

## Travel Solution FAQ's - Christopherson Business Travel

**Update 4/27/15** – please note the travel solution is currently in a pilot status and not yet available to the entire University.

Q: When will I be able to use Christopherson Business Travel?

A: A few departments have been identified to pilot Christopherson Business Travel. Additional departments will be added over time. The travel solution is being extensively piloted before being rolled out to the University community to ensure that both the full service travel agent bookings and the online bookings are optimized for the University traveling community and support staff.

Q: What is the overall plan?

A: By creating a strategic sourcing program for travel, the University can negotiate better rates than an individual traveler can obtain. With an integrated travel and expense management system, expenses can be integrated to the Integrated System Accounts Payable module electronically, reducing time spent filling out paper forms and processing receipts. These changes enable time and funds to be reallocated to the University's core mission activities of teaching, research, and scholarship and support the University's strategic priorities.

Q: Why use Christopherson instead of another travel agency with whom you may have a preexisting relationship?

A: Based on conversations with over 300 faculty and staff at the University about their travel needs, extensive research in 'best of breed' travel solutions, and numerous discussions with UVA's higher education peers, we selected Christopherson Business Travel as the best solution for the University's travel program. Christopherson handles a large portion of higher education travel for institutions similar to ours. Christopherson has dedicated travel agents versed in our specific travel policies; those same policies are built into the self-service online booking tool as well. Using Christopherson to book travel, you can utilize the discounts UVA has negotiated with preferred travel partners. As the travel volume booked through Christopherson Business Travel grows, further vendor discounts will be available. This strategic sourcing program will provide financial resources to be used to help offset the ever increasing costs of travel. Finally, Christopherson Business Travel is a SWaM (Small/Woman/Minority) vendor.

Q: Is use of the booking solution required?

A: The implementation and transition plan is still under development, and rollout decisions will be informed by the pilot program. University leadership is closely monitoring the pilot program to ensure that the University community receives maximum benefit from a strategically sourced and managed travel program. Consider the following benefits of using the solution:

- Christopherson provides real time access to all available flights and fares through a single on-line resource for booking airfare, lodging and rental car in the same reservation.

- Christopherson retains unused ticket information for future travel.
- Christopherson provides exclusive access to negotiated airline discounts with preferred carriers, negotiated hotel discounts, and discount rental car rates. These discounts are not available through other agencies, internet sites, or airline web sites.
- Tickets can be voided within 24 hours of purchase with no airline penalties.
- When flights are changed, cancelled, or otherwise delayed, Christopherson provides 24/7 support. Christopherson will proactively contact travelers when weather/risk related events occur to make alternative travel arrangements or assist with required ground services such as hotels and transportation.
- By booking through Christopherson, the University will have your travel information available in case of an emergency (such as a natural disaster or political upheaval at in your travel destination) and can help coordinate assistance.

Q: Will changes to travel policies and procedures and implementation of the travel booking solution apply to the Medical Center?

A: No, Christopherson Business Travel is currently only available for University travel. Travel policies and procedures for the Academic division differ from those for the Medical Center.

Q: When booking a hotel stay on a Pcard with the hotel restriction lifted, does the traveler need to have it in hand at the hotel?

A: Most hotels require that the card be present at check in. To learn if the hotel will require this, please contact your hotel. You may visit the [University Purchasing Card webpage](#) for instructions lifting the hotel restrictions.

Q: Will I be able to book group or Athletic travel through the system?

A: Yes, Christopherson Business Travel has extensive experience in group travel for higher education, including team travel. Call a Christopherson agent directly rather than book online to make sure that you receive the best service possible. Christopherson also provides complete meeting planning services.

Q: Will I be able to direct bill my airfare cost to the University in Christopherson Business Travel?

A: Yes, you may use your Pcard. While the preferred method of payment for University related travel remains the Pcard, you may also use your own credit card and seek reimbursement after the trip is completed.

Q: Can I book conference hotels in this tool?

A: Most hotels have negotiated specific rates for conferences that will not be available in the online booking tool. You may either call Christopherson Business Travel and request that an agent book the hotel conference rate for you and pay a booking fee or book directly with the hotel.

Q: Will I be able to book travel for someone other than myself using the online booking tool?

A: Yes, that is a benefit of using the booking tool. You can book as a delegate of someone else (a UVA employee) and you can book guest travel.

Q: Will I be able to book air/lodging/rental car/rail through the online tool?

A: Yes, Christopherson Business Travel has the ability to book airfare, lodging, rental cars, and rail tickets in the tool.

Q: If we no longer need a written explanation for expense reimbursement requests submitted after 30 days, are you still checking to see if we submit multiple requests after 30 days?

A: Yes, we are still monitoring that.

Q: Will I be able to book personal travel through Christopherson Business Travel?

A: No, this tool is only for University related business travel. However, you will be able to coordinate additional travelers within the tool, if needed (such as when traveling with a spouse/child or adding additional vacation days on to the beginning or end of the trip).

Q: What if I want to use my affinity/loyalty programs for booking and earning miles?

A: You can absolutely enter your program information into the Christopherson Business Travel tool and earn frequent flier miles/credit for booking with your preferred hotel chains. The booking tool will save that information under your profile so that you do not have to enter it every time.

Q: How was Christopherson Business Travel chosen as the vendor for University travel?

A: Procurement and Supplier Diversity Services, in partnership with Organizational Excellence, worked with a collaborative, cross-functional team of representatives from several schools and units. This team engaged with 40 different focus groups, engaging over 300 faculty and staff, to gain insight into various traveler and support staff needs. With this information, the team solicited information from several travel management companies (from local vendors all the way to industry leaders) and selected Christopherson Business Travel as the firm that could meet the University's travel needs.

Q: Will I have to get preapprovals for travel?

A: No, preapprovals are not required. However, international travel requires prior review by [The Office of Export Controls](#).

Q: Will all hotels/airlines be in the online tool for booking or will just the ones with negotiated rates?

A: All hotels and airlines in the Global Distribution System (GDS) will be shown in Christopherson Business Travel's online booking tool. This is the same information that you would see in Orbitz or Expedia. As we capture more information about the University's business travel spend, we will be able to use that data to negotiate better rates at preferred vendors. Those preferred vendors will be labeled as such but you will still have the opportunity

to book with any vendor in the system. Some international hotels or airlines may not be in the online tool. You can either call the Christopherson Business Travel's dedicated agents for help booking with those vendors or you can do that independently.

Q: Will the airfare or lodging be charged directly to a PATEO?

A: No, that information will not be linked in the booking tool. You are encouraged to use a Pcard to avoid out of pocket expenses.

Q: Will the online booking tool show Southwest and Jetblue flights?

A: Yes.