

CTRE Student Employee Handbook



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Student Relationship with CTRE

CTRE offers students a valuable learning environment that combines academic and non-academic professional experiences. Students are part of the CTRE community, and their conduct and performance play an important role in CTRE's ability to attract sponsorship for research and outreach projects.

Student role in CTRE projects

At CTRE, you will be appointed to one or more transportation projects and will work with a CTRE project manager and your advisor to find the right assignments. If you have project preferences or wish to combine your thesis with a CTRE team project, discuss your options with CTRE's professors.

Most sponsored projects at CTRE involve undergraduate and/or graduate research assistants. Projects offer several benefits:

- 1) professional work experience and contacts with project sponsors and other professionals interested in the same or similar topics
- 2) a deep understanding of the topics being researched
- 3) a topic which may suggest a personal research focus
- 4) a source of income to help finance your education

Professionalism

As a CTRE staff member, you are expected to complete the work assigned and to behave professionally with other students, CTRE staff, and project sponsors.

Because CTRE is part of Iowa State University, supervisors understand the academic pressures placed on you. This means that managers will be flexible about your work schedule during finals or when large class projects are due, but you also must complete CTRE project tasks within a reasonable time. As with any job, failure to accomplish tasks within a reasonable deadline will result in termination.

Professionalism at CTRE also extends to the dress code for students. While appropriately casual clothing is allowed, be sure to wear more professional attire for events and meetings with CTRE sponsors. Ask your supervisor or project leader about a sponsor's expectations.

Office courtesy

CTRE has many people working in one building—especially in a cubicle environment—which means we need to be especially considerate of each other regarding noise levels. Please use earphones for listening to music. If you find yourself in a three-person meeting in your office

space, or if your visitor has a loud voice, it might be a good idea to move to a small conference room. Also, please keep impromptu meetings in the hall or at the printers short and quiet.

CTRE Facilities

Office Security

You may use CTRE facilities after hours and on weekends if you have been issued a key to the building. Clear any non-employee use of the facilities with your supervisor ahead of time. Keep the doors locked after 5:00 p.m. and on weekends.

If you are the last person out of the building, make sure the doors are locked, the coffee pots and lights are turned off, and any potential facility problem is resolved. Also, be sure the building is cleared and no one remains who does not have keys to the building or does not know about securing the building.

Office keys

If you are on assistantship, you can obtain an office key by speaking with your project manager, who then will get approval from CTRE's director. Once approved, the director's secretary will provide you with a key. Do not loan your key to anyone, and turn it in when you leave CTRE.

You will not be issued an office key if you are an hourly student, but if you need to work after hours or on the weekend, see your supervisor about accessing the building.

Building emergency

If there is an emergency after hours, consult the red emergency signs posted in the mailroom and the break room. Rip a copy off the bulletin board, find a phone, and follow directions. If the emergency is life threatening, e.g., a fire, leave the building, find a phone, and call 911 or the police, then call CTRE staff or building assistance as per the instructions on the red emergency notices. Make yourself available to firefighters or police to get them into the building, or advise them of the general layout of the office space. (Give the CTRE office map on the back of the red emergency sheet to the emergency unit coordinator when he or she arrives on the scene.)

Break room use and housekeeping courtesy

Please clean up after yourself when using the break room or other CTRE facilities. If your meeting guests use CTRE resources, be sure to clean up after them as well. Do not leave dirty cups or dishes in the sink or messes in the microwave or on the counter.

You may keep food in the refrigerator, but remember to throw out unused items within a reasonable period. Containers that look like science experiments will be discarded. On occasion, you may be asked to remove your things when a CTRE luncheon or other event requires full use of the kitchenette.

Conference rooms

If you need to use any of the conference rooms, please reserve it on the appropriate online schedule. Find the schedules on the M:\ drive, msoffice/ccwin/Data. The table in the library can also be used for small meetings, and in a pinch some staff offices can be borrowed.

Please remember to remove your name from the sign-up calendar if your meeting is cancelled.

Business cards

You will be issued business cards only if the nature of your project work requires it. At your project manager's request, CTRE's director approves the issuance of all business cards. After your request is approved, CTRE's communications group can assist you in obtaining cards.

Computers

Equipment

CTRE computers are for CTRE business. Do not load unauthorized software onto a CTRE computer. CTRE computers use the normal virus-protection software; however, the possibility of introducing a virus is always a concern. Take every precaution to avoid computer viruses; once a virus is introduced, it can severely damage the entire CTRE network. Internet downloads should be only from reputable Web sites and strictly business related.

Computers are available on a first-come, first-served basis; unfortunately, there may not always be enough personal workstations in the student or GIS labs. Please be considerate by sharing computers, and do not use personal passwords to lock down equipment.

When CTRE staff are out of the office, you may—with their permission—use their workstations. Do not change configuration settings or desktop layouts or add software without permission.

Network access, email, and security

Your supervisor will contact the network administrator to set up your CTRE login and email address. You then will be able to set up a directory on the "CTRE Shared" drive for business use. In addition, you will have your own directory on the P-drive to store back-up and temporary files. The P-drive is not intended for personal use; however, it is specific to your login identity, and your files will not be viewed by anyone but the administrator.

Do not keep your personal business, correspondence, etc., on the CTRE network. Because CTRE is a place of business, any files stored on the CTRE server, or email sent or delivered through the CTRE system, are considered non-confidential and non-secure. Any authorized ISU employee may review your files or email at any time.

Drive space

There is a student directory on the "CTRE Shared" network, where you will have your own subdirectory (S:_student\yourname) to keep files you share with your team. Any CTRE staff member can access your subdirectory.

Avoid excessive S:\ drive usage by keeping the number of files to a minimum, and be space conscious when saving large files. Save image bitmaps as jpgs, a format that now is usable by most programs; a 1.3 meg bitmap, for example, often will compress to a 100K jpg file. Compress large files whenever possible.

Temp files should be cleared off the local drive of any computer you use. Please search and delete your temp files at the same time you do your regular back-ups. Also, weed out junk files, miscellaneous Internet downloads, or huge files such as movies and bitmaps. Do not load games, music, movies, or any illegally obtained software onto CTRE computers.

Directory management

Because other staff may share your files, choose logical directories and file names that a team member could identify in your absence. Except for back-ups, keep multiple copies of your work and obsolete files to a minimum. CTRE needs the drive space.

Thesis or course-related use

If you use CTRE equipment or drive space to work on theses or dissertations, tell your CTRE supervisor or advisor and take every precaution that your files do not hamper the efficiency of the network. Class project use of CTRE resources should be kept to a minimum.

Finally, the safety of your personal documents is up to you! You are encouraged to invest in a Zip drive or other portable storage device. Provide your own disks and supplies as needed, and make back-up copies of your work.

Copier

Use of the photocopier requires an access code. Different projects have different access codes; please make sure you use the correct code, as clients will be charged according to the code used. Your project manager can tell you which access code to use when making project copies.

If you need to make a few personal copies, get a copy code from the secretary/receptionist. Personal copies are \$.05 per copy. For extensive personal copying (such as copies of your thesis or academic projects), use the university copy centers, which offer a volume discount. Keep personal copy-making at CTRE to a minimum.

Phones

All telephones at CTRE are on the university system and for CTRE business only. For long-distance calling, the phones require an authorization code, and the call is charged to the appropriate client. If you need a special authorization code for your project, or if you are having trouble with a phone, see the ISU telecommunications representative for CTRE.

If you need to make any personal long-distance calls, you must use a personal phone credit card. The ISU phone book explains the process, as well as how to use other features of university phones.

Finally, inform the secretary/receptionist of your schedule and CTRE phone number so that calls you receive at the main CTRE number can be forwarded to you.

Supplies and project purchases

All CTRE supplies are for business use. The secretary/receptionist can assist you in finding supplies or ordering special items. If you take the last available item or remove a large quantity of one particular item, please tell the secretary/receptionist so that she can re-stock and charge the appropriate account. Computer supplies for projects (CDs, Zip disks, inkjet transparencies) can be obtained from the front desk. Be prepared to provide the project name or account number so that the stock can be replenished and appropriately charged.

Important: Do not purchase anything and expect to be reimbursed without prior written authorization. All purchases made for CTRE must be **pre-approved** as per university purchasing rules. Most supplies must be procured at a university departmental “store” or at an approved outlet. This includes university center copies; computer software, parts, and supplies; photo services and film; general office supplies; manuals; phone or equipment cords or connectors; miscellaneous services; and more. The secretary/receptionist can assist you in getting proper authorizations, processing the paperwork, and obtaining supplies and services.

Your Employment with CTRE

Work schedule

Once you establish a semester work schedule, avoid tardiness and call your supervisor or the secretary/receptionist ASAP if you will be late or absent. When you will be absent from CTRE, please leave a contact number where you can be reached.

Hourly work week

The *ISU Graduate College Handbook* and the *ISU Office Procedure Guide* explain the number of hours you can work in conjunction with your academic load; they also describe restrictions based on grade point average and other factors. The typical CTRE student workload is 20 hours per week; however, your hours must accommodate your academic load and available project work.

Payroll

While you are working for CTRE, you are an employee of the university and therefore must be signed up with ISU Payroll. Proof of eligibility to work and payment instructions must be provided. If you have worked elsewhere on campus, you do not need to sign up again; however, CTRE does need some basic contact information. The CTRE account clerk can assist you with the appropriate paperwork and will be your administrative contact during your CTRE employment.

Research assistantships

If you are a graduate student, you will be paid either via a research assistant appointment (if enrolled in at least one class) or hourly. Appointments can include the periods between semesters

so you need not change status during breaks. The *ISU Graduate College Handbook* outlines the regulations regarding assistantship and eligibility.

A research assistant appointment is made via a Letter of Intent from the university to you. This is a formal offer of employment, which spells out the terms of employment, rate of pay, period of assignment, number of hours you are expected to work, source of the funding, and any other relevant conditions. CTRE's director, the Graduate College, and you will all sign the Letter of Intent. Once established, the assistantship pay rate cannot change during the year. Research assistants maintain their normal student benefits. Should you resign, the university requires that you submit a letter of resignation specifying the ending date and reasons for early termination.

Because CTRE operates independently of the university calendar and has project commitments year round, you will work through class breaks and during the summer. Vacations or other leaves may be taken during the appointment period; however, the timing must be arranged with your project manager or supervisor well in advance to accommodate project requirements and deadlines. Your supervisor should be notified of your need to take sick leave or emergency leave as soon as possible, and you are expected to keep your supervisor up to date as to any changes in the status of your absence.

Research assistants are paid at the end of each month. If you are a research assistant, you generally do not complete time sheets, but should keep track of your accomplishments to discuss with your project supervisor or faculty advisor.

Hourly pay

Undergraduate and some graduate students are paid on an hourly basis at CTRE. The pay rate will be determined at your initial appointment and cannot change during the year unless your duties and responsibilities change.

Hourly time sheets must be turned in for processing on the 15th and on the last working day of each month. Your check will arrive (or be auto-deposited) half a month after the time sheet is processed (i.e., paychecks are issued twice a month). Each time sheet must have your name, your social security number, and a project name or project account number on it. If you work on multiple projects during a pay period, submit one time sheet for each project so that each project is appropriately billed for your time. Each time sheet must be signed by your supervisor and turned in to the CTRE account clerk.

It is your responsibility to remember to turn in your time sheet. Late submittal will cause your paycheck to be delayed until the following pay period.

There are no paid vacation holidays or sick leave allowances for hourly staff.

Traveling for CTRE

Travel approvals

To be reimbursed for expenses incurred while traveling on CTRE business, you will need to complete a travel authorization form in advance. In-state travel (outside Ames) requires the completion of the pink In-State Travel Authorization form, which must be approved in advance by your project manager and CTRE's director. All out-of-state travel requires the completion of the blue Out of State Travel Authorization form, which also must be approved in advance. The director's secretary or CTRE's account clerk can assist you in completing this form. In most cases, you will be responsible for making your own business travel arrangements. However, if you are travelling with a CTRE group, the director's secretary will probably assist in making the arrangements. In such cases, and when you otherwise need her assistance, provide the dates, destinations, justifications for travel, project account numbers, and other relevant data.

CTRE must use the lowest-cost airfare. This means taking advantage of early scheduling, non-refundable tickets, and other types of discounts, as well as choosing the most economical departure locations.

When planning to travel, leave contact information and a full itinerary with the director's secretary and your project manager/supervisor.

Travel reimbursement

Keep all receipts to be reimbursed for your travel expenses, and report only actual expenses. Meals and other incidental expenses should be limited to what is reasonable given the situation. CTRE observes the university meal allowance guidelines, and you will not be reimbursed for amounts over these limits. In addition, the university has rules for when you are allowed these meals. For instance, if you depart after 8:00 a.m., you will not be eligible for the breakfast allowance. The university will not reimburse for alcoholic beverages, entertainment, or personal purchases.

Maximums	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
in Iowa	\$5.00	\$7.00	\$14.00
outside Iowa	\$8.00	\$12.00	\$20.00

University vehicles

CTRE leases a university car for business purposes. When it is unavailable, another may be reserved from ISU Transportation Services. Use of university vehicles is subject to the following guidelines:

Driving authorization/driving permission form

If you are a graduate student with a valid driver's license, you may use university vehicles for CTRE business purposes. If you are an undergraduate student, you need to complete a Driving

Permission form and be approved by the ISU Department of Public Safety (DPS). In addition to requiring that you have a valid driver's license, the DPS will review your driving record. Your request may take two weeks or more to process. Obtain a Driving Permission form from CTRE's account clerk.

Obey the law

Obey all laws when driving a university vehicle. You will be responsible for any traffic tickets. Never carry any alcoholic beverages or illegal goods.

Business use only

Do not use university cars for non-business purposes. Occupants should be employees or business associates only. University cars should never be left running unattended, unlocked, or parked in a residential area.

Emergencies

Each car has emergency information in the glove compartment. If you have car trouble or are in an accident, follow the directions in the "What To Do ..." booklet. You will be responsible for reporting the accident at the nearest police station and filling out the proper accident forms. Call the CTRE office and notify the ISU Transportation Services office as well.

Fuel

In the rare event that you have to fuel CTRE's car while driving in Ames, do so at ISU's Transportation Services building on Haber Road. If you need to re-fuel any university car while traveling out of town, use the fuel credit cards in the key fob of the vehicle. Use one of the gas companies represented by the credit cards whenever possible. You can use an alternative oil company only if there is no approved credit card available (remember to keep receipts for reimbursement).

CTRE's university vehicle

A sign-up schedule for CTRE's car, along with the key, is kept in the mailroom. Please sign the car out whenever you use it. If you will park on campus, you must use a parking permit. One is usually kept in the car, but if it's not there, see the secretary/receptionist to check out the appropriate permits.

Reserving a car

If you need to travel for a project and the CTRE car is unavailable, see the secretary/receptionist for help in reserving a car through ISU Transportation Services. At times it is not possible to reserve a university vehicle due to high demand. Schedule early, but remember to cancel if the trip is changed—otherwise your project will have to pay for the car even if you didn't use it. If a car needs to be picked up the day before departure, park it overnight in the CTRE parking lot.

Using personal vehicles for CTRE business

If you need to travel for CTRE business, your first choice should be to use CTRE's car or reserve another university vehicle. However, you may be able to use your personal vehicle.

Mileage reimbursement

If CTRE's car or another university vehicle is unavailable, or you simply prefer to use your own vehicle, you may be reimbursed for mileage. The per-mile reimbursement rate will vary depending on the distance traveled and whether a university car otherwise could have been used. For mileage reimbursement, see CTRE's account clerk.

Parking permits

A few university departmental and vendor parking permits are available to use in your personal vehicle for occasional, business-related trips to campus. A key card is also available for deliveries to campus. When using these permits, do not leave your car unlocked. Obey all parking rules; you are personally responsible for any parking tickets when using the permits. Return the permits as soon as possible, as they are often in demand.

Do not use CTRE parking permits on your car to park on campus during a class or other personal activity. As with university vehicles, permits are to be used only for CTRE business purposes.

Basic Information

CTRE address and contact information

Center for Transportation Research and Education
2901 South Loop Drive, Suite 3100
Ames, Iowa 50010-8632 Phone: 515-294-8103
Fax: 515-294-0467
www.ctre.iastate.edu

ISU Office Procedure Guide

ISU Office Procedure Guide for ISU administrative policies and regulations is available online:
www.adp.iastate.edu/vpbf/prod/docs/opg/opg.htm.