



## University Policy: Sustainable Purchasing

**Policy Category:** Sustainability

**Subject:** Sustainable Purchasing

**Office(s) Responsible for Review of this Policy:** Sustainability, Purchasing

**Related University Policies:** American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment; Green Building Policy; Green Cleaning Policy; Talloires Declaration; Zero Waste Policy

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### I. SCOPE

The policy provides guidelines, information and resources for developing sustainable purchasing practices that apply to procurement conducted by all University departments and offices for ongoing consumables, durable goods, facility alterations and additions, and mercury-containing lamps.

### II. POLICY STATEMENT

Consistent with American University's goal to "Act on our values through social responsibility and ... an active pursuit of sustainability," the purpose of this policy is to guide University procurement in ways that advance social responsibility and environmental sustainability by using, maintaining, disposing or re-purposing, goods and services which: improve energy, water, and material efficiency; utilize renewable materials; advance the University toward carbon-neutrality or net positive renewable energy production; eliminate waste, especially hazardous materials; enhance the physical campus environment; protect and enhance the health of the campus community; encourage AU employees to adopt sustainability practices; offer additional consideration to vendors with sustainable production, distribution and end of life management systems or services; support locally produced goods and services; educate the University campus and the extended community about sustainability.

### III. DEFINITIONS

*Best Value:* A result intended in the acquisition of all goods and services based on consideration of total cost of ownership, product lifecycle impacts, human health and equity concerns, product quality and performance, and vendor quality of service.

*Product Lifecycle Impacts:* The social and environmental costs and benefits resulting from a product over its life span, from raw material acquisition, manufacturing, distribution, use, maintenance, and end of life management.

*Total Cost of Ownership:* The real cost for a product, encompassing materials, installation, maintenance, anticipated repairs, necessary monitoring, and end of life management.

### IV. POLICY

#### Sustainable Purchasing Guiding Principles

University personnel shall strive to achieve the following goals: conduct purchasing in conformance with LEED EB O&M 2009 standards, at minimum, and in accordance with the following principles:

1. Utilize procurement to act on the University's values of social responsibility and environmental sustainability;
2. Support the University policy of striving to produce zero waste, by reducing overall consumption and shifting to products with reduced product lifecycle impacts;
3. Support the University commitment to eliminate and offset our greenhouse gas emissions;
4. Consider total cost of ownership, rather than purchase price, when evaluating the financial competitiveness of procurement contracts;
5. Require sustainability standards and certifications whenever they are available, with preference for those which are developed by third-parties through balanced stakeholder processes, and which are independently verified throughout a product's chain of custody;
6. Continuously improve sustainable purchasing practices; and
7. Serve as a model of sustainable purchasing to our community of consumers and suppliers.

#### Sustainable Purchasing Goals

In accordance with the university's Sustainability Plan, Climate Plan, and Zero Waste Policy, university personnel shall aim to achieve, at minimum, the following goals:

1. Ongoing Consumables:
  - a. Achieve sustainable purchases of at least 60% of total annual spend;
  - b. Purchase only 100% post-consumer recycled content paper by the end of CY 2015;
  - c. Support fair trade by sourcing Fair Trade certified products;
2. Durable Goods:
  - a. Achieve sustainable purchases of at least 40% of total annual spend on electric powered equipment;
  - b. Achieve sustainable purchases of at least 40% of total annual spend on furniture;
3. Reduced Mercury Lamps: At least 90% of all mercury-containing lamps contain no more than 90 picograms of mercury per lumen hour.
4. Facility Alterations and Additions: Achieve sustainable purchases of at least 50% of annual spend on materials for facility renovations, demolitions, refits, and additions.
5. Bottled Water: Purchase no single-serve bottled water for university consumption by the end of CY 2015;
6. Food: Source at least fifty percent of dining services food from sustainable sources, according to LEED criteria, by the end of CY 2016
7. Apparel: Source from apparel suppliers who conform to the Fair Labor Association's code of conduct and who have been included in the Designated Suppliers Program by the Worker Rights Consortium, as applicable

#### **V. FREQUENCY OF REVIEW AND UPDATE**

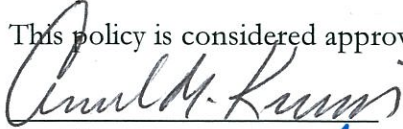
Any party mentioned in the Policy section above may initiate review and update at any time. The Office of Sustainability will initiative review and update not more than two years from the effective date, or date of last review or update, whichever is most recent.

**VI. EFFECTIVE DATE AND APPROVAL**

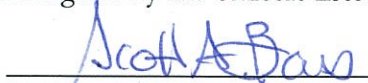
This Policy is effective January 14, 2010.

Last reviewed and updated April 19, 2013.

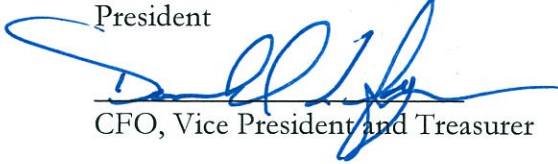
This policy is considered approved when signed by the officers listed below:



President



Provost



CFO, Vice President and Treasurer



Date approved

## Appendix A – Procedures and Strategies for Sustainable Purchasing

Goals	Responsible Party
1. Ongoing Consumables	Director, Contracting and Procurement, Purchasing
2. Durable Goods	Sustainability Coordinator, Office of Sustainability; Lead Buyer and IT Specialist
3. Reduced Mercury Lamps	Materials Supply Manager, Facilities Management
4. Facility Alterations and Additions	Sustainability Coordinator, Office of Sustainability
5. Bottled Water	Sustainability Coordinator, Office of Sustainability
6. Food	Sustainability Coordinator, Office of Sustainability
7. Apparel	Director of Auxiliary Services

### Sustainable Purchasing of Ongoing Consumables

The term “ongoing consumables” refers to low-cost-per-unit materials that are regularly used and replaced through the course of daily business operations. These products may include, but are not limited to: printing and copying paper, notebooks, envelopes, business cards, sticky notes, paper clips, toner cartridges, and batteries. American University’s goal is that at least 60% of the cost of goods purchased will comply with one or more of the following criteria:

- Contains at least 10% post-consumer and/or 20% post-industrial material
- Contains at least 50% rapidly renewable material (e.g., bamboo, cotton, cork, wool)
- Contains at least 50% materials harvested and extracted and processed within 500 miles of the facility
- Consists of at least 50% Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-certified paper products
- Rechargeable batteries

American University acknowledges the value of purchasing sustainable products and requires that vendor(s) support that effort when appropriate and/or possible. American University requests that vendor(s) notify them of recycled content and reduced packaging options or alternative products that would comply with the above specifications. Nothing contained in this policy shall be construed as requiring American University to procure products that do not perform adequately for their intended use, exclude adequate competition, or are not available at a reasonable price in a reasonable period of time.

### Sustainable Purchasing of Durable Goods

The term “durable goods” refers to higher-cost-per-unit materials that are replaced infrequently and/or may require capital outlays to purchase. These products may include, but are not limited to: office equipment (such as computers, monitors, printers, copiers, fax machines), appliances (refrigerators, dishwashers, water coolers), external power adaptors, televisions, and furniture. The purchasing criteria for these products fall into the following two categories.

#### Electronics and Appliances

American University’s goal is that at least 40% of the cost of goods purchased will comply with one or more of the following criteria:

- Energy Star labeled products, when available

- Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tools (EPEAT) rated products (at least bronze level)
- The equipment replaces conventional gas-powered equipment, i.e. maintenance equipment and vehicles

### *Furniture*

American University's goal is that at least 40% of the cost of goods purchased will comply with one or more of the following criteria:

- Contains at least 10% post-consumer and/or 20% post-industrial material
- Contains at least 70% salvaged material from off-site or outside the organization
- Contains at least 70% salvaged material from on-site through an internal materials and equipment reuse program
- Contains at least 50% rapidly renewable material (bamboo, cotton, cork, wool)
- Contains at least 50% materials harvested, extracted and processed within 500 miles of the facility/site
- Consists of at least 50% Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified wood

American University acknowledges the value of purchasing sustainable products and requires that vendor(s) support that effort when appropriate and/or possible. American University requests that vendor(s) notify them of Energy Star and sustainable furniture opportunities that would comply with the above specifications, as well as reduced packaging options.

### **Sustainable Purchasing: Toxic Material Source Reduction – Reduced Mercury in Lamps**

American University seeks to reduce the amount of mercury brought into all sites through purchase of lamps for the buildings and associated grounds. American University's goal is that at least 90% of the number of lamps purchased will meet the following overall mercury-content target:

- No more than 90 picograms of mercury per lumen-hour

American University representatives acknowledge the value of purchasing low-mercury lamps and require that vendors support that effort when appropriate and/or possible. American University requests that vendor(s) notify them of specific lamps and other opportunities that would comply with the above specifications, as well as reduced packaging options.

Tracking of purchases will occur at a campus level and within specific buildings as possible to assess performance based on total purchases of applicable materials on a cost basis. Weighted values are used; materials meeting two separate criteria count twice toward the total. The average mercury content in lamps purchased is determined using the weighted average method in the LEED Reference Guide for Green Building Operations & Maintenance, 2009. Purchasing personnel and/or vendor responsible for purchasing will report American University purchases on an annual basis or as requested.

