

## Keough Implementation of University Spending Guidelines Effective September 19, 2025

The following document is intended to provide clarification on how the Keough School is implementing the most recent [University spending guidelines](#). The guidelines are effective immediately and it is the responsibility of every Keough School employee to familiarize themselves with the content below and any FAQs that will be shared in the near future. The guidelines apply to all expenses, **regardless of the source of funding**.

The following are the highlights and main changes:

- Meals/coffee between employees will be limited to organized programs, with specific agenda (e.g. mentoring of junior faculty and visiting scholars.) Hosting of new faculty or visitors should be moderate and coordinated.
- Several aspects around the organization of events and hosting of guests are now regimented. Event planners must therefore be contacted as soon as possible when planning such activity, and certainly before any commitments are made.
- Spending on milestone recognition, social and team-building activities is limited. We are all called to recognize each other in other creative ways.

Questions regarding the guidelines should be sent to the business manager of the unit, to the director of an institute or center, or to the associate director of finance.

	New University Guideline	Keough-Specific Guidance
	<b>Academic Research and Scholarship:</b>	
I.	● Research activities supported by extramural funding should continue as planned, including travel and convenings. Such activities must adhere to the sponsor's guidelines.	If an activity is funded by a combination of extramural (grants and contracts) and internal funding (endowment, gifts, unrestricted,) and if the sponsor guidelines are less restrictive than the University's, the University guidelines will prevail.
II.	● Internally-funded support for research and scholarship is also generally encouraged, but is subject to review based on the guidelines below.	

<p>III.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scholarly convenings are structured gatherings designed to advance academic inquiry, present scholarly work, foster collaboration, and translate research into practice. Such convenings, where costs are expected to exceed \$25,000 and are not funded with extramural support, should be approved by the relevant dean, associate provost, vice president, or their delegate.</li> </ul>	<p>Event coordinators share event planning through a consolidated list. In addition, a <a href="#">special request form</a> is implemented to capture basic information around events that require special approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget expected to exceed \$25K</li> <li>Honoraria above \$2K</li> <li>Serving of alcohol</li> <li>Business class for distinguished guest</li> <li>Guests/topics require special review/security provisions</li> </ul> <p>The list is reviewed periodically by the Dean; the Keough School Program Director for Event Strategy will facilitate the approval process.</p>
	<p><b>Convenings:</b></p>	
<p>IV.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gatherings or events for fundraising purposes are allowed only with the approval of the relevant vice president or dean (or their delegate) and the vice president for university relations.</li> </ul>	<p>No change - All fundraising gatherings, events or trips must be discussed with the Keough School Academic Advancement Director (Gavin McGuire), and approved by the Dean.</p>
<p>V.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other non-scholarly events over \$10,000 should be approved by the relevant dean or vice president (or their delegate) and approved by an executive officer (or their delegate) if over \$25,000.</li> </ul>	<p>Event coordinators share event planning through a consolidated list. In addition, a <a href="#">special request form</a> is implemented to capture basic information around events that require special approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget expected to exceed \$10K</li> <li>Honoraria above \$2K</li> <li>Serving of alcohol</li> <li>Business class for distinguished guest</li> <li>Guests/topics require special review/security provisions</li> </ul> <p>The list is reviewed periodically by the Dean; if over \$25K, the request will be forwarded to the Provost Office; the Keough School Program Director for Event Strategy will facilitate the approval process.</p>
<p>VI.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The importance of unit/division retreats and meetings are recognized. Retreats, until further notice, should not involve overnight stays at a hotel, and organizers should adhere to the meal limits below.</li> </ul>	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keough School Town Halls</li> <li>Staff retreats</li> <li>Faculty retreats</li> </ul>

VII.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In general, units should limit the number of university-sponsored employee celebratory events, including award luncheons, holiday events, tailgates, etc. These events should not exceed three per academic year at the division level.</li> </ul>	<p>The following large group events are approved:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Keough School Tailgate (Sept);</li> <li>2. Keough School holiday celebration (Dec);</li> <li>3. Keough School recognition/award celebration (May).</li> </ol> <p>In addition, each unit may plan one additional event for the 2025-26 year. This event would be considered one of the up to three annual gatherings mentioned in Item XII below.</p>
<b>Other Hospitality and Entertainment:</b>		
VIII.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The inclusion of alcohol at events should be minimal and appropriate to the occasion. Deans, associate provosts or vice presidents (or their delegates) should approve the inclusion of alcohol for receptions and other events.</li> </ul>	<p>Event coordinators will share their request for special approval via the <a href="#">special request form</a>.. The Keough School Program Director for Event Strategy will facilitate the approval process.</p>
IX.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Meals between employees will not be reimbursed unless they are part of an organized event. For example, dinner, lunch, and coffee meetings between a few employees, not part of an approved event, should be considered personal expenses.</li> </ul>	<p>Examples of allowed meal reimbursement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Organized lunch meeting for large groups;</li> <li>● One-on-one lunch in context of junior faculty mentoring program; academic deans and I/C directors' mentorship of faculty and staff</li> <li>● Staff-wide professional development day, if a meal is needed.</li> </ul>
X.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● For events approved by the respective dean or vice president at which the University or University unit serves as host OR when entertaining a business guest or guests, maximum thresholds per attendee for meals are: \$25 per person for breakfast, \$50 for lunch, and \$100 for dinner. Vice presidents, deans, and chairs, or delegates of the unit, may incur meal expenses of up to \$150 per person to recruit or host distinguished guests. These limits are inclusive of food, alcoholic beverages, labor, sales tax, service charges, and delivery fees. Again, these are maximum thresholds; every effort should be made to stay under these caps. If you travel to a city where the government per diem exceeds these caps, the government limits will apply.</li> </ul>	<p>Categorization of 'distinguished' (and limit to \$150) is at the discretion of the director of an institute or center, or the director of administration and finance.</p> <p>When organizing meals for recruits or distinguished guests, the organizer will work with local restaurants to ensure, to the extent possible, that acceptable parameters are set for the reservation (e.g. pre-set menu, pre-order of wine).</p> <p>The Notre Dame employee serving as host (attending the meal) will familiarize themselves</p>

		with the forthcoming Keough School Guidelines for Hosts.
XI.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Receptions without a full meal should not exceed \$50/person.</li> </ul>	Event coordinators will adjust reception plans to ensure the reception remains within the allowed limits.
XII.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Informal gatherings within departments or teams for purposes of team-building, or to celebrate personal milestones—e.g., weddings, birthdays, births, or dissertation defenses—should be limited in number and may not exceed \$15/person.</li> </ul>	<p>Units are allowed to plan small activities for students (e.g. study breaks) or community-building events (e.g. seasonal celebrations-Halloween/Day of the Dead).</p> <p>Each unit will hold no more than one other large gathering in fall, spring and summer (a total of 3 per year). Staff retirement celebration is included in this number, as well as the one informal gathering mentioned in Item VII above.</p> <p>Student-related celebrations should be organized by the respective academic program.</p>
XIII.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Retirement celebrations are allowable but should adhere to the above mentioned per-person entertainment limits. Group faculty promotional celebrations in the units at the end of the year are allowable.</li> </ul>	Faculty retirements will only be celebrated during the May Keough School gathering.
XIV.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Holiday events should adhere to the above per-person entertainment limits. Divisions should better coordinate and in some cases consolidate holiday events. For example, units should not plan a holiday party if there is a division-level holiday party.</li> </ul>	The Keough School holiday party will be the only celebration organized. No 'holiday' gifts should be purchased using University funds.
	<b>Travel:</b>	
XV.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The use of business and first class for domestic travel is not permitted. A dean or vice president(or their delegate) should review any requests for international business class travel.</li> </ul>	<p>Director of Administration and Finance will review requests and only approve requests from ND employees with a special circumstance (e.g. medical condition). Requests on behalf of distinguished guests should be submitted as part of the <a href="#">special request form</a>.</p>

XVI.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Travel for fundraising purposes is allowed only with the approval of Development and the associated vice president, dean, or academic advancement director.</li> </ul>	No change - The dean should approve any fundraising-related travel.
	<b>Other:</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Generally, the purchase of branded goods (swag) is paused. Branded gifts for distinguished guests, recruitment purposes or faculty/staff/student onboarding events are allowable, but should be reasonable in cost. A dean or vice president (or their delegate) should approve any exceptions.</li> </ul>	All branded goods (swag) will be reviewed and approved by the director of communications and marketing. This includes proposals to purchase swag for institutes, programs, or events.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Units should transition discretionary printed materials, such as annual reports and Christmas cards, to electronic versions where possible.</li> </ul>	The communications professionals will determine a consistent approach for the Keough School. Printed annual reports or christmas cards should not be distributed to ND employees (e.g. copy of annual report sent to University leadership; Christmas cards sent to list of colleagues).
	Note: If an individual unit has limits or thresholds below what is articulated here, individuals should abide by their unit guidance.	