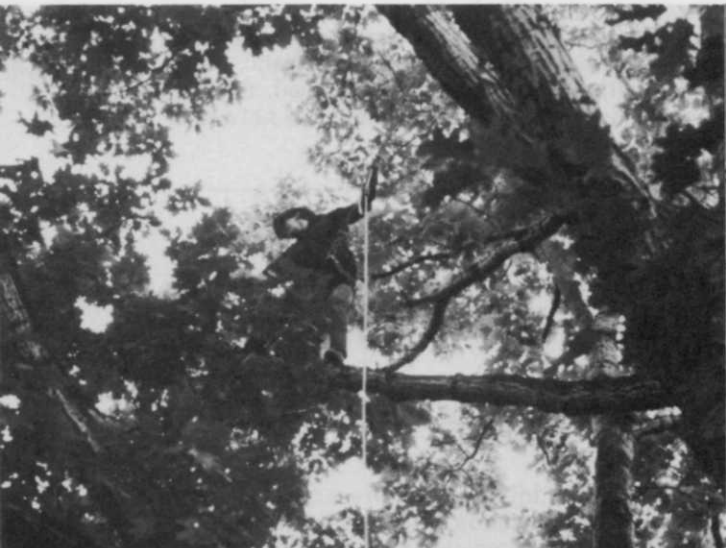


TWO-YEAR ARBORICULTURE PROGRAM IS WHAT THE INDUSTRY ORDERED

By Maria T. Cinque, Extension Agent, Nassau County, New York



Student practices trimming (above) in the program. **A secure and proper knot** is vital to safe tool transfer. **Tree survey techniques** and recordkeeping (below) for future municipal arborists.



The State University at Farmingdale, Long Island, New York, a two year Agricultural and Technical College has added a new option to its curriculum in Ornamental Horticulture. This new area of study is in Arboriculture. Over the years, the State University has offered courses in Arboriculture but this is the first time that the College has had a program designed to train students to work for Professional Arborists.

Since September of 1978, students wishing to pursue an Associate Degree in horticulture now have the Arboriculture option to choose from the already established areas of study in: Floriculture, Horticultural Management, Landscape Development, Nursery Management, and Turfgrass Management.

The Arboriculture Program Leader is Professor H. Dennis P. Ryan III. Professor Ryan's background in Arboriculture is both technical and practical, with an A.A.S. degree in Arboriculture from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture in Massachusetts, a B.S. degree in Environmental Design, and an M.S. degree in Forestry; both B.S. and M.S. degrees are from the University of Massachusetts. As for the practical side of his experience, Professor Ryan worked professionally as an arborist for about nine years in the Massachusetts area.

Arborist industry wanted the program

Both the Long Island Arborist Association and the New York State Arborist Association were instrumental in getting the State University to include Arboriculture as an option in their two year Ornamental Horticulture Degree Program. Letters poured into the President's office at the State University from local arborists and landscaping firms, as well as from local, state, and national trade associations. Most felt the Industry's biggest problems were in attracting young and qualified personnel to the field of Arboriculture; for arborists require specialized skills, such as climbing, tree spraying, pruning, cabling, bracing, cavity work and diagnosing tree problems. Letters from the industry indicated that much time was required to teach men and women these technical skills to become competent arborists. They also indicated that such a program would greatly help to improve the quality of the personnel in the tree care industry and also expand the industry.

According to the National Arborist Association (NAA) there are very few schools which offer formal arboriculture training other than Morrisville in New York, The University of Massachusetts, and Wooster Tech in Ohio. The NAA assists in placement of graduates of these schools and says that there are never enough students to go around. Robert Felix, NAA Executive Secretary, indicated to the State University that The Association would be able to place twenty-five or more graduates every year.

Based on the needs indicated by The Industry, a Steering Committee made up of Farmingdale Faculty and New York Arborists was formed. The committee worked to design a program that would provide the Arboriculture student with the practical, scientific, business and technical training that is required of an arborist initially in starting positions and later on in sales and management.

The four Arboriculture courses offer the following:

Introductory Arboriculture is divided into two parts, the first dealing with Landscape Drafting to enable the student to read landscape construction blueprints and draw plot plans for themselves. The second half of the course is outside and is concerned with the use of arborist tools and techniques such as chain saw maintenance, use and safety; transplanting large trees; preparing hydraulic sprayers for use after winter; dormant spraying; the proper use of the Brush Chipper; fertilizing and spraying.

Arboriculture I involves the principles and techniques of field arboriculture. Students are exposed to the National Safety Standards for Arborists, Shade Tree Pruning, The National Arborist Association Pruning Standards, (CODIT) Compartmentalization of Decay in Trees, some cavity work, bark repair, bracing, cabling, fertilizing, and non-parasitic problems. Lab requirements for Ar-

boriculture I are: 30 hours of tree climbing and pruning large trees and the proper use of ropes and saddles. They are taught where and how to put ropes in a tree, how to get up in the tree, and working ropes to move about. The students get the basics of climbing and climbing safety. The Arboriculture students do all of the tree pruning on the campus of the State University of Farmingdale.

Arboriculture II is split into two parts. The first part of the semester is spent on arboricultural business management: How to write a safety program for a firm, personnel management, how to hire, treating employees, and shade tree evaluation. Business practices and organization includes: management, record-keeping, estimating, customer relations, ethics and standards. Speakers are brought in from both large and small tree companies in addition to NAA Executive Secretary, Robert Felix. Industry representatives explain to the students the problems that they and the industry are facing. The second half of the course is concerned with Municipal Arboriculture/Urban Forestry. They take a look at the problems confronting a Municipal Arborist in planning, design, pruning, and specifications. The students are required to run a Street Tree Inventory on a part of the town of Farmingdale and propose a solution to an existing problem.

Woody Plant Diagnostic Techniques is offered in the last semester and calls for the student to draw upon what he or she has learned in their previous courses. It is assumed, in this course, that the student will end up with a position where he will have to diagnose woody plant problems, such as in sales or with an agency like Cooperative Extension. Students are required to diagnose insect, disease, site and physiological problems. They are taught how to use keys for diagnosing and also the principles of Integrated Pest Management.

A Commercial Pesticide Applicator License is mandatory and the Arboriculture student **MUST** be licensed by the state of New York or their home state in order to graduate.

Professor Ryan maintains a close contact with the industry by being active in both the Long Island and New York State Arborist Associations and he urges his students to also become involved with these associations and the International Society of Arboriculture. Ryan feels that one must know the industry in order to work with it. He also wants his students to know the practical applications of the industry and not just theory.

First graduating class

In June, the first class of Arboriculture students will graduate from the State University at Farmingdale. The graduating class consists of twelve students, two women and ten men, who will be looking to gain employment with professional tree services. The class of 1981 expects to graduate nineteen new arborists, three women and sixteen men. Professor Ryan wants to build up the program so that the State University turns out twenty-four students each year for the arboriculture industry.

Continues on page 70

Ornamental Horticulture Program—Arboriculture Option

First Semester	Credits
Soil Science	3
Horticulture I	3
U.S. History	3
Botany	3
English	3
Physical Education	1
	<hr/>
	16
Second Semester	
Mycology and Plant Pathology	3
Horticulture II	3
Introductory Arboriculture	3
Entomology	3
Business Math	3
Chemistry	3
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	18
Third Semester	
Woody Plants I	3
Arboriculture I	3
Horticulture and Turfgrass Equipment	3
Turfgrass Culture	3
Horticulture Elective	3
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	15
Fourth Semester	
Arboriculture II	3
Landscape Construction	3
Woody Plant Diagnostic Techniques	3
Woody Plants II	3
Social Science	3
English	3
	<hr/>
	18
	<hr/>
Total Credits	67

Job market

With some 14,000 open arborist positions in the country, it is doubtful that the twelve new arborists from Farmingdale's Arboriculture program will have much trouble finding a job. According to the Chairman of the Department of Ornamental Horticulture, Dr. John Hyde, the department as a whole gets five job offers per student. But will the newly trained arboriculture students be satisfied with what the industry has to offer them? That is a question in the minds of a lot of people.

Many in the Arboriculture Industry feel that it usually takes the average starting Arborist anywhere from two to three years of internship as either a climber or sprayer before obtaining any type of management position. There is concern that some of these newly trained arborists might become dissatisfied with the noncompetitive salaries of the Arboriculture Industry at the onset of their careers.

It certainly seems that The Industry has a responsibility to the students, since it was the Industry's campaigning that helped to create the program. If they want good people they may very well have to become more competitive about getting them than in the past. Once Arboriculture students start graduating from the State University at Farmingdale,

there will be more trained people to choose from in the New York area and this might very well reduce the high turn over in personnel, experienced by the industry each year.

Anyone interested in the Arboriculture option can write to either Professor H. Dennis P. Ryan or The Director of Admissions, State University of New York, Agricultural and Technical College, Melville Raod, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11735.

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