

Frequently Asked Questions

VCCS Peer Group Conferences

Who is eligible to attend a peer group conference?

All faculty and staff in the related discipline are eligible, including both full-time and part-time employees.

How much does it cost to register for a peer group conference?

Registration is free. The conference is free.

Are all meals included?

You will notice on the registration form that only certain meals are provided during the conference. It is important for you to register for these meals so that we may give the hotel an accurate number and so that we may be able to accommodate any special dietary needs you may have. A more detailed explanation is below concerning meals.

What do I pay for and what does the VCCS pay for? Since my campus is less than 50 miles from the site of the conference, am I too close by to qualify for a room?

Standard policy is that room charges, lunch, and breakfast* will be master-billed. For groups meeting every other year, the Professional Development department of the VCCS will cover rooms @ 100% for individuals traveling 50 or more miles to attend, and will also cover the previous night (Wednesday or Thursday) for those traveling 200 or more miles. Participants are encouraged to share a room so that their hotel is covered in full. Dinner is "on your own." Mileage reimbursement is not offered by VCCS Professional Development, but may be covered by the college.

*If provided

There's hotel information on the registration form. Does that mean once I'm registered my room is booked as well?

No—you must call the hotel to reserve your room.

The hotel says they're full / I need a group number / other... Make sure you identify yourself as being part of the VCCS peer group conference and if that doesn't work **please notify the Office of Professional Development**. We have large room blocks reserved which should be able to accommodate everyone who calls by the reservation deadline. Let us know and we will make sure you get a room. Or try calling the hotel's direct number yourself (instead of the central 800 number) during regular business hours and ask for the reservation desk.

If the room is being master-billed, why did the hotel want my credit card number?

Participants will be asked for a credit card to guarantee their reservations. There are only two scenarios in which your credit card may be charged: 1) incidentals, and 2) if you do not show for the conference and fail to cancel your room reservation. Also, the master-billing part of the equation occurs at the back end, and not every reservations agent may be well versed with our particular hotel contract. Don't

worry—as long as you specify that you are with the VCCS room block, your card should not be charged for your room.

I called the hotel and they didn't know about my peer group.

Please be sure to ask for the **VCCS peer group conference**—not just your discipline. Specific room block names are also available on peer group conference pages.

I registered but I have to cancel. What do I do?

Please send an email to Nancy Harris, at nharris@vccs.edu and let her know you need to cancel. **Be sure to call the hotel to cancel your room reservation as well, or you will be charged!**

Where do I get more information on my peer group?

Peer group information, including lodging, agendas, locations, etc. will be posted as they become available. Peer Group chair contact information is also available on the OPD website. Keep checking the opening page of the [Peer Group section](#) for updates.

Can I bring my spouse?

Peer group conferences are designed to promote and encourage interaction among VCCS colleagues. Attendance by spouses or family members, which may divert the participant's attention away from the event, is not encouraged but is permitted.

When guests are invited by members of our faculty and staff to attend meal functions that are master billed to the VCCS, the full amount of each meal should be incurred by the attendee. Payment should be sent in advance to Nancy Harris at the Systems Office at least two weeks prior to the peer group conference for any guests not employed by the VCCS. Meal costs will be provided upon request. Please note that once payment is received in the System office, no refunds can be given.

For any other questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Nancy Harris in Professional Development, phone (804) 819-4687, fax (804) 819-4771, or email nharris@vccs.edu. Hope you have a great conference!