

POLICY: POL010

TITLE: PURCHASING DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

EFFECTIVE DATE: JANUARY 2000

UPDATED: AUGUST 2009

GENERAL

The Purchasing Office exists to insure informed purchasing decisions are made and to improve procurement effectiveness by providing purchasing expertise and advice to University departments.

PURCHASING MISSION

- **To support** the academic, administrative, and operational activities of the University by locating competitive sources of quality goods and services which meet the University's high standards.
- **To negotiate** favorable terms, conditions and pricing, and to arrange for delivery when and where needed.
- **To monitor** supplier compliance with purchase order contracts and resolve discrepancies.
- **To contribute** to the financial wellness of the University by practicing careful and diligent management of purchases and assets through the active participation in planning and implementation of sound financial and ethical decisions.

PURCHASING DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Purchasing Department accomplishes its mission by carrying out its duties and responsibilities through:

- **Obtaining bids** to realize maximum value from the expenditure of University funds in the purchase of materials and services.
- **Coordinating the purchase** of materials and services for all functions of the University.
- **Providing value added services** to the University by constantly striving to find new and better products, sources of supply, and better ways of meeting the needs of the using departments.
- **Maintaining liaisons** with the vendors that service the University.
- **Developing** University purchasing standards based upon value analysis, economies of scale, total acquisition costs, and budget limitations.
- **Assisting** University departments in locating substitute materials in cases of emergencies, material shortages, strikes, or other external

circumstances.

- **Protecting** the University against unfair or unethical trade practices and unrealistic or exorbitant price increases.
- **Expediting**, when requested and warranted, the delivery of goods and services.
- **Maintaining** the master vendor and commodity list.
- **Directing** the accounting, transfer, trade, and/or sale of University property assets.

DEPARTMENT GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH VENDORS

The University's suppliers are a valuable resource of information on products and services. Although the Purchasing Office should be your first resource, there will be times when it is recommended that using departments speak directly with selected supplier representatives. They can often help clarify what products or services will best meet the needs of the end user. To help end users in dealing with supplier representatives, the Purchasing Office suggests the following guidelines:

- Advise the Purchasing Office in advance. The purchasing staff can help by providing information on qualified suppliers.
- Contact more than one qualified supplier whenever possible.
- Give equal information to all suppliers, so each has an equal opportunity to make acceptable recommendations.

Never give a supplier any information on budget allocations, or any information provided by a competing supplier.

- Discuss all aspects of the need. Use a life cycle approach, i.e. what happens after the department owns the goods? Using departments should consider installation, maintenance, supplies, training, repairs, etc.
- Guard against overreaction to a supplier created crisis. For instance, "The price is going up after the first of the month"; "This is the last one in stock and I can't guarantee it won't be sold" or, "I need a purchase order to insure we schedule production".
- Do not appear to agree to prices and terms. The purchasing staff needs an opportunity to evaluate or negotiate a fair price.
- Do not appear to commit the University by telling a salesperson that he or she has the order. **Only a signed purchase order can commit the University.**

- **Never** accept payments or gifts from suppliers. Offers tendered by **unsolicited** telephone calls should **never** be considered. Such items have been found to be **overpriced** and of **poor quality**.