- McNair staff will make all travel arrangements with the Scholar, but only after the McNair staff and grants officer have approved the travel request.
- Scholars should not register for conferences, book flights, or reserve hotel rooms before or after McNair staff approves a travel request.
- The McNair staff makes every attempt to minimize out of pocket expenses Scholars incur when traveling.
- Review the section on travel in your McNair Scholars Handbook (see Attachment A below).

### Step-by-Step Process for McNair Scholars Travel

Scholars will follow this step-by-step process for preparing for and returning from McNair supported travel.

1. Scholar, in collaboration/discussion with mentor, identifies conference to attend. Remember the priority for funding (see Attachment A). It should be a conference at which the Scholar presents his/her research.
2. When the Scholar and mentor decide to attend conference, the Scholar begins a Request to Travel (RTT) form: <https://honors.unt.edu/mcnair-scholars/forms/travel-request>.
3. Scholars can begin the RTT before you submit an abstract or have your presentation/poster accepted.
4. Beginning the RTT starts the discussion process with McNair staff about traveling.
5. Before McNair staff can approve the travel, the Scholar must upload to the RTT a copy of the abstract submitted and the notification of acceptance from the conference.
6. The McNair staff completes the RTT and asks the Scholar to come in to sign the paper Travel Budget Authorization (TBA) form.

7. When the Scholar and the McNair staff have signed the TBA, the McNair staff forwards the TBA to the grants officer for review and final approval, and the TBA returns to the McNair staff. This approval means that grant funds can be used for the travel.
8. McNair staff then notifies the Scholar of the approval and asks the Scholar to make appointment to work with Rosa to make travel arrangements, pay registration, book hotel, etc.
9. The Scholar is now ready to and has the responsibility for completing the travel.
10. Upon return from travel, the School should meet with Rosa as soon as possible to submit paperwork (e.g., receipts) for her to prepare the travel voucher, which sets in motion reimbursement to the Scholar for out of pocket expenses.
11. Before the reimbursement can be processed, the Scholar must complete the Travel Report: <https://honors.unt.edu/mcnair-scholars/forms/travel-report>.

## Final Considerations for McNair Supported Travel

- Scholars and the McNair staff are the stewards of McNair grant funds.
- Scholars should consider the funds their own and spend accordingly.
- Well-managed funds mean more funds available for more Scholars.
- Use shared transportation services (e.g., shared shuttles to and from airport; public transportation, etc.) whenever possible.
- General rule: Do not use of ride hailing services (Lyft, Uber, Taxis) since these are more expensive than shared/public transportation. **Exceptions to this general rule can be made for safety, etc.**
- You are allowed per diem (i.e., a dollar amount daily) for food expenses. This is one of the controllable expenses when you travel.

## Attachment A: Travel Information from Scholars Handbook

### Section D. Travel

You should seek opportunities to participate in educational and scholarly events that will enhance your knowledge of graduate education, provide experience in presenting your research, and allow you to network with faculty, researchers, and students involved with graduate education nationwide. Mentors should inform you about special events that foster scholarly development and networking opportunities.

The program can cover part or all of expenses to special events that directly relate to the purposes and objectives of the UNT McNair Scholars Program. The McNair Program has a procedure for requesting travel support, arranging travel arrangements, and reporting your travel once completed. You must meet with the McNair Director for travel approval. We encourage you to start travel planning as early as you can to get the best prices for registrations, flights, hotels, etc.

### Eligibility for Travel

The Director approves travel requests, in the following priority order, to scholars planning to:

1. *Present* research at a professional conference
2. *Present* at a McNair conference
3. *Attend* a professional conference (this is on a case by case basis and the request must come from your mentor)
4. *Visit* a prospective university for graduate school or to interview for a graduate program. The availability of funds may constrain the support for such travel. Thus, you may have to provide your own food, lodging, and other expenses

## Requirements and Expectations for Travel

You are all ambassadors of the UNT McNair Scholars Program. As such, you must always conduct yourself in a professional manner. Although the following travel information concerns scholars, mentors should become familiar with them to help you prioritize your travel.

Before you travel, you must:

- Inquire about various events scheduled and dress accordingly
- Be prepared to present research
- Seek the guidance of mentors, McNair staff, and senior scholars
- Follow program travel procedures as described in McNair travel information

When attending professional conferences, you must:

- Attend all scheduled conference sessions and meetings
- Network and establish contact with professionals in your field: faculty, administrators, fellow students, and staff from participating institutions

When presenting your research, you must:

- Prepare for your presentations by practicing with mentors, peers, and/or staff to get feedback and constructive criticism
- Take multiple copies of oral presentation (flash drive, cd, email to self, etc.)
- Arrive at the site early to familiarize yourself with the room and test the audio-visual equipment if needed

When traveling to visit prospective graduate programs or to interview, you must:

- Coordinate your plans with the Director
- Seek your mentors' advice, names of contact persons, and opinions about the programs
- Read about the institutions you plan to visit
- Read articles published by prospective major professors and other faculty
- Contact the Office of Graduate Admissions and the department of your choice to schedule meetings with the chair, faculty, administrators, financial aid officials, and graduate students
- Prepare an interview portfolio, including statement of purpose, transcripts, vitae, publication or writing samples, GRE scores, and appropriate questions for/about the graduate program