**CLASSE Guidelines for Local Business Meal Expenses**

(not to be confused with Cornell’s travel guidelines)

In order to ensure compliance with sponsored awards terms and conditions and Cornell policies, CLASSE has created the following guidelines for covering the cost of local business meals:

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Unless specifically permitted in the terms and conditions of an award, meals for participating Cornell staff/students not in travel status must be charged to non-sponsored funds.**

*(Note: Alcohol is an “unallowable” expense and cannot be charged to sponsored awards; alcohol charges must be covered by a non-sponsored account.)*

CLASSE has set a maximum expense limit of $150 for dinner with a guest speaker, external collaborator, or research/faculty candidate. (Specific research groups—e.g., the Theory Group—may set a lower limit, if desired, but they should ensure this is communicated to the group members.) Charges that exceed the $150 limit must be covered from personal funds by the non-guest participants.

Lunch expenses are not reimbursable, unless there is a special situation where lunch is scheduled in lieu of the dinner. In this situation, the maximum lunch expense limit is $100, and excess charges must be covered from personal funds. (Typically, the guest will pay for his or her own lunch and then include the expense in their travel reimbursement request therefore a group lunch expense should be a rare event.)

There must be a bona fide business purpose for a spouse or companion to attend a meal when charging their meal expense to a University account (only a non-sponsored account may be used). If there is no business purpose, the meal expense must be covered by personal funds.† (Note: All business meals must have an explanation which identifies the business purpose and must include names of all attendees. If the cost of the meal exceeds $75, an itemized receipt is also required.)

**Source of Funds for Meals/Refreshments**

1 - *Guest Speaker/Collaborator/Research Candidate* – allowable (except for alcohol) on a sponsored research account; meals for participating Cornell staff/students must be charged to non-sponsored funds\*.

2 - *Physics Department Faculty Candidate* – CLASSE non-sponsored funds\* must be used; all expenses for a second visit are covered by the Physics Department.

3 - *Organized Research Conferences/Workshops* – allowable (except for alcohol) on a sponsored research account when the primary purpose is dissemination of technical information and the meal is an integral and necessary part of the conference/meeting.

4 - *Site Visits* – meals (excluding alcohol) for Advisory Committee members are allowable on a sponsored research account when authorized by the awarding agency, otherwise non-sponsored funds\* must be used.

5 - *CLASSE Seminar/Journal Club/Theory Seminar* – refreshments provided for seminars must be charged to non-sponsored funds\*. (For related meals, see #1 above.)

6 - *CLASSE-wide General Events* – must be charged to non-sponsored funds\*.

7 – *CLASSE Res/Admin Staff Meetings* – the cost of food for staff meetings is not typically covered by CLASSE funds; for special exceptions, non-sponsored funds\* must be used.

†Occasional special Lab-related events—e.g. retirement or employee celebration parties—may include meals for spouses/companions, if funding is available.

\*The account to be used for non-sponsored expenses will be determined based on the unit(s) affiliated with the specific event (e.g., an employee’s meal at dinner with a CHESS candidate will be charged to the CHESS discretionary account).

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