PURCHASING GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

There are 4 methods for making purchases. They are listed below in order of recommended use along with instructions for each:

- **Ariba** (UW eProcurement System): This is a web-based ordering system for orders from frequent suppliers that have a contract with UW. It is the most preferred method of placing an order. Please check the list of suppliers to verify that the vendor is in the system. If so, you can place orders yourself through Ariba. Once you know the budget number that the purchase is to be charged to (consult your advisor), simply follow the link to the eProcurement page, click on “Create Order” on the left, and fill in the required information. If you need help, you can visit the business office for a tutorial or ask one of your peers to help you get started. Once you place an order via Ariba, a notification will be sent to the department Administrator to approve. If the order requires approval (see Approvals below), you must obtain either an electronic email approval or add the faculty’s name to the approval chain in Ariba.

- **Departmental Credit Card** (UW Procurement Card): This is a purchase made via a departmental Visa credit card (ProCard). This is the recommended option for small dollar items that are not available in Ariba. There is a limit of $3500 unless special approval is obtained. To start, please submit online purchasing form. After hitting the submit button on the form, a summary of what you submitted will appear. Please copy and paste this into an email and send to your advisor for approval if necessary (see Approvals below). Once submitted, the order auto generates an email to the designated staff handling ordering (Karen Yoneda). Forward the email approval from your advisor to Karen.). Once Karen receives the documents she will contact the vendor to place the order. She will then notify you once the order has been placed with confirmation and shipping information (if provided). Once the order arrives, you will be notified by the front desk that a package is waiting for you. Please check the packing slip to ensure all items are received. If so, mark the packing slip “Received” with the date and return to Joanne Tall at the front desk or Karen’s inbox marked “packing slips.”

- **Purchase Order** (UW Payments & Accounts System): For large-dollar purchases or when a signed purchase order or contract is needed. If possible, please obtain a quote from the vendor that includes the item number, unit cost, quantity, and total cost. Note: Always request an educational discount. Most vendors will provide a 5% to 15% educational discount on large-dollar items. Next, submit online purchasing form. If you have a quote you may simply refer Karen to the quote. After hitting the submit button on the form, a summary of what you submitted will appear. Please copy and paste this into an email and send to your advisor for approval if necessary (see Approvals below). Once submitted, the order auto generates an email to the designated staff handling ordering (Karen Yoneda). Forward the email approval from your advisor to Karen and plus any tax exemption, sole source, or capital equipment statements (if needed, see details on each below). Once Karen receives the documents she will contact the vendor to place the order. She will then notify you once the order has been placed with confirmation and shipping information (if provided). Once the order arrives, you will be notified by the front desk that a package is waiting for you. Please check the packing slip to ensure all items are received. If so, mark the packing slip “Received” with the date and return to Joanne Tall at the front desk or Karen’s inbox marked “packing slips.”

- **Reimbursement**: For small items, travel, or things needed from local vendors, students may purchase the item themselves and then request reimbursement. Please provide Karen with the
receipts on a piece of paper with the nature of the expense and the budget number along with approval from your advisor if necessary. You will then be given a Check Request form to sign, or receive an email from the e-reimbursement system to approve. A check will be delivered to the department once it is processed by the Accounts Payables office or if you have direct deposit the funds will appear in your bank account. If being reimbursed from a general department budget (not your advisor’s research budget), you do not need to get pre-approval from your faculty advisor.

**Approvals:** You must obtain approval (email is fine) from your advisor unless: (1) you are in the Baneyx, Overney, Jenekhe, Schwartz, or Shen group AND the cost is less than $250, or (2) you are in the Adler or Carothers group AND the cost is less than $1000.

**Sales Tax Exemption:** In order to qualify for sales tax exempt, the purchase equipment must: (1) Have a useful life of more than one year, (2) Be used more than 50% annually on qualifying research; and (3) Have an acquisition cost of $1,000 or more. You must provide a statement attesting that these three criteria are met. In most cases, for item 2 above, it will suffice to state the main goal of the research project incurring the cost of the order (i.e., develop solar cells to reduce energy costs). Note: we cannot request tax exemption on credit card orders. Please email this statement to Karen Yoneda after submitting the online purchasing form.

**Capital Equipment and Fabrication of Capital Equipment:** Equipment that costs at least $2,000 may be designated as “capital equipment.” Doing so is highly advantageous since capital equipment does not get charged UW overhead, which is an additional ~54% charge. For example, a $1,999 piece of equipment will cost a grant $3,078 ($1,999 x 154%). However, a $2,000 piece of equipment costs $2,000. An additional requirement is that it must be tagged as a UW asset. If you are receiving such an item, Karen will contact you to get the appropriate information to enter into the Asset Database and provide you a sticker to affix to the equipment. If you are fabricating multiple items of less than $2,000 together to create a piece of capital equipment, request a tag number from Karen and identify items in your online purchase request that belong to this fabricated capital equipment.

**Sole Source Justification:** If a purchase exceeds $10,000 and there is not a contract in place with UW, we must include a “sole source justification” that explains why we are using the certain vendor. A "Sole Source" purchase means that only one supplier (source), to the best of the requester’s knowledge and belief, based upon thorough research, (i.e. conducting a market survey), is capable of delivering the required product or service. Similar types of goods and services may exist, but only one supplier, for reasons of expertise, and / or standardization, quality, compatibility with existing equipment, specifications, or availability, is the only source that is acceptable to meet a specific need. Often it is because they are the only vendor who carries the item or have proven to be the most efficient in
processing. You may consult with the business office for assistance with crafting this statement. It should be emailed to Karen Yoneda after submitting the online purchasing form. Note: a quote is also required if the order is more than $10,000.

For all the gory details on the ordering process at UW, check out Purchasing’s web site: http://f2.washington.edu/fm/ps/how-to-buy