How to fill out a Travel Authorization in four easy steps:

Are you preparing to travel to a conference, meeting or other business-related event?

Why do we need a Travel Authorization (TA)?
- For insurance purposes, it lets VCU know where you are and when, in case something happens.
- Once processed, it allows you to book travel through Covington travel. You may want to book through Covington because you can purchase the flight directly through VCU, without paying out of your own pocket. If you would like to make the flight arrangements yourself, you will have to pay for it first and later be re-imbursed.
- It’s a necessary part of the process to get your travel expenses re-imbursed.

1. The TA must include all costs related to the trip, regardless if expenses are to be direct billed, paid by P-Card (registrations only) or reimbursed to the individual traveler.

Costs you must provide:
- airfare
- baggage fees
- lodging
- ground transportation (taxis or car rental)
- per diem
- conference registration, if applicable

2. WHAT IS A PER DIEM?

A per diem is the amount the federal government sets for your daily expenses during business travel. Basically, it’s the amount you will get to by food.

To calculate per diem for a business trip, click here: http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21287

Then click on the state you are traveling too
This chart (or one like it) will appear, look at the number to the far right of the city you are visiting. That is your per diem amount, it’s the total you will have to spend on food for each full day of your trip.

During the two days you travel to and from the location, you’ll have 75 percent of the per diem. This chart has the exact amounts: http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/101518

IF: The conference provides any meals, you must subtract those meals from your per diem. The amount for each meal that needs to be subtracted can be found with this chart:

3. Okay, I know how much I can spend on food. But how much can I spend on a hotel?

If it’s the conference hotel, put the amount advertising on the website or through your registration. Otherwise: Check the lodging rate, put that in for the cost of each night. Keep that price in mind when booking your hotel. It’s okay if it is slightly more than the amount, but you will have to provide an explanation later.
4. What to do once it is finished:

If you need it processed in a hurry: print it, sign it, scan it and email to Angela at ardiggs@vcu.edu, who will put the account number in.

If you have a little extra time: attach your TA to the email, and send to Angela at ardiggs@vcu.edu, who will type the account number, print it and put it in your box to sign.

Remember:
It takes between 1-3 weeks to get a TA processed. Be sure your dates are cemented, as any changes will require the TA to be resent, which will add more time to the process.