UMass’ new Green Guidelines highlight LEED

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The University of Massachusetts Amherst (UMASS) has become a true sustainable building leader over the years, setting an example for other institutions to follow. They have taken their work a step further, with the Green Building Committee at the university recently announcing the publication of Green Building Guidelines for use on campus.

The Guidelines use the LEED green building rating system as the core framework in addressing site development, water efficiency, materials and resource use, indoor air quality and energy efficiency. Design teams for all new UMass Amherst buildings are using these guidelines to design a greener campus.

Being a leader in the green world is not a new feat for UMass. In 2007, University President Jack Wilson signed the American College & University President’s Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) and later that year established the Environmental Performance Advisory Committee (EPAC). In 2008 UMass mandated a LEED-Silver certification or higher for all new construction and major renovations on their campus, and in 2010, the Green Building Committee was established to focus efforts on sustainable design and building on campus.

During the summer of 2010, the committee reviewed the LEED credits and prerequisites and established priority and feasibility levels for each based on the environmental realities and mission of the University. The campus hopes the new guidelines will be the catalyst for dynamic conversation between designers, UMass stakeholders and users of new buildings. LEED points are not the end goal of these guidelines; rather, they will be a by-product of the design of high performance buildings.

The Green Building Guidelines are available to the public through the UMass Amherst Facilities Planning website. More information can be obtained by contacting UMass Amherst green building researcher Lawson Wulsin at 413-577-1787 or lwulsin@art.umass.edu

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