In keeping with University policy, the costs incurred for group meetings/group meals should be prudent, reasonable, and in the best interest of the University. These charges should have a valid business purpose that can be justified under audit and public scrutiny. As stewards of University funds, which in most cases, are derived from taxpayer and tuition dollars, it is important to think about whether an expense is reasonable as well as the impact it could have on public perception across Departments, the University and local communities.

An internal College guideline for Travel and Entertainment related expenses was developed to further clarify University Policy FN10, <http://guru.psu.edu/policies/FN10.html>. These guidelines specifically address the area of Group Meal expenses to more consistently clarify the allowability of certain expenditures across the College.

***GROUP MEALS:***

After benchmarking with other Colleges across the University, the following guidelines will be used to determine allowable Group Meal expenditures…

* The attendance of the group meal will be limited to 4 individuals,
  + Attendance will include one guest that is not a University employee.
  + Group meal expenses will be allowable up to a maximum of the current State College per diem rate of $56/per person for a total of $224
    - **The maximum allowance includes tips**.
    - **If the cost of the meal is over the maximum allowance, a payroll deduction will be required**.
* Costs for alcoholic beverages consumed during a group meal must include one guest that is not a University employee
  + - Must not exceed an average of 2 drinks or $25 per person
    - Must be charged to OGE funds
    - Alcoholic Beverages should not be served or ordered prior to 3pm on a business day (Monday – Friday)
    - **The maximum allowance of $25/person includes tips**
    - **If the cost of the alcohol is over the maximum allowance, a payroll deduction will be required**.
  + Employee only group meals will require prior approval by the Financial Officer
  + Employees travelling together is not a valid business reason for a group meal, each individual is required to claim meal per diem
* Any exceptions to these guidelines must be pre-approved in writing by the Financial Officer
* Alcohol in lieu of group meals is prohibited and will be considered a personal expense.

The criteria stated above will be applied to all University funding where group meals are allowable, including gift (OGE)/restricted funds.