

First Year Seminar Funding Manual – Version 3.1

Two funding mechanisms are available to support First Year Seminars (FYS). The first section of the manual describes Hospitality Funds and the second section describes Course Enhancement Funds. The final sections describe the procedures for obtaining and managing Course Enhancement Funds and the reimbursement procedures for Hospitality Funds. ***Please read this entire document before you spend FYS funds. Knowledge of the relevant procedures and constraints can save you, your department, and the FYS office considerable trouble!***

I. Hospitality Funds

The primary mission of the FYS program is to build and sustain a vibrant campus-based educational community committed to the success of first year students. To promote contact between faculty and students, we can provide faculty with hospitality funds of up to \$100 to offset the cost of expenses incurred while dining with students or otherwise meeting informally outside the classroom. Our expectation is that these funds will be used to support events that include the entire class. Hospitality funds cannot be used to purchase alcoholic beverages and should not be used for the purchase of course supplies or other materials that would be more appropriately considered an expense covered by course enhancement funds (as described below).

Instructors do not have to apply in advance for hospitality funds, but should note that reimbursement requests must be submitted to the First Year Seminar Office by the instructor of record using the Hospitality Award Reimbursement Form by the last day of exams for the semester in which the FYS was offered. We can only make reimbursements to instructors and not to students. The reimbursement form must include a list of the students who attended the hospitality event and receipts for all expenditures. Receipts for credit card reimbursements must show the amount paid, the last four digits of the credit card used, and ideally a balance due of \$0.00. If a credit card receipt is not available, a credit card statement must be provided.

II. Course Enhancement Funds

FYS allow students to focus on how scholars pose problems, discover solutions, resolve controversies, and evaluate knowledge. A second important aspect is that FYS encourage students to produce original research and creative activities. Finally, many FYS encompass some degree of hands-on engagement with a phenomenon (e.g., an event, a place, an activity). Limited financial resources are available to support these goals. Specifically, instructors can receive awards of up to \$750 per course to pay for special events or activities associated with a FYS. Examples of expenses covered by Course Enhancement Awards include tickets to events, short-

term licensure of software, rental of performance space, transportation, and purchase of unusual course-related supplies.

Limitations on the use of FYS funds arise due to various legal constraints on expenditures; University regulations on payments to faculty, staff, and students; some practical concerns; and policies that have emerged in the FYS Program as best practice. Specifically:

1. There is an expectation that the expenditure of these funds will benefit all of the students in the FYS, but this constraint can be interpreted broadly.
2. The purchase of equipment is not supported because of issues related to ownership of the equipment at the conclusion of the FYS. Exceptions include course-specific equipment that is stored and maintained by the instructor or the relevant department for use in a recurring FYS.
3. Due to recent changes in the rules for disbursements paid to independent contractors, course enhancement funds cannot be used to pay honoraria to guest lecturers.
4. Given the availability of hospitality funds to offset the cost of expenses incurred while dining with students or otherwise meeting informally outside the classroom, course enhancement funds are not used to pay for meals except in circumstances in which meals are an integral aspect of a course-related event.
5. Any requests for rental space must be limited to the UNC campus. In most cases, course enhancement funds can be used to provide appropriate security, audio-visual support, or to cover other peripheral expenses associate with a course-relevant event.
6. Skilled labor can be reimbursed in some circumstances, but State laws and University policy impose strict constraints on the use of FYS funds to pay salary, particularly to undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, or staff.
7. FYS funds cannot be used to pay for any form of gift card.
8. UNC strongly recommends that vehicles be rented through the UNC Motor pool (962-6676 - <http://www.fac.unc.edu/>), which is much less expensive than commercial vendors. This may entail renting two vans to accommodate an entire class, but this would still be much less expensive than renting through a commercial vendor. The most

problematic issue can be finding appropriate drivers. In certain instances UNC Travel Services (962-0210) allows instructors to rent a vehicle from an outside vendor. For example, permissions have been granted when an appropriate state vehicle was not available, when the driver would not be a state employee, or due to the logistics of pick up and drop off, but this permission must be received in advance. The state is "self insured", so do not purchase additional insurance if the driver is a state employee. Additional insurance can be reimbursed if the driver is not a state employee.

9. Discounted tickets can be purchased for shows at the PlayMakers Repertory Company. For a listing of productions, see <http://www.playmakersrep.org/>. To obtain discounted tickets, contact the Group Sales coordinator or check the group sale information page: <http://www.playmakersrep.org/tickets/groupsales.aspx>

III. Obtaining and Managing Course Enhancement Funds

The steps should be followed in the process of obtaining and managing FYS Course Enhancement Funds:

1. Complete a Course Enhancement Award Application to describe the proposed activity, how the activity will be integrated into the course content, how the funds will enhance the course, and to provide a detailed budget outlining the proposed use of Course Enhancement Funds.
2. Ask the appropriate administrator in your department to review your Course Enhancement Award Application, and particularly your plans for expending funds, to make sure that University and Departmental guidelines are being followed. Add this administrator's name, e-mail address, and telephone number to the application so that we have a contact person for the transfer of funds.
3. Submit the Course Enhancement Application to Associate Dean Steve Reznick (reznick@unc.edu) by August 1, September 1, or October 1 for fall FYS funds and December 1, January 1, and February 1 for spring FYS funds.
4. You will be notified as soon as possible regarding whether your Course Enhancement Award Application has been approved. If your Application is approved, the requested funds will be transferred to your department within the first few weeks of the semester, and you will be expected to follow departmental and University procedures for

managing expenses and reimbursements. If your plan for Course Enhancement expenditures changes, please submit a revised Course Enhancement Award Application before spending any transferred funds.

5. If circumstances necessitate a change in your budget, a modified budget must be submitted before funds are expended in order to insure that expenditures are appropriate for the trust fund account that is being used.
6. By the end of the semester, submit a brief report to Associate Dean Steve Reznick (reznick@unc.edu) describing how the Course Enhancement Funds were used. Photographs of FYS-related events are always appreciated.
7. If the unspent balance for your Course Enhancement Award is greater than \$50, your department must return the unspent funds to the First Year Seminar account.

IV. Reimbursement Procedures for Hospitality Funds

There are five common methods of purchase that can be reimbursed, and each must be accompanied by a completed Hospitality Reimbursement Form:

1. Credit Card Purchase – The receipt should show a zero balance due and the last four digits of the credit card number. If the receipt does not show a zero balance, a copy of the credit card statement that shows this transaction must be attached to the receipt.
2. Check Purchase – The receipt should show a zero balance due. If it does not, a copy of the canceled check or the checking account statement showing the relevant transaction must be submitted.
3. Cash Purchase – The receipt should show a zero balance, or at least must be stamped as paid.
4. Account Purchases – In some instances departments have accounts with vendors that allow UNC to pay the invoice directly to an approved vendor. For these purchases, the invoice and receiving document must be provided. If there is no receiving document, the award recipient must submit a memo stating that the item was received.

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5. Departmental Reimbursements – In some instances, departments can pay expenses, and a correcting journal entry can be used to transfer the charge to First Year Seminar account. A departmental accounting technician should contact FYS Accounting Technician Randy Medlin (rmedlin@email.unc.edu) to discuss this.