

# **THE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM- A TOOL FOR DEVELOPING AND TEACHING ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP**

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For years universities have recognized that areas such as environmental protection and sustainability are important, and have created courses & academic programs and have conducted research in these areas. What many universities have not yet done is to consciously examine how they fulfill their academic mission and what effect do their operations have on the environment. Conducting university operations in an environmentally sound manner can be a powerful teaching tool. Setting the example and teaching by doing can be more powerful than the best lecture. An Environmental Management System (EMS) is a set of policies, plans, review mechanisms, and procedures used to proactively manage the environmental aspects of an organization. UPRM has been evaluating what aspects of its operation affect the environment the most and has taken the first steps in the implementation of an EMS. This environmental self assessment has started the educational process by forcing the UPRM community to take a closer look at how things are done, what are the consequences of these actions, what benefits are generated by these actions, and if the benefits are worth the consequences. This covers the design, planning and initial implementation process of the UPRM Environmental Management System and its role in UPRM's academic mission.