DSAS Food & Entertainment Authority Policies

August 2025

UC SANTA CRUZ | Division of Student Affairs and Success

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Financial Stewardship

Financial stewardship is defined as the responsibility for managing University resources wisely and executing these responsibilities with integrity and ethical conduct. These resources include time, money, people and property. When UCOP employees **manage public resources** in an efficient, economical and ethical manner, the result will be better achievement of the University's overall missions of teaching, research and public service.

Stewardship responsibilities encompass total oversight of the resources assigned to each employee as well as those resources available for use. Financial stewardship responsibilities include:

1. Spending money wisely and monitoring expenditures as if they were your own.
2. Purchasing goods and services wisely.
3. Helping others in their financial stewardship efforts.
4. Being accountable for your actions, equipment, funding and time.
5. Encouraging others to be good stewards of their resources.

Entertainment

What is Entertainment?

In the University of California's policy BUS-79, "entertainment" refers specifically to expenses incurred for events that are connected to university business activities. Overall, entertainment expenses under BUS-79 must strictly align with the university's operational and outreach goals, excluding purely personal or informal employee events. Key points include:

- **Definition & Purpose**: Entertainment involves costs for meals, refreshments, and related services like renting a room or hiring labor. It must support the university's mission through business-related events aimed at activities such as public service, teaching, research, or donor engagement

- **Guest-Host Relationship**: A fundamental component of what qualifies as entertainment is the presence of a guest-host relationship. Official guests should attend at the invitation of a university host, and the event should serve a valid business purpose, which is essential for the expenditure to be considered allowable

- **Documentation & Compliance**: The policy mandates detailed documentation to demonstrate how the expense aligns with university objectives. This is critical for expense approval, with the need to show the university-related necessity of the event

- **Exclusions**: Not every social gathering or meeting qualifies. For instance, routine meals among employees without a guest or a clear business justification do not count. Similarly, personal celebrations like birthdays or informal social events are not reimbursable under this policy

Business Meetings and Entertainment

Employee Meetings: The University may cover or reimburse meal and light refreshment expenses for business meetings with University employees, as long as:

1. Expenses occur infrequently (BUS-90-V.B.4)
   - Meals should be limited to no more than one a month or twelve time per year, per group
   - Light refreshments are limited to no more than twice per month, per group
2. Expenses benefit the University and are appropriate to the purpose and nature of the business meeting
   - University-wide meetings of functional offices
   - Location based meetings (Deans, Directors, Academic Senate)
   - Formal Trainings/Conferences
   - University-appointed/hosted: Committees, sponsored meetings of learned society's, professional associations
   - Extended planning meetings and workgroups

Programmatic Activities: The University may provide meals or light refreshments to students or other individuals to support its educational programs, including:

- A class, study hall, or other academic-based activity that occurs on an infrequent basis
- Student orientation programs, commencement exercises, and similar activities
- Student government meeting, association meeting, or other student meetings
- Ice cream social and or social gatherings that pertain to specific student programming activities/events

Entertainment : The University may provide meals or light refreshments to students or other individuals to support its educational programs, including:

- Donors- may provide meals or light refreshments at an entertainment event for the purpose of goodwill of University donors
- Employees, Guests and Volunteers- Meals or light refreshments may be provided to visitors, guests, community members, or employees for social or recreational activities if there is a business purpose supporting the University's mission.
- Tickets to an Entertainment Event- The University may cover the cost of tickets to sporting, theatrical, or musical events provided to prospective donors or employees when related to official University business.

What is a student vs what is staff?

Student Workers

Students

A UCSC student who participates in extracurriculars but does not have an on-campus job. Their time outside of class is dedicated to studying, social activities, or personal interests. They have no connection to receiving compensation from the UC for work or assistance.

A student worker is a part-time employee enrolled in college who works on campus, gaining experience while supporting university departments. These roles, which are flexible to fit academic schedules, include tasks like administrative support, tech assistance, research, and customer service. Student workers build skills, form connections, and may receive financial aid through work-study programs.

** A student worker may participate in student program or activities, provided these are not events or programs exclusively designed for student workers **
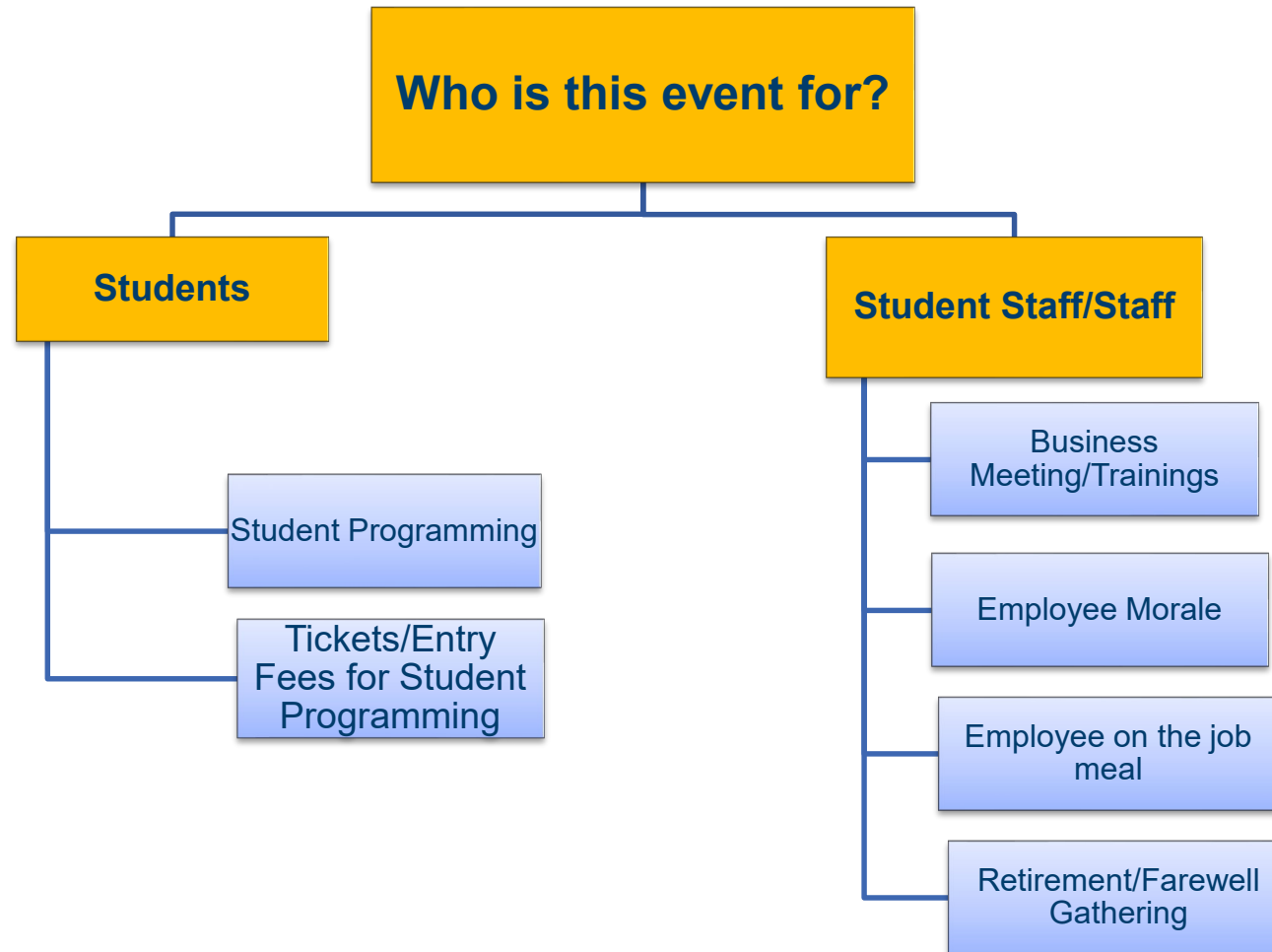
Staff

A UCSC staff member is an employee who assists with the University's operations and services in exchange for compensation

Event Timelines and Approvals

Who is this event for?

Students

Student Staff/Staff

Student Programming

Tickets/Entry Fees for Student Programming

Business Meeting/Trainings

Employee Morale

Employee on the job meal

Retirement/Farewell Gathering

Entertainment Approval Chart

UC SANTA CRUZ | Division of Student Affairs and Success

Entertainment Approver Guidance- EEC

Expense Type	Account Code	Description	Approver	Authorization Amounts (up to)
Student Programming	001253	Study Break/Orientation/Dances/Festivals/Student Org Events/Student Organization Group Meetings/Residential Floor Programs/FSH Culinary Culture Share/Commencement	Associate and Assistant Vice Chancellor	$ 20,000
			Unit Director, Unit Leader, Directors, Associate Directors and Executive Directors	$ 10,000
			Department Director, Department Leader, Associate Director	$ 5,000
			Assistant Directors	$1,000
			Supervisors and Coordinators	$ 500
Misc. Outside Services	001260	Tickets/Entry Fees for Student Programming Events NOTE: Consult with your Financial Analyst when purchasing tickets **** Tickets that are outside of student programming are restricted expense requiring top level approval from EEC ****	Associate and Assistant Vice Chancellor	$ 20,000
			Unit Director, Unit Leader, Directors, Associate Directors and Executive Directors	$ 10,000
			Department Director, Department Leader, Associate Director	$ 5,000
			Assistant Directors	$1,000
Business Meetings	001270	Business Meeting/All Staff Training	Associate and Assistant Vice Chancellor	$ 20,000
			Unit Director, Unit Leader, Directors, Associate Directors and Executive Directors	$ 10,000
			Department Director, Department Leader, Associate Director	$ 5,000
			Assistant Directors	$1,000
Employee on the Job Meals	001272	Employee on the job meals (including move in/move out/commencement)	Associate and Assistant Vice Chancellor	$ 20,000
			Unit Director, Unit Leader, Directors, Associate Directors and Executive Directors	$ 10,000
			Department Director, Department Leader, Associate Director	$ 5,000
			Assistant Directors	$1,000
NOTE: ANY EMPLOYEE MORALE EVENT NEEDS TO BE ROUTED TO THE FOLLOWING HIGHER DELEGATED AUTHORITY				
Employee Morale	001250	Employee Morale (i.e. All Staff Appreciation/Retirement Celebration/Holiday Event)	Associate and Assistant Vice Chancellor	$ 20,000
			Unit Director, Unit Leader, Directors, Associate Directors and Executive Directors	$ 1,000

Food and Catering

Understanding Meal Expenses

What is considered a meal?

- Is catered, restaurant-provided, or self-prepared breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

What are light refreshments?

- Coffee, tea, non-alcoholic, snacks, hors d'oeuvres, pastries, cookies, crackers, chips, fruit, and similar items.

How much can I spend?

- Per-person Spending Rates are listed below:

Meal Type	Hours	Per-Person Rate
Breakfast	7am – 11am	$ 31.00
Lunch	11am – 4pm	$ 54.00
Dinner	4pm – 11pm	$ 94.00
Light Refreshments	Entire Day	$ 22.00

Important Reminders:
- If a reception prior to a meal includes drinks, hors d'oeuvres, the total charges for both the reception and the meal should be considered a single event when calculating per-person costs.
- Costs for room rental, setup fees, media rentals, and decorations are excluded from the per-person costs unless the vendor is unable to itemize these expenses separately.

** Please note that limitations are set to change and be updated as mandated by campus/UCOP guidance **

University Catering

University Catering
(In-House Full Service)

Requirement: All full-service catering on UCSC-owned/leased facilities must be handed by UC Santa Cruz Catering Services

Booking Process: Submit the date, time & location – received confirmation within 48 hours – sign event agreement – pay 50% deposit (balance due 5 business days prior to your event)

Service Details:
- Delivery/Setup: 7AM-9PM (M-Sun); Sunday orders may require a $500 minimum
- Servers: $35/hr (min 2hrs); buffet attendants and bar servers may be available

Approved Caterers & Compliance

- Must use vendors from UCSC's Approved Caterers list, meeting insurance, health permit, and tax requirements
- For alcohol-serving events, eternal caterers require $1M liquor-liability insurance
- New caterers can be added via the Approved List application process

Important Reminders:
- When a **reception is held prior to a meal** (including drinks and hors d'oeuvres), the **total cost of the reception and meal must be treated as a single event** for calculating **per-person catering limits**.

- **Room rental, setup fees, media rentals, and decorations** are **excluded from the per-person catering cap**—*unless* the caterer or vendor **cannot itemize** those costs separately.

*** Please note that limitations are set to change and be updated as mandated by campus/UCOP guidance ***

Contracting out for Catering

Want to use an outside catering company?
Make sure you follow these rules before proceeding:

For events that will not require full service catering you will not need to obtain a contracting out for catering form

UCSC Catering Services- All full service-catering at UCSC-owned/leased facilities must use UC Santa Cruz catering services per RP5402 and AFSCME Article 5

What is full service catering? Food preparation and cooking by the supplier, event setup (tableware, serving items) and post event cleanup and on-site food service (buffet, tableside, tray-passing)

Exclusions from Full Service: Takeout or simple delivery, personal events

External Catering Approval: UCSC catering must be declined first, submit a contracting out request with required documentation if approved (link to contracting out form)

For a full list of contracting out processes and procedure please utilize the following links:
- Contracting out workflow
- Outside catering requirements
- UCSC Approved Caterers

** Please note that this is only needed if you will be utilizing FULL SERVICE catering options **

Approvals and Processing Purchases

Official Host

What is an event host?

- An official host is a University employee or representative attending an entertainment, employee morale, recruitment, or student outreach event on behalf of the University.
- The official host may not approve event expenses and cannot be the same person as the Event Expense Certifier (EEC).
- The event organizer (e.g., individual arranging meeting space or ordering food) is not considered an official host unless they are physically present at the event and act in that capacity.
- All entertainment, employee morale, recruitment, and student outreach events require an official host

What is my responsibility as an event host?

- The Official Host must attend the event and certify that all expenses serve a substantial and official University purpose.
- The Official Host must confirm the number of attendees and ensure event reporting is accurate and complete.

** Events such as student programming, on-the-job meals, and business meetings generally do not require a host **

EEC Delegation of Authority

Event Expense Certifier (EEC) limits should be standardized to ensure fair delegation of authority across DSAS, empowering fund managers. Approval limits, fiscal guidelines, and form routing are streamlined, directing forms straight to analysts and final signers. A new DocuSign form (ERF 1.3.2) consolidates event planning, approvals, and post-event validation, making tracking simpler. This approach improves consistency, efficiency, and policy compliance across all event-related processes.

Authority	Authorization Limit (up to)	Position Titles
Level 1	$250,000	Vice Chancellor and Delegate
Level 2	$20,000	Associate Vice Chancellors
Level 3	$10,000	Executive and Senior Directors
Level 4	$5,000	Associate Directors and Managers
Level 5	$1,000	Assistant Directors and Managers
Level 6	$500	Coordinators and Supervisors

EOA Delegation of Authority

Event Order Approvers (EOAs) ensure compliance with UC policies by serving as intermediaries between form preparers and certifiers, verifying adherence to spending limits, and checking that only trained, authorized staff handle orders. They work closely with event hosts and certifiers, provide policy guidance, and ensure proper order submission through CruzBuy or University Catering. EOAs also apply all policy requirements, including expense limitations, approvals, documentation, and post-event reporting, particularly for events serving alcohol.

Authority	$ Limit	Position Titles
Level 1	$100,000	Assistant Vice Chancellor, BFM
Level 2	$15,000	Directors, Business and/or Finance
Level 3	$5,000	Financial Analysts

If you have a financial staff member who you feel should be an EOA, please consult with DSAS Budget & Financial Management. A brief assessment will be performed to ensure sufficient EOA coverage does not exist & to assign the appropriate EOA level to your financial staff member.

Alcohol Policy

Serving Alcohol? What do you need to know:

Event Disclosure and Approval
- Events with alcohol, on or off-campus, must be disclosed with requests.
- *Requires approval from a top-level (VC approval needed) event expense certifier*

Pre-event Certification
- *Top-level certifier* must confirm compliance with UCSC's Alcohol Policy.
- All alcohol service must adhere to UCSC's Campus Alcoholic Beverage Policy.

Exclusions
- Policy does not cover individual entertainment-related alcohol expenses.

Will I need Campus Police?
- **Notification Threshold**: Notify Campus Police for on-campus events with 50+ participants.
- **Event Notification Form**: Submit form to Campus Police 2 weeks before events requiring police security.
- **Safety Advising**: Police may provide event safety management guidance

Can I use any funding source I want?
- Funding Limitations: Limited sources can cover alcohol costs
- Prohibited Funds:
  - *State Funds: Cannot be used for alcohol*
  - *Federal Funds: Generally prohibited unless specifically allowed by the award terms and conditions*

UCSC Police Event Notification Form

Understanding Unallowable Expenses

Expense payments or reimbursement are **_NOT ALLOWED_** under any of following conditions:

Not Allowed:
- Lavish or extravagant expenses/events
- Expenses violating fund source requirements
- Taxable income to employees/students
- Political campaign contributions
- Personal use purchases
- Request/routine expenses

Business Meetings- Meal Limitations:
- Meals: Max once/month (12 per year-Student Programming Specific Events Exempt)
- Light Refreshments: Max twice/month
- Frequent employer-provided meals are taxable income (exceptions for non-employee students)
- Meetings that could occur during regular hours, and meals/refreshments do not need to be provided
- Meals as incidental business with colleagues (unless business could not been done during work hours)

Events Not Reimbursable:
- Farewell gathering honoring an employee departing to take a position at UCSC or at another UC location
- Farewell/Retirement gatherings for employees with <5 years of services
- Birthday, wedding, or anniversary events/celebrations

Methods to Pay for Entertainment/Events

CruzBuy

Event reporting, dining services paper recharge form, and out-of-pocket reimbursements. For multiple F&E orders made through CruzBuy: use 1st requisition # for tracking purposes

CTE Card

All receipts and backup documentation needs to be attached to the transaction in CruzFly. Ensure that the pre-approval DocuSign is attached and uploaded

Pro-Card

Complete ERA (Entertainment Reporting Addendum) and ensure to submit with the receipt on your uploaded DocuSign for reconciliation and approval
** 001253 delegated with approval to charge on their Pro-Card **

Recharge

If you pay out of pocket, you will submit for reimbursement using the Entertainment Reporting Form (ERF)

Multiple Payment Methods

Utilize the Entertainment & Food Request Form (ENT 1.3.2) if you will be utilizing multiple methods to pay for entertainment/event expenses.

- Entertainment Reporting Form (ERF)
- Meal Expense Tracker (MET)

Processing Entertainment Requests

Which form should I use?

Entertainment & Food Request Form (ENT 1.3.2)- Electronic form that is utilized when you will be having an event or food that consists of utilizing more than 1 vendor. This also applies if you will be utilizing only one vendor, but it is over the $500 total threshold.

Entertainment Reporting Form (ERF)- Electronic form that serves as the payment form for out-of-pocket reimbursements for non-UCSC entities and campus recharges.

CruzBuy Food and Entertainment Form (F&E)- The CruzBuy Food and Entertainment (F&E) Form is utilized for creating, processing, and approving Purchase Orders for events. To access the form, log into CruzBuy and click on the **Food & Entertainment** link under **Commonly-Used Forms**

CruzBuy UCSC Catering Recharge Form- The CruzBuy UCSC Catering Recharge Form is designed for creating, processing, and approving Campus Catering Recharges for events. To access the form, log into CruzBuy and click on the **Recharge - UCSC Catering Request** link found under **Commonly-Used Forms**.

Meal Expense Tracker (MET)- Is used to track meal expenses across multiple transactions for accurate per-person cost calculations. Required fields are similar to those on the existing ERF (Expense Reporting Form) and include only the essential data needed for this purpose.

Helpful Guides and Reference Forms

Entertainment Form References

Entertainment Reference 1.1

The document titled "[Ent Ref 1.1](#)" is a **Summary of Forms and Approval Requirements for Food & Entertainment**. It outlines the steps for processing orders based on various purchasing methods, including **PO, CTE, Pro-Card, or Recharge. Additionally it provides guidelines for the following:**

- **Order Processing**: Guidelines based on purchase method (PO, CTE, Pro-Card, Recharge).
- **Expense Tracking**: Links to ERF and MET for multi-method purchases.
- **Special Events**: Requirements for hosted or alcohol-included events.
- **Supporting Materials**: Includes participant lists, agendas, etc.
- **Account Codes & Authorization**: Table to match event type with account codes and required authority levels for EEC certification

Entertainment Form References

Entertainment Reference: 1.3.2

The *Request for F&E Event Approval* is also called "Ent Ref 1.3.2" and is hosted in DocuSign via PowerForm.
[Approved Example]

- Utilized when an event or food service involves multiple vendors or if the total cost exceeds $500
- Gathers organizer, reviewer, EOA, EEC, and Top-Level EEC information.
- Requires the organizer to submit all required information in DocuSign.
- Allows all parties to edit the request asynchronously.
- Forwards the finished approval to DSAS Financial/BFM.

Entertainment Reference 1.3.2 Process Form

This request form is also accompanied by the *Ent. Ref. 1.3.2 Process Form* a PDF guide to utilizing the request form.
- *Helps the organizer identify their EOA and EEC.*
- *Directs the organizer to identify their Top-Level EEC if appropriate.*
- *Notifies users of the ability to collaborate on a single document.*

Entertainment Form Reference

Entertainment Reference: 1.5

The *Protocol for Retirement and Farewell Gatherings* is called "Ent Ref 1.5".

- Details the need for a participant list and the potential notification of campus police.
- Covers Alcohol policy and the potential for Top-Level Certification.
- Guides users through determining if their event is eligible to use University funds.
- Links users back to Financial Affairs to comply with per person meal limits, NTE limits, and maximum gift values

Quick Links to forms/policies

DSAS Event Request Form

DSAS Ent. Ref 1.1

DSAS Ent. Ref 1.3.2

Entertainment Expense Guide

DSAS Ent. Ref 1.5

ERF Requests

UCSC Police Event Notification Form

UC- BUS-79 Policy

CruzBuy

MET (Meal Expense Tracker)

Contracting Out Catering Request Form

Contracting Out Services Workflow

CruzFly