



Vehicle Policy

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Purpose

The purpose of the Vehicle Policy is to ensure the safe operation of the vehicles used in accomplishing the mission of the Pott College of Science, Engineering, and Education. The policy will also delineate procedures for reserving and maintaining the Pott College vehicles and is intended to supplement existing University of Southern Indiana Policies on vehicle operations, field trips, and travel. In the event of conflicting information, the more restrictive requirements will be used in guiding travel, vehicles, and field trips. Individual departments within the Pott College may supplement this document with policies addressing discipline specific needs. This policy applies to the operation and maintenance of Pott College vehicles, even if driven by University employees who are not part of the college. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in loss of driving privileges and use of Pott College vehicles.

Currently, the Pott College has several vehicles, including a SWISTEM minivan, a College Chevrolet Suburban, a College Toyota Sienna minivan, an Engineering Toyota Sienna minivan, an Engineering Ford 150 pick-up truck, a Geology, Physics, and Environmental Science Toyota Sienna minivan, a large box truck, two golf carts, and a Kawasaki Mule. The Pott College also owns a 22 feet long enclosed trailer and Baja car trailer owned by Engineering, and a motorboat and trailer, along with a Giddings Soil Probe trailer owned by Geology, Physics, and Environmental Science. Each vehicle may be reserved using the Vehicle Reservation form <https://www.usi.edu/science/faculty/pott-college-vehicle-use/>. The maximum number of passengers that may be transported by the Pott College vehicles are: 8 in the Chevrolet Suburban, 3 in the Ford Pick-Up, 8 in each of the Toyota Sienna minivans, and 3 in the golfcarts. The SWISTEM minivan, the box truck, and the Kawasaki Mule **are not** available for reservation and their use is restricted to their respective programs or Departments.

Reservations

To make a reservation for use of a Pott College vehicle, you must first complete a "Travel Request and Class Coverage Form" and have this paperwork approved by your Department Chair. Then, make a reservation for a Pott College vehicle through the following web page via a Qualtrics form: <https://www.usi.edu/science/faculty/pott-college-vehicle-use/vehicle-request-form/>. This online form requires you to provide information about your departmental account, dates of travel, purpose of travel, emergency contact, and any additional relevant information to verify with Risk Management that only authorized drivers will be operating Pott College vehicles. Once a reservation is processed through the Pott College Dean's Office or the respective Department, you will receive email notification with an Outlook calendar reservation. Your vehicle reservation is not final until you receive confirmation from the Pott College Dean's office. An inspection of the Pott College vehicle will take place after each usage, and any repairs needed will be charged to the respective department of program. Drivers of the

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vehicles are also required to complete a mileage ticket (included with each vehicle ticket) that includes the date and time of departure, date and time of return, odometer readings, and total miles driven on the trip. This paperwork needs to be returned with the packet to the respective Department or the Pott College Dean's Office.

Information Needed for Request

Before your vehicle request is approved, you must provide the following details in the online reservation form:

- Driver name and driver license number
- Department
- Department account number or grant account number
- Alternate driver name and driver license number
- Purpose of trip
- Department Chair Approval
- Those attending (student/faculty)
- Contact information (phone numbers and email)
- Emergency contact information
- Travel Request and Class Coverage Form
- Whether or not a trailer will be pulled
- Additional Trip details

Trip information will be logged within a Vehicle Reservation Invitation (sent through Outlook) and documented on our vehicle calendar (To view the calendar: in Outlook, go to Folder List/All Public Folders/Pott College/Vehicles). The department chair must approve of all vehicle sign-outs. Keys to the Pott College vehicles will only be issued to and reserved by USI faculty members and/or staff. Students may not reserve the vehicles or pick up the keys. It is expected that club advisors will make reservations, pick up and return keys, and accompany students for any club events in which Pott College vehicles are used.

Reservations must be made at least a week prior to the requested day/time of use. Vehicles may be requested up to one semester in advance. Reservations for Spring semester may be made in the Fall. Reservations for the Summer may be made in the Spring. Reservations for Fall may be made in the Summer. A separate request must be made for each instance of travel. Blanket requests (example: "We want the Suburban every weekend for the Fall semester") will not be entertained or approved.

It is important to note that the vehicle request form is not a substitute for travel request or field trip notifications. Faculty and staff are expected to complete travel paperwork and follow the USI Travel Policy. If you are filling out a "Travel Request and Class Coverage Form" and plan to use one of the Pott College vehicles, ensure that you indicate this on the paperwork. You will also be required to use your Travel Card for fueling the vehicles, and thus you must request this

funding with your “Travel Request and Class Coverage Form”. Finally, you are also required to complete a Pre-Approval in Chrome River, as well as completing an Expense Report upon the return from your trip in Chrome River.

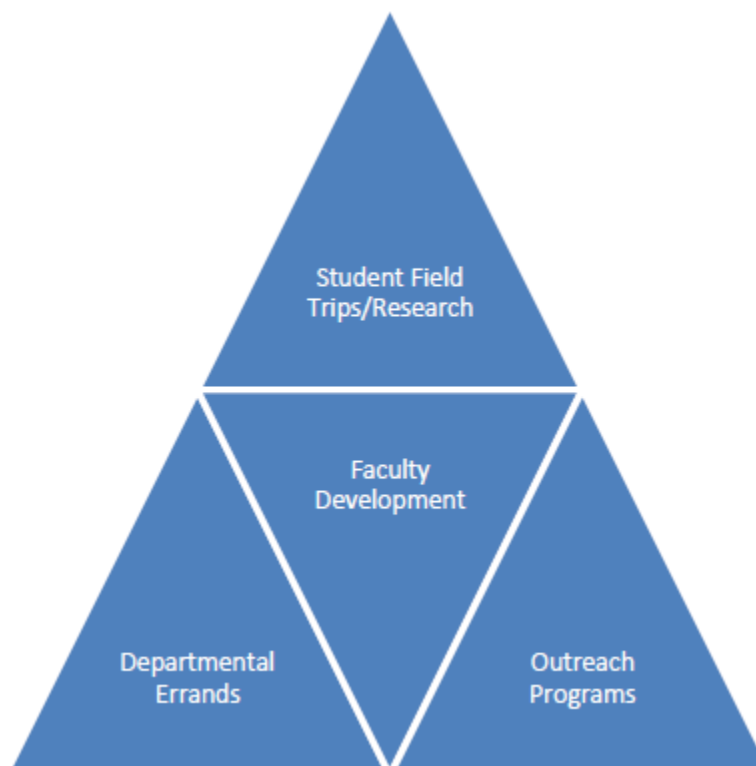
Approved Trips

- Vehicles may be requested for:
- Student Field trips
- Research
- Faculty development, i.e., conferences, seminars
- Picking up supplies

Usage for supply runs will normally be limited to once per week per borrower. Please plan accordingly.

Trip Priority

Trips will be approved based on priority when there are multiple requests for the same period of time. The following pyramid displays priority usage:



Student field trips and research precede faculty development such as conferences and seminars; likewise, faculty development will precede outreach and departmental errands. Approval may be conditional—special requests may be made based on student involvement. Trips that require trailering capability will take precedence over those that do not require

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trailer capability. Since the pick-up truck and minivan were purchased using Engineering department funds, the Engineering department will have priority usage of that vehicle. Likewise, the priority for the use of the Geology, Physics, and Environmental Science minivan will be with this department.

The Pott College Dean's office will normally approve vehicle requests as they are received, as long as there are no conflicts with other trips and the request meets the College guidelines. These requests may be cancelled if a higher priority request is received. Users will be notified if their request is cancelled. Normally, requests will not be cancelled once a trip is within 2 weeks of departure.

Vehicle Sign Out/Sign In

The keys to the Suburban, Pott College minivan, and to the golf carts will be in the Pott College office. The keys to the pickup truck will be located in the Advanced Engineering Center office. The keys to the Geology and Physics minivan will be located in the Geology, Physics, and Environmental Science Department. The keys to the Engineering minivan will be located in the Engineering Department. Normal business hours are 8:00 AM until 4:30 PM, if you cannot pick up the keys during these times, it is your responsibility to make other arrangements. When the keys are picked up, the driver will be given a sign out sheet that indicates the approximate location of the vehicle. The Suburban, Pott College minivan, and Geology & Physics minivan will normally be located in Lot G or H near the Science Center. The golf carts are parked outside the Education Center (ED7) doors near the Pott College Dean's office. The pickup truck is located in the parking lot by the Applied Engineering Center. Upon arriving at the vehicle, the driver needs to inspect the vehicle. **If the vehicle is damaged, the driver is required to contact the Pott College office immediately at 812-464-1977.**

Operators will be given a Pott College vehicle mileage usage form when they are issued the keys. Please fill out the form in its entirety prior to return of the vehicle.

Remember to note:

- Departure Date and Time
- Initial Odometer Reading
- Return Date and Time
- Final Odometer Reading
- Total Mileage Driven
- Vehicle Location (Parking Lot and Row)

When returning from the trip, drivers need to ensure the vehicle is returned with a full tank of gas. Drivers of each vehicle are responsible for making sure all personal items are removed from the vehicle. The driver also needs to make sure that trash is removed from the vehicle,

and if needed, rubber mats removed and shaken to remove loose debris. If the vehicle is soiled (either internal or external, the driver is responsible for having the vehicle cleaned at a local car wash. Car washes may be paid for using the credit card in the vehicle packet. The receipt for the car wash needs to be returned with the vehicle packet and keys. Return the keys to the Pott College Dean's or respective Department office as soon as possible during normal business hours. If the trip will be returning after normal business hours, check with the respective office to plan for the return of vehicle packets and keys for any early morning trips that may depart the next day. Finally, drivers need to report any vehicle damage or maintenance issues (e.g., flat tire, low fluid levels, illuminated engine light) so that vehicles may be repaired and/or maintained.

Vehicle Chargeback

Departments are responsible for covering the cost of fuel during usage of the Pott College, Engineering, and/or Geology, Physics, and Environmental Science vehicles. The Pott College will cover routine maintenance (e.g., windshield wiper replacement, oil changes, new brakes, fluids, new tires) for the vehicles. The cost of repairs due to damage from an accident, or damage resulting from negligence of the driver and/or passengers, will be charged to the respective Department involved with the incident.

Driver Qualifications

All drivers of Pott College vehicles must hold a valid state or United States government issued driver's license. Drivers of Pott College vehicles also need to be an Authorized Driver of the University of Southern Indiana. If you are not an Authorized Driver, contact one of the administrative associates in the Pott College Dean's Office to find out how to become an authorized driver. The processing of vehicle reservations and/or the release of vehicle keys and packets will be possible only if confirmation of USI Authorized Driver status is received from Risk Management. The process to become an Authorized Driver at the University of Southern Indiana may take up to three weeks to complete, so please be sure to start your planning well in advance of your trip. If you will have multiple drivers for your trip, each operator of a Pott College vehicle must be a USI Authorized Driver. If you are renting vehicles through the University, you will also need to make sure that all vehicle operators are USI Authorized Drivers.

For travel involving students, it is expected that Pott College faculty or staff will be the primary drivers of the vehicles. The lead vehicle on student field trips, or any vehicles towing a trailer must be driven by a faculty or staff. For those instances where students need to drive-because of using multiple vehicles, it is expected that faculty and/or staff will select more experienced student drivers (21 years of age and older) to operate the Pott College vehicles. Students must be an Authorized Driver of the University of Southern Indiana. Students that do not have a minimum of 5 years driving experience are ONLY authorized to drive within Vanderburgh County and the four (4) adjacent counties (Posey, Gibson, Warrick, and Henderson).

Vehicle Operation

It is critical that all Pott College vehicles be operated safely and maintained appropriately. In addition to the University Fleet Safety Policy and traffic laws, the following rules apply to the Pott College vehicles:

- Vehicle operators who are given more than one moving violation while operating University vehicles will normally be prohibited from using the Pott College vehicles for a period of one year.
- Alcohol will not be consumed or transported in Pott College vehicles.
- Smoking is prohibited in Pott College vehicles.
- Vehicle operators are responsible for returning vehicles in clean condition. All trash must be removed from the passenger compartment. Spills must be cleaned up. Excessive mud and dirt must be cleaned off the exterior of the vehicle. The credit card in the packet may be used to wash the vehicle; the receipt must be taken to the Dean's Office.
- Vehicles will not be driven to personal residences, either on errands or for parking overnight.
- Vehicles must not be used for personal errands or business.
- Drivers are required to return the Pott College vehicles with a full tank of gas when returning from a trip.
- Vehicles may only be used on prepared road surfaces to the extent necessary for mission accomplishment. An example of authorized off road use would be the towing of the core sampling rig to an appropriate operational location.

Extended Trips

Special care must be taken when traveling long distances. The following rules serve as guidelines for longer trips.

- On any trip with one or more passengers, one passenger should always be acting as the vehicle navigator. The vehicle navigator is not only responsible for providing directions, but also for helping to keep the driver awake and attentive. The navigator should not be sleeping while the vehicle is in motion.
- Any trip (or trip segment) exceeding six hours must include at least one fifteen-minute rest stop.
- Any trip (or trip segment) exceeding ten hours must include at least one thirty-minute (or more) stop in addition to the 15-minute rest stop.
- It is recommended, whenever possible, multiple authorized drivers be utilized for trips that exceed six hours, to avoid driver fatigue. In any case, no driver shall drive more than twelve hours during any 24-hour period. Driving time is inclusive of rest stops.

Trailer

Both the Suburban and the pickup truck are capable of towing trailers. Faculty/Staff/Students who will be trailering should have experience trailering before towing with the Pott College vehicles. There will be no more than three occupants in a Pott College vehicle when a trailer is being pulled. The purpose of this limitation is to limit the risk that is inherent in towing operations. The following four trailers are approved for towing behind the Pott College vehicles, any additional trailers must be pre-approved by the college office before towing:

- Engineering 22 feet long enclosed trailer
- Engineering Baja car trailer
- Geology trailer and motorboat
- Geology Giddings Soil Probe trailer

Users must ensure that trailers do not exceed the maximum trailering capacity of the vehicle. Ensure that the proper sized ball is used on the trailer hitch and that safety chains are used. Loads need to be balanced and tie-down straps used. Trailer lights and brakes (if applicable) must be hooked up and tested prior to towing. An outside observer **must** be used anytime a trailer is backed. The driver must have verbal and visual contact with the outside observer.

Cart Operation

The purpose of the golf carts is to support Pott College events and business that occurs on campus. Normally, the golf carts will not be removed from campus. The following rules apply to golf cart operations:

- Cart operators must be University Authorized Drivers and have completed the Golf Cart and Utility Vehicle Safety Training in addition to the Defensive Driver Training.
- Carts must not be operated by anyone under the influence of any substance including alcohol, illegal drugs, and/or medications that may cause impairment.
- The number of passengers in a Cart must not exceed the Cart's seating capacity. If seat belts are installed, they must be used while the Cart is in motion. Passengers may not be carried in the cargo areas of the carts or Mule.
- Carts should be operated on sidewalks, plazas, and bike paths only when necessary. The speed limit for Carts in these locations is 5 mph. When moving through congested areas, speed should not be faster than pedestrians walking in the same area. Extreme caution must be exercised at blind corners and in areas of crossing pedestrian and bicycle traffic.
- Cart operators should pay particular attention to vehicular traffic, and must comply with posted speed limits, stop signs, and other traffic control regulations. When crossing intersections, Cart operators should take extra care to ensure they are seen by other drivers and pedestrians before proceeding.

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- The carts have governors installed to limit their speed. These governors must not be disabled by those who drive them. Overriding the governors poses a safety risk and voids the powertrain warranty on the carts.
- It is important to note that the golf carts do not have brake lights nor turn signals. Hand signals should be used when operating the carts on the roads of the USI campus. Hand signals are shown in the diagram below.
- Carts have been a high-theft item on the University of Southern Indiana campus. The anti-theft brake-steering wheel interlock should be installed when carts are unattended (see photograph below). Ensure that the parking brake is set before installing the interlock. Mule is not allowed to be reserved, so we don't need to inform anyone about the anti-theft device.
- Carts may not be parked where they block regular traffic paths, building exits, fire department connections, wheelchair ramps or curb cuts, or any other location that may present a hazard.



Properly engaged anti-theft brake-steering wheel lock for the golf carts. Photograph courtesy of Dr. Zane Mitchell (2015).