Western Michigan University is firmly committed to the principle of nondiscrimination and affirmative action.

It is the University’s purchasing policy to actively pursue and promote the opportunities for minority/female suppliers to furnish the University with goods and services.

In an effort to formalize established affirmative action procurement programs, the following procedures will be implemented by the University Purchasing Department.

**Minority Owned Business (MBE) Definition**

For purposes of NMSDCs (National Minority Supplier Development Council) program, a minority group member is an individual who is a U.S. citizen with at least 1/4 or 25% minimum (documentation to support claim of 25% required from applicant) of the following:

- **Asian-Indian** - A U.S. citizen whose origins are from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh
- **Asian-Pacific** - A U.S. citizen whose origins are from Japan, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Taiwan, Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, the Philippines, Thailand, Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Trust Territories of the Pacific or the Northern Marianas.
- **African American** - A U.S. citizen having origins in any of the racial groups of Africa.
- **Hispanic** - A U.S. citizen of true-born Hispanic heritage, from any of the Spanish-speaking areas of the following regions: Mexico, Central America, South America and the Caribbean Basin only. Brazilians shall be listed under Hispanic designation for review and certification purposes.
- **Native American** - A person who is an American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut or Native Hawaiian, and regarded as such by the community of which the person claims to be a part. Native Americans must be documented members of a North American tribe, band or otherwise organized group of native people who are indigenous to the continental United States and proof can be provided through a Native American Blood Degree Certificate (i.e., tribal registry letter, tribal roll register number).

A minority business enterprise is legally defined as a privately or publicly owned corporation, joint venture, or any other type of business organization that is more than fifty percent beneficially owned and controlled by one or more minority persons.
**Women Owned Business (WBE) Definition**

To be identified as a woman owned business, businesses must show:

- Must be able to provide clear and documented evidence that at least 51% or more is women-owned, managed, and controlled.
- The business must be open for at least six months.
- The business owner must be a U.S. citizen or legal resident alien.

Evidence must indicate that:

- The contribution of capital and/or expertise by the woman business owner is real and substantial and in proportion to the interest owned.
- The woman business owner must direct or cause the direction of management, policy, fiscal, and operational matters.
- The woman business owner shall have the ability to perform in the area of specialty or expertise without reliance on either the finances or resources of a firm that is not owned by a woman.

**Identification**

The Purchasing Agent will identify qualified minority and female vendors and give them the opportunity to furnish quotations on all goods and services procured by the University. A directory of minority and female vendors will be compiled and maintained by the University Purchasing Department. Minority and female business registers and directories will be requested from sister institutions, municipalities, professional organizations, and other sources appropriate to our needs.

**Controls**

The Purchasing Agent will monitor all procurement activity of the various purchasing entities and will submit quarterly reports to the Affirmative Action Office and also the Michigan Minority Supplier Development Council.

**Proposed Purchasing Procedures:**

A. Contracts can be negotiated directly with minority and female suppliers on amounts up to $10,000.00 per order. This should allow the purchasing staff sufficient flexibility to increase both the volume of orders and the dollar amount to minority vendors. This program will bypass the existing competitive bid process. Therefore, to provide proper balance between affirmative action objectives and internal control requirements, we believe this program should be held to contracts below $10,000.00.

B. We will bid to only minority/female suppliers if three or more vendors can be identified for a particular product. This will be limited to orders estimated at less than $25,000.00.

C. We will continue our involvement with minority/female supplier organizations. This involvement promotes the University and encourages minority vendor participation with
our organization. Along with these outside contacts, we can provide the following:

**Technical Assistance** – Technical assistance include all areas that relate to business skills.

**Special Assistance** – Any desired assistance of the Business Staff of the University may be requested to aid the minority/female vendor in the development of the qualifications necessary for a successful business relationship with the University.

**Technical Seminars** – Technical seminars may be held to instruct the interested minority/female vendor in business procedures, as it relates to our University (e.g., preparation of bids, cost accounting, traffic, etc.).

**Small Business Administration** – The SBA administers a program under which a qualified minority/female vendor may receive the services of a business consultant on a “no charge” basis. We will make this known to minority/female suppliers.

**Office of Minority Business Enterprise** – OMBE, established by Executive Order in 1969, acts as the Federal Government’s focal point and catalyst in the development of resources that assist minority vendors. We will cooperate with this office and its programs which are conducted to identify and qualify minority/female vendors.

D. Many small businesses, particularly the newly established business, are undercapitalized and often require some type of financial assistance in order to survive. The University Purchasing Department “Buyers” will be authorized, subject to review by the Director of Logistical Services, to provide the following forms of assistance to minority vendors with deemed appropriate:

**Billing Assistance** – The University, through the efforts of the Purchasing Department Buyer, will make an effort to insure that the vendor’s billing is in order and is submitted to the accounting system in the proper manner and location. The Buyer will follow through to expedite payment of the invoice.

**Purchase of Material Inventory** – The University will purchase raw materials to be fabricated by the minority/female vendor for installation. The University will buy raw materials on occasion at substantially better prices than minority/female vendors and, under these circumstances, we will utilize our purchasing power to gain a better price on the raw material sold to the minority/female vendor.

**Guarantee Minority Purchases** – The University will guarantee payment of minority/female purchases. This will enable the minority/female vendor to gain credit to fulfill our contract expectations without incurring interest of carrying charges.

**Prepay Approved Orders** – The University will prepay approved orders, if prepayment will assist in maintaining the minority/female vendor’s cash liquidity.