

# CIL: Customized Interactive Learning— APPA’s Latest and Greatest Educational Opportunity

By Ruthann Manlet

**C**ustomized Interactive Learning (CIL) is a relatively new way to learn the basics of APPA’s Four Core Modules as you work your way toward earning your CEFP and EFP (Certified Education Facilities Professional and Educational Facilities Professional) designations. The way we learn—as well as the entire educational system—is undergoing incredible transformation. In the past, the primary way to earn a degree was to enroll in a course, buy the books, go to class, do your homework, take written exams, wait for the results, and if all went well, you passed the class and ultimately earned a degree.

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With interactive learning, all that has changed—and the facilities industry is trying to keep up with that change. CIL is one of the latest, innovative ways that APPA has developed to allow our members an effective and efficient way to stay current with the constant shifts in our industry. CIL is available to all APPA members who are pursuing their CEFP/EFP designations.

## THE LEARNING ADVANTAGE

There are several reasons why all APPA members should take advantage of this program. First, the online feature is appealing to many professionals who have hectic schedules and busy lives; online learning allows these students flexibility.

Second, based on the feedback from members who have taken advantage of this program, the abil-

ity to collaborate with other students in the “forum” is a great benefit. The forum is an online chat room where a student can pose a question and other students who may have specific knowledge about the topic can respond. Upon your enrollment in the class, you are assigned to a cohort group; and along with your fellow students you work through the exercises and assignments together.

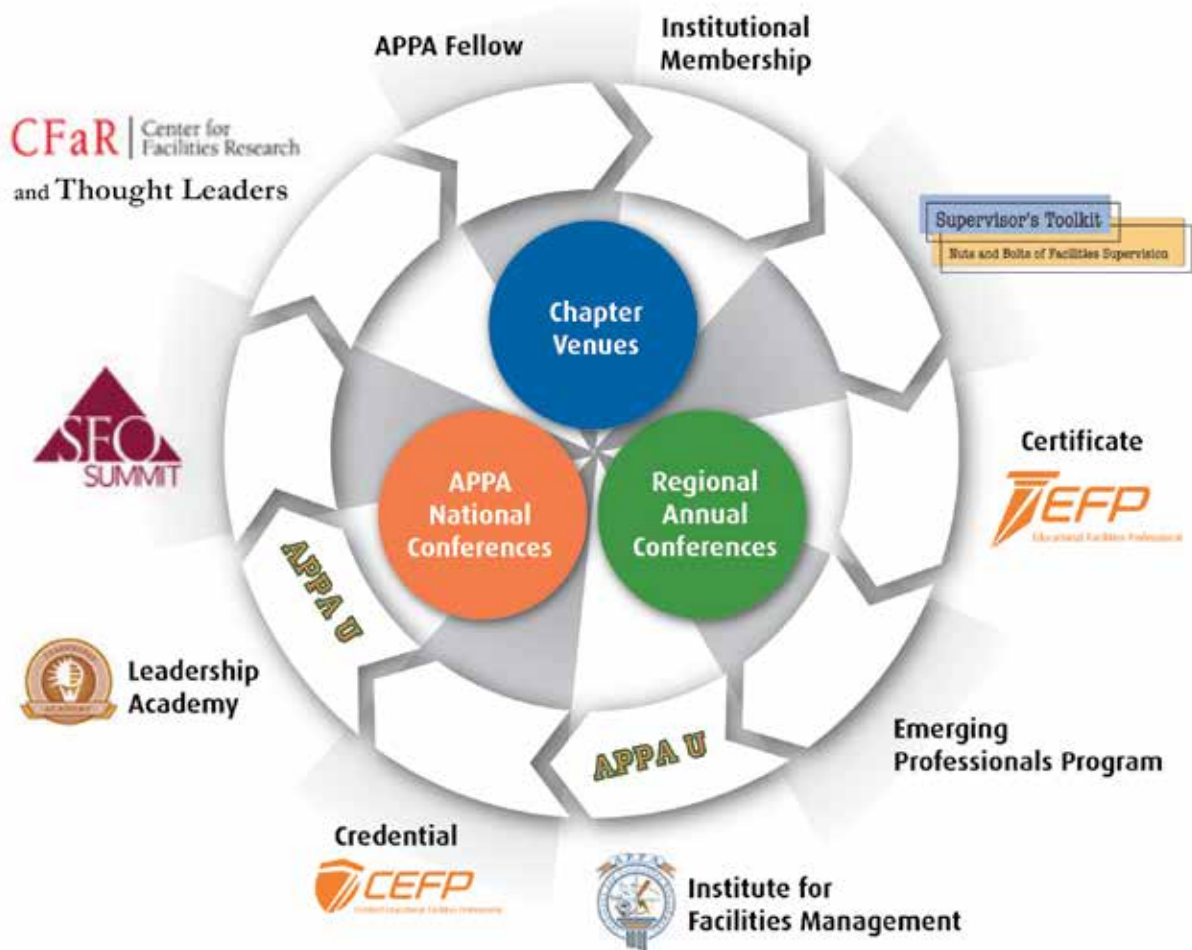
Throughout the course you have the opportunity to participate in four live webinars, during which you discuss the material and prepare for the exam. The webinars expand growth opportunities for the group, to ensure that it is fully prepared. These webinars are recorded for future reference—this unique feature has proven to be an extremely valuable tool that allows the students’ varied and significant experiences to be shared with one another. The real-life answers provided by fellow students bring a perspective to the issue that an instructor or a textbook cannot.

Along with the forum, students are encouraged to use the flashcards, which are also a helpful tool. The flashcards offer specific answers on a topic that may help to identify a correct answer on the exam, or eliminate a wrong answer. Taken together, the forum, the flashcards, and the BOK (Body of Knowledge) offer an easily accessible, diverse, and very thorough coverage of the topic being studied.

After completing the modules, the students will not only earn the appropriate designation, but will bring significant benefits to their respective institutions, enhance their knowledge, and advance their careers. Furthermore, the contacts they make and the relationships they develop while earning their designations will be a valuable asset throughout their careers.

Over the years I have taught many courses in many different settings. I had the privilege of be-

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ing the facilitator for Group A, the first class of students who used the CIL format; it is obvious to me that letting the students work at their own pace and giving them the ability to interact with their peers results in an immediate improvement in test scores.

## MAKING CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS

The more involved one gets in the facilities industry, the more it becomes apparent that our goals can be attained more quickly by working in a spirit of cooperation. I am certain that the collaboration and contacts that are developed through APPA and the CIL will prove invaluable to our careers and to our respective institutions. I am excited and encouraged

by the feedback I have received from those who are taking part in this new era of learning.

To date, more than 300 students have participated in the CIL program. There are financial incentives available from all APPA regions that make CIL more affordable than ever. Be sure to check out this unique and exciting opportunity. ☎

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