



News

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Philadelphia University's M.S. in Sustainable Design program receives excellence in education award from U.S. Green Building Council

PHILADELPHIA, Sept. 16, 2009 – Philadelphia University's innovative M.S. in Sustainable Design program has received the 2009 Excellence in Green Building Education Recognition Award from the U.S. Green Building Council.

“Through this initiative, USGBC is recognizing those organizations that are taking the lead in the development of innovative green building knowledge and resources,” said Rebecca Flora, the council's senior vice president for education and research.

“The M.S. in Sustainable Design is an innovative program that encourages trans-disciplinary collaboration among faculty members and students from diverse academic backgrounds,” said Rob Fleming, director of the program. Fleming is a LEED-certified architect and associate professor of Architecture. “Sustainability is now widely recognized as one of the critical components in building design and use, and our students will have the knowledge and expertise to be leaders in their fields.”

Philadelphia University was one of five colleges and universities nationwide that were recognized by the USGBC for their green building education programs. The other awardees are Duke University, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Iowa State University and the University of Arkansas.

“It's very gratifying to see the Sustainable Design program recognized by the U.S. Green Building Council as one of the top academic programs in the field of green building and education,” said Vini Nathan, dean of Philadelphia University's School of Architecture. “The program is a thought leader in the field and focuses on finding collaborative solutions to real-world problems.”

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The Sustainable Design program, established in fall 2007, was one of the first graduate programs in the country to focus on educating professionals across a range of disciplines – including architecture, design, real estate and construction – to build environmentally friendly buildings and support sustainable business operations.

The program features special laboratory and design-build courses focusing on green materials. It also includes funded research projects that give students the opportunity to connect theoretical knowledge with important environmental and energy-efficiency challenges. For instance, for one project, students had to design a LEED-Platinum, carbon-neutral fast-food company that covered all aspects of the business, including architecture, interior design and operations and practices.

The M.S. in Sustainable Design has quadrupled in size since it began in fall 2007, and the first graduates completed the program last month. The program is part of Philadelphia University's School of Architecture, a leader in teaching sustainability to architects since its establishment in 1993.

The USGBC recognition awards were judged on demonstrated success, ability to be replicated, scope of influence, advancement of green principles within the educational community and the fostering of a collaborative or interdisciplinary approach.

Philadelphia University has established a comprehensive approach to green education through a four-point environmental and sustainability strategy that includes academic programs, student engagement, applied research and campus operations.

For more information on the M.S. in Sustainable Design at Philadelphia University, go to <http://www.philau.edu/Green/>. For more information on Philadelphia University's green education efforts, go to www.PhilaU.edu/ebooks/sustainability/

Philadelphia University, founded in 1884, is a private university with 3,350 full- and part-time students enrolled in more than 50 undergraduate and graduate programs. As part of its core mission, the University focuses on professionally oriented programs that prepare students for successful careers, with a strong foundation in the liberal arts and an orientation toward interdisciplinary cooperation. Philadelphia University includes Schools of Architecture, Business Administration, Design and Media, Engineering and Textiles, Liberal Arts, and Science and Health.