

Facility Asset Management

Advanced Degrees in Facilities Management

by Matt Adams, P.E.

The options for education in our industry—specifically advanced education—have progressed in lockstep. I was encouraged by the availability of undergraduate and graduate programs directly related to facilities management six years ago (*Facilities Manager*, March/April 2001) and as the field continues to become more sophisticated, I see an exciting evolution of program offerings.

One person who knows a great deal about advanced degrees in facilities management is Victoria Hardy, CFM, CFMJ, academic department head in the Department of Design and Facilities at Wentworth Institute of Technology in Boston, Massachusetts. She has seen graduate studies in our field expand and move in many positive directions. Hardy sees facilities management as a “collaborative art form,” meaning various skill sets combined to provide a variety of services for a spectrum of customers.

It is ironic that all of our comprehensive research institutions now extol the virtues of interdisciplinary programs for graduate studies and research, while we, as educational facilities managers, have been practitioners of this approach for decades. Each of the universities that offer either undergraduate (like Wentworth or Brigham Young University) or graduate facilities management programs has interdisciplinary components. At Wentworth, facilities management curriculum is influenced by space planning and interior design. Hardy’s specialty is theatre management.

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One of the premier graduate programs in the country is through the School of Design and Environmental Analysis at Cornell University Graduate School. This is a truly interdisciplinary program with its own

relative to the facilities management curriculum. This includes graduate studies and research. Graduate programs at Cornell fall under the Department of Human Environment Relations. Each class starts in the fall and enrolls eight to ten students.

Offered in parallel are applied research in human environment relations, facility planning and management, human factors, and ergonomics. Sims—professor of two of these courses and principal researcher for the International Workspace Studies Program—explains that disciplines crossover in Cornell’s program, resulting in a graduate degree that is more strategic and management-oriented than others. Graduates from this program go on to work for companies such as Toyota and Goldman Sachs. There is no doctoral program at this time.



Inventive entries from a recent door handle competition in the Department of Design & Facilities at Wentworth Institute of Technology.

unique influences. Bill Sims, former department chair, has seen a steady increase in interest. In the past, the program focused on the office environment. The new chair, Frank Becker, brought a healthcare perspec-

Georgia Institute of Technology offers master and doctoral programs in facilities management as part of its Building Construction Program. Master degrees are offered in Integrated Facility and Property Management,



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Georgia Tech Professor Chuck Eastman and two Ph.D. students are developing software to make building information models.

Though the real leaders in advanced degrees for facilities management are arguably in Europe, Asia, and Australia, the United States is improving and expanding its existing facilities management programs, especially on the graduate level.

Integrated Project Delivery Systems, and Resident Construction and Development. Unlike Cornell, Georgia Tech's programs are offered as night classes for professional students and online via the school's distance learning vehicle, which allows professionals to study for advanced studies, while they continue to work full-time.

Georgia Tech's curriculum is formulated around portfolio management practices. Many of the incoming students come from the General Services Administration, the U.S. military, private property management companies, and REITS (real estate investment trusts). Offering both thesis and non-thesis options for a master's degree, core courses include:

- professional trends in facility management
- maintenance management of built assets
- safety and environmental issues
- facility planning
- project management and benchmarking
- real estate asset and income property management
- facilities management financial analysis

Georgia Tech also offers internships, including one at Macy's. Tech has one of the only pure doctoral programs in facilities management. The graduates of Tech's programs often return to their current employers. Some become adjunct professors, which is a huge asset,

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as there is a high demand for faculty in facilities management programs.

Massachusetts Maritime Academy has been a long-time leader in facilities management education and understands what potential students are seeking. The academy offers master degree programs in an executive education format. Crossover curriculum from the traditional coursework of a maritime academy is a proven path for successful facilities managers. I know of a dozen or more senior facility administrators within APPA who have followed a maritime career path to get into our industry.


The Mass Maritime program is competitive, with only 24 students enrolled last fall. With more than 47 university physical plant departments in the Boston area alone, there is a "natural market" for prospective students. Graduates from this program go to all areas of our field and work in places like Gillette, John Hancock,

Pearson Education, and banking institutions.


Though the real leaders in advanced degrees for facilities management are arguably in Europe, Asia, and Australia, the United States is improving and expanding its existing facilities management programs, especially on the graduate level. I was excited to learn that Rochester Institute of Technology is starting a new master's

program this spring, and I know there are more programs in development. As we continue on this track, our peers will gain a deeper and broader background to provide innovative solutions in facilities management. 🏛️

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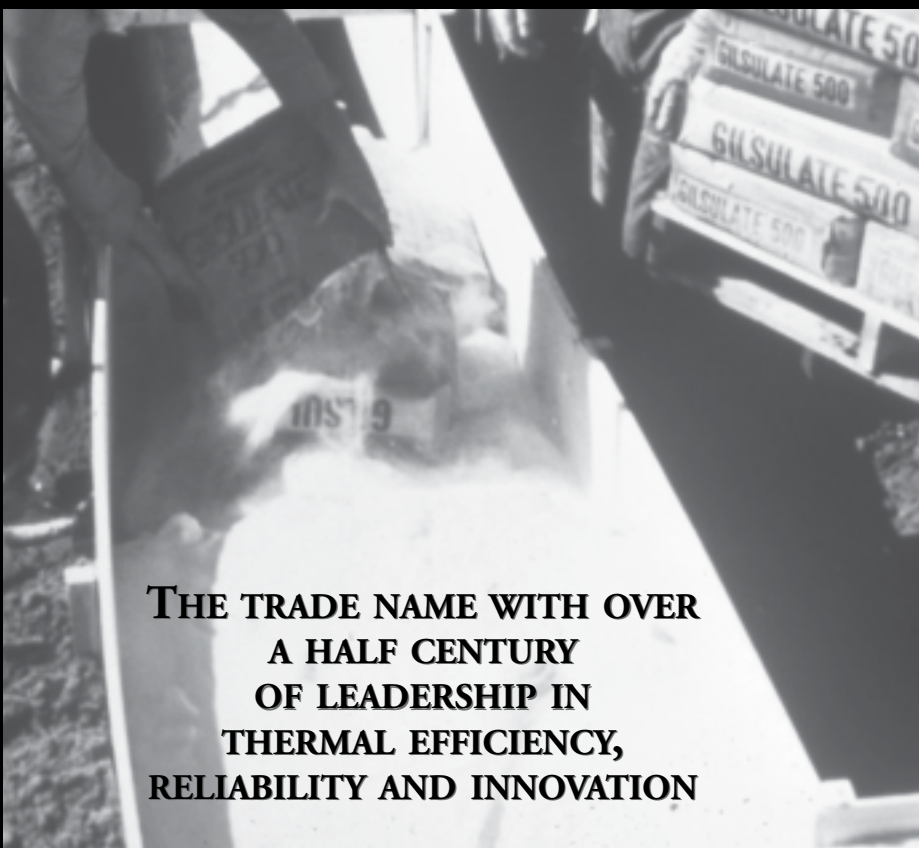
Later this year, APPA will be offering the first of two credentials for educational facilities professionals. The Educational Facilities Professional (EFP) program gives up-and-coming facilities professionals the opportunity to be recognized - with an EFP credential - for their achievement and experience in our field.



More information on EFP qualifications and the process will be available soon. To stay informed, visit www.appa.org or contact Suzanne Healy, suzanne@appa.org to be added to our special EFP email distribution list.

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