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School's Out for ... Never

You may be a registered professional engineer required to earn Professional Development Hours (PDHs) to maintain your license. Maybe you are taking advantage of your employer's tuition-reimbursement program to earn an advanced degree. Or perhaps you simply want to keep your skills sharp and stay up-to-date on the latest technical developments. Whatever your situation, lifelong learning is essential.

Lifelong learning comes in many shapes and sizes — from formal university classes to onsite training seminars, from multi-day courses and one-day workshops to half-day short courses at AICHE meetings, as well as various types of self-study. (Of course, attending AICHE meetings and reading *CEP* should also be part of your ongoing education.)

AICHE's vision is to provide value as (among other things) "the lifetime center for professional and personal growth," and one of the goals set out in the strategic plan includes promoting lifelong learning. Building on the success of ChemE on Demand, the Institute recently expanded its educational menu with the launch of the AICHE eLearning Center. In addition to more than 1,000 archived ChemE on Demand webinars and other videos, this new portal is a gateway to a growing library of live and on-demand online courses.

Most courses consist of multiple modules taken in sequence, usually with a quiz that you must pass before you can move on to the next module. Some are asynchronous, consisting of 8, 12, or 30 hours of recorded material, and are available at any time. Several synchronous courses take place over a period of two to six weeks with weekly assignments and online meetings with the instructors. These "online office hours" provide opportunities for student-student as well as student-teacher interaction. Many of the online classes were developed from established AICHE continuing education courses and are taught by the same instructors (including several *CEP* authors).

The eLearning program aims to cover industrially relevant topics, much like the articles you'll find in this issue on process development, distillation, and flares. The first classes include: Process Safety Management Overview; Spreadsheet Problem-Solving; Chemical Engineering for Non-Chemical Engineers; Crystallization Process Development; and Process Safety Management for the Biofuel Industry. Tuition varies depending on the course, and members receive a discount of \$200 (more than the cost of membership!). Members with any AICHE group insurance policy get another 10% discount. The best deal yet is the biofuel safety course, which is free to AICHE members until September.

The fall semester, featuring an expanded course list, will begin in September, with new topics such as bulk solids flow and pneumatic conveying, particle technology, intellectual property, and process hazard analysis. Even more classes are in development.

For information, go to www.aiche.org/elearning.

If you prefer the more-traditional approach to continuing education, browse through the courses offered through AICHE's partnership with the American Society of Mechanical Engineers. Fall classes will be held in Las Vegas, Denver, San Diego, Houston, Atlanta, and Orlando. The complete schedule and course descriptions are available at www.aiche.org/CareersEducation/Education/index.aspx; the Fall 2011 catalog is included in copies of this issue mailed to North American addresses.

Cynthia F. Mascone, Editor-in-Chief