

University of Idaho

**PREPARED BY CORE 175: EARTH AND OUR PLACE ON IT
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**UI MOSCOW CAMPUS
SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT**

Purchasing

- 1 Paper Purchasing
- 2 Reusing/Recycling Paper
- 3 Campus Attitude Towards Green Purchasing
- 4 University Policy on Green Purchasing
- 5 University's Future in Green Purchasing

Purchasing



PAPER PURCHASING

In a general sustainability assessment of the Purchasing department our committee has compiled some interesting data for consideration. First some background information, according to policy, various departments on campus can purchase up to \$5000 without the Purchasing office being involved. It is focused on the larger scale buying. The fiscal year runs from July 1st to June 30th and each department receives X amount of dollars to spend for the year. There is a cap on the purchasing card of \$20,000 per month but as many purchases can be recorded as needed within the limits.

How Are We Doing?

Green Purchasing

The exact figures for percentage of departments employing sustainability guidelines in all purchasing decisions are unknown to a degree, since purchasing sector runs as a decentralized office. When departments are for instance buying paper, as long as it is under \$5000, there is no control over what kind of paper is purchased. The purchasing office sent out free reams of paper across campus ranging from 30-50% post-consumer. The paper is around the same prices as virgin paper. The head purchasing office has estimated that at least 70% of departments are purchasing at least 30% recycled paper. In a survey conducted across campus for purchasing departments with 41 respondents, 47.2% used 30% post-consumer paper, 5.6% used 50% post-consumer paper, and 16.7% used 100% post-consumer paper. This amounted to 69.5% of the departments participating in the survey using some form of post-consumer paper.

The University of Idaho has a contract with Office Max, but departments do buy paper from other sources such as Costco, Staples, and Office Depot.

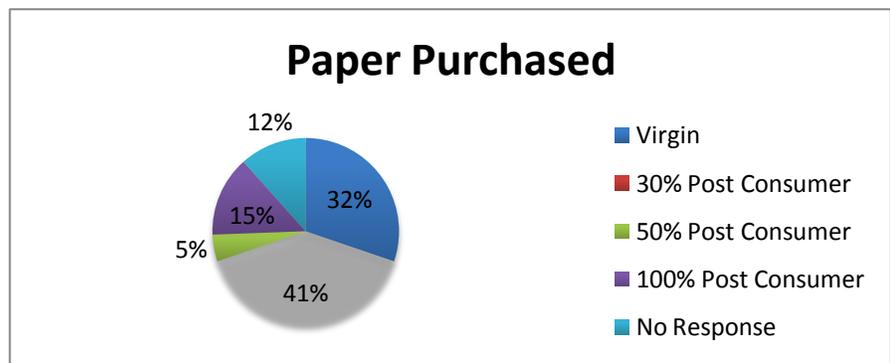
We thought the following data regarding the number of reams of paper purchased amongst departments per month might be of interest:

Mean: 11 Reams
Median: 7 reams
Mode: 10 reams
Range: 2-90 reams

Concerns of Departments

- Cost-effective vs. virgin paper
- Recycled paper doesn't run through some printers well
- Balance between "green" and expense
- Don't like the noting of enforcing anything

Our assessment is that the paper purchasing results are an indicator there is certainly room for improvement on campus in utilizing green paper purchasing. It seems viable to consider centralized purchasing of such bulk items as printer paper in an effort to go greener and save the university money.



Did You Know?

The U.S. consumption of paper and paperboard in 1999 was approximately 354 kilograms (about 800 pounds) per person¹

Water System



PAPER PURCHASING

Recent Accomplishments

Nearly 75% of paper used on campus is post-consumer paper.

Comparing our Performance

Arizona State University has similar guidelines on purchasing of paper. Their policy on paper from their green purchasing policy is:

“Thirty per cent postconsumer waste recycled paper for all applications shall be the standard when quality of service is not compromised nor the health and safety of employees prejudiced.”³

Purchasing



PAPER PURCHASING

Opportunities

NEXT FEW YEARS

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Purchasing



REUSING/RECYCLING PAPER

Recycling and Reusing is a huge part of purchasing sustainability. The more the departments reuse, the lesser the need is to buy. Not printing unless it is necessary and reusing paper whenever possible will save the university money and produce less waste.

Recycling paper instead of throwing it away reduces trash flow to landfills. This is important if we are to become more sustainable.

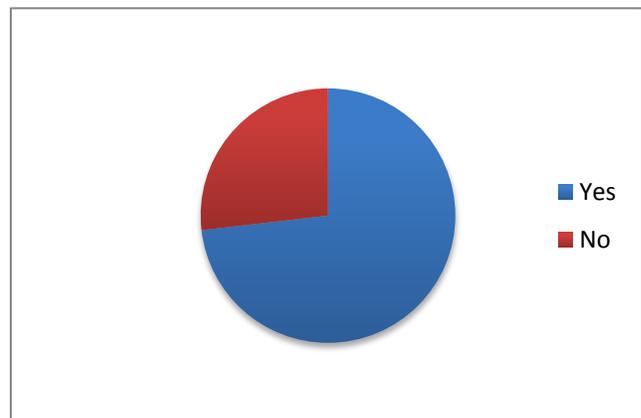
How Are We Doing?

Almost 75% of the departments we surveyed said they reuse paper. That is a good majority and shows that we are on our way to sustainability.

More than 60% buy paper that is at least 30% recycled.

As far as paper consumption goes, departments range greatly in their use of paper. The number of reams of paper used per month varies from anything from 3 to 90. Paper consumption depends greatly on the department, and their need for printing paper.

Does Your University of Idaho Department Reuse Paper?



Did You Know?

Recycling one ton of paper saves about 17 trees

Purchasing



RECYCLING/REUSING PAPER

Recent Accomplishments

This entire sustainability audit is a great first step. It shows that our university is taking the issue seriously. Many students and staff are involved in this. This will bring awareness to the sustainability of our school. Hopefully even by taking this survey, many of the department purchasing heads rethought how they get their paper. Many of our departments reuse paper and buy paper that is at least partly made from post consumer waste. We got responses from 41 departments, showing that staff/faculty at this university are willing to work towards sustainability.

Comparing our Performance

While it appears that University of Idaho is doing pretty well in the recycling and re-using paper department, there is room for improvement. Other universities have more readily accessible paper-recycling programs. One such university is Iowa State University². Their recycling program is better advertised, thus more utilized. Iowa State University recycles over 10 tons of white paper a month. Iowa State also has a full website devoted to their recycling program on campus:
<http://www.fpm.iastate.edu/recycling/default.as>



Opportunities

NEXT FEW YEARS

There are many things we can do over the next few years to have a better system when it comes to recycling and reusing.

People will recycle when it is convenient so we need a larger system of recycling bins in all the departments and all around campus.

When recycling bins are readily available, people will recycle more. With more bins, all the departments will be able to recycle all their department paper waste.

Many departments say they do not buy the recycled paper because it is more expensive than the “virgin” paper. To get more departments to purchase recycled paper, the University could find a paper contractor that is willing to work with the University and move in the “green” direction.

Most departments already reuse their paper but we could send emails to all the departments in the school detailing all the simple and easy ways to reuse paper.

Opportunities

LONG TERM

Ultimately, we need to look at having purchasing regulations to keep this campus sustainable.

We also need regulations on paper purchasing. In the future, we need to find a distributor with good prices on paper made from post-consumer waste.

Other opportunities include getting faculty, staff, and student feedback on recycling efforts. Feedback is essential to seeing what works and what does not work.

Purchasing



CAMPUS ATTITUDE TOWARDS GREEN PURCHASING

In general, policies on campus and initiatives do not come to existence without the support of those on campus. Faculty and staff members play an influential role in general attitudes on campus. In order to get a sense of the campus attitude towards “green” purchasing, those in charge of purchasing for each campus department were asked to complete an online survey that looked into general attitudes and practices in regards to green purchasing.

How Are We Doing?

In general, the campus attitude towards green purchasing policies is conditionally supportive. The majority of respondents felt that green purchasing was a good idea, but most were conflicted with fiscal responsibility and ecological responsibility. Due to budget cuts, many departments said they did not have the funding to be worried about making sure all their purchases, especially in regards to paper purchases, were “green”.

Did You Know?

U.S. contribution of global greenhouse gas emissions: about 20 percent

Purchasing



CAMPUS ATTITUDE TOWARDS GREEN PURCHASING

Opportunities

NEXT FEW YEARS

- Host workshops/seminars that show the benefits of green purchasing
- Provide faculty/staff/students with reading materials that explain green purchasing and the benefits associated with green purchasing

Opportunities

LONG TERM

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Purchasing



UNIVERSITY POLICY ON GREEN PURCHASING

Green purchasing can be more expensive than the traditional purchasing that requires little to no consideration to how it will affect the environment. The University of Idaho is pushing to become a more 'green' university, but also has to make sure they are able to fit it in their yearly budget. Campus policies regarding green purchasing do encourage departments to take the Earth's resources into consideration while making purchases, but at the same time aren't too strict in order to match the needs of many departments that simply could not operate as efficiently on green products.

How Are We Doing?

Over the years, UI has been making great efforts to become a more green university. By making deals with suppliers to reduce cost on green products, and enforcing recycling more, UI is heading in the right direction to becoming greener!

Did You Know?

Combined percentage of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions generated by commercial buildings (17 percent) and industrial facilities (28 percent): 45 percent.

Purchasing



UNIVERSITY POLICY ON GREEN PURCHASING

Recent Accomplishments

Orders for paper that go through the purchasing office must be at least 30% post consumer paper

The University has a contract with Office Max which means the cost of being greener is becoming less expensive for everyone to use.

Cleaning departments have been using greener cleaning supplies that don't harm the environment as much.

Comparing our Performance

While the University of Idaho is making great strides towards becoming a "greener" more "sustainable" campus, other universities have already implemented more comprehensive green purchasing policies. One example of a clear and readily accessible policy and attitude towards green purchasing is that of Rutgers University. [Rutgers University](#) has a full website devoted to their efforts towards creating a green, sustainable campus.

Purchasing



UNIVERSITY'S FUTURE IN GREEN PURCHASING

The Sustainability Center at the University offers great hope towards the University of Idaho having a “green” and sustainable campus. Change happens when people take the time to explain and advocate for it.

How Are We Doing?

The future of green purchasing at the University of Idaho is bright. While current purchasing guidelines are more of just friendly suggestions, it appears that the Sustainability Center is doing its work to have a campus that purchases in a more “eco-friendly” way.

Did You Know?

Amount of greenhouse gas emissions that would be reduced if the energy efficiency of commercial and industrial buildings improved by 10 percent: equal to about 30 million vehicles.

Purchasing



UNIVERSITY'S FUTURE IN GREEN PURCHASING

Recent Accomplishments

While the University is still working on having more comprehensive purchasing regulations, they have made great strides.

While it is not necessarily a tangible “accomplishment”, the completion of a survey of purchasing habits is a step towards great green purchasing requirements. The overall opinion on green purchasing was positive—the university just needs to find a way to make it possible financially.

Comparing our Performance

As said in the section that covered the attitudes towards green purchasing, other universities have passed the University of Idaho in green purchasing guidelines/regulations. Rutgers University has a pretty comprehensive plan for purchasing guidelines. Arizona State University⁴ is another university that shows a sustainable initiative in their purchasing practices. This link takes one to the purchasing policy at ASU: <http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/pur/pur210.html>

Purchasing



UNIVERSITY'S FUTURE IN GREEN PURCHASING

Opportunities

NEXT FEW YEARS

Educate staff/faculty on the benefits of green purchasing.

Slowly implement green purchasing guidelines. Possible create incentive for departments to do so.

Opportunities

LONG TERM

Continue to educate staff on the benefits of green purchasing. Also provide information to the departments and show them how the "green" purchasing they have been doing has lessened the University of Idaho's carbon footprint

Enter System



PURCHASING NOTES

Staff interviewed in the assessment of this system (bold indicates primary contributors):

| NAME | CAMPUS ROLE | INDICATOR(S) OF RELEVANCE |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Julia McIlroy | Purchasing Department | Indicators 1-5 |
| University of Idaho Purchasing Survey | | Indicators 1-5 |
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