ACI University in the Classroom

by Anthony J. Lamanna

ACI University, the online learning resource of the American Concrete Institute, offers three certificate programs:

- Anchorage Design;
- Concrete Fundamentals; and
- Repair Application Procedures.

Each certificate program requires the completion of specific professional development hour (PDH) modules within ACI University. Upon completion of a certificate program, the recipient receives a printable completion certificate and a digital badge. The digital badges can be shared on LinkedIn and other social networking sites, as well as in e-mail signature lines. Later in this article, I’ll provide more comments about badges.

Membership Matters

ACI members are granted 11 member credits per year, and these credits can be used to access a wide variety of ACI University’s online courses—most of which are worth 1 PDH. Continuing education requirements vary by state, but if you’re a licensed professional engineer, you need PDHs; the credit program is a very valuable benefit.

ACI also offers a premier membership level specifically to students. Student membership is free, and with the exception that publications are available only in digital form, it provides the same benefits as Individual membership. As a professor teaching a Materials and Methods course that includes extensive coverage of masonry and concrete, I require my students to become ACI Student members. This not only builds awareness of the Institute and industry standards in general but also gives them access to 11 member credits.

Education Matters

When I travel during the semester, such as to The ACI Concrete Convention and Exposition, I assign ACI University PDH modules to students to make up for the missed lectures. Each module is worth 1 hour, so there can be no question from administrators that the students did not have the required instruction time. I like the modules because a student can e-mail the completion certificate to me as proof that they completed the module. This drastically reduces the amount of grading I need to do—I simply record the work as completed when I receive the student’s e-mail. My students like the modules because they are from “the real world”—the modules are the same ones that practicing engineers and construction industry experts are using.

Before the ACI University certificate programs existed, I regularly assigned PDH modules related to my course content. When the ACI University Concrete Fundamentals certificate program started, I began assigning the modules required for that program. This program requires two courses that are not member credit eligible—they must be purchased.

However, ACI was gracious enough to create student versions of these two courses at half price. In the course...
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ACI University is a dynamic learning center. New PDH modules are continually being added, and a Concrete Construction Basics certificate program will be released soon. If you are in the concrete industry and want to propose a new PDH module or certificate program, you can submit your proposal to ACI’s Professional Development staff through your committee homepage or by sending an e-mail to claire.hiltz@concrete.org.

Selected for reader interest by the editors.