

## HOLYOKE

# HCC keeps up with expanding industries

Beer, wine and cannabis production are part of new curriculum

By RON CHIMELIS

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Cannabis cultivation, beer and cider brewing, and wine-making are among the new academic programs being offered this fall at Holyoke Community College.

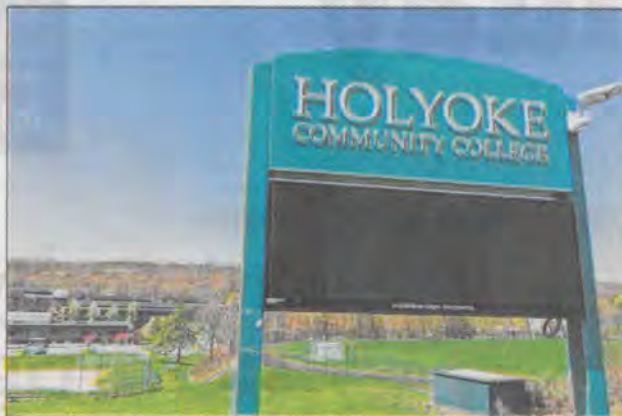
All three were developed as one-year, 24-credit certificate programs through the college's Sustainability Studies department.

With the fall semester nearing, the college also rolled out two sessions of accelerated, full-credit, late-start classes this fall for students looking for more flexible academic schedules. Late Start I offers 12-week courses beginning Sept. 28 and Late Start II offers seven-week courses beginning Oct. 28.

Regular classes begin Sept. 8. All fall semester courses, regardless of starting date, will conclude by Dec. 16.

The new programs are designed to respond to job opportunities in the area, HCC officials said.

"As the cannabis industry has moved into Holyoke and other area towns, a num-



All classes are being offered this fall at HCC in one of three formats: Online, Blended Remote, and Blended Face-to-Face.

(HOANG 'LEON' NGUYEN / THE REPUBLICAN FILE PHOTO)

ber of the owners of these enterprises are asking for trained employees," said Kate Maiolatesi, chairwoman of HCC's Sustainability Studies program.

"Estimates for new cannabis jobs in the region range as high as 1,500."

One new course, Cannabis Today, provides knowledge of the growing part of the industry. Other requirements for the certificate include classes in agriculture, marketing and entrepreneurship.

Maiolatesi said the college also developed the brewing and winemaking certificates with an eye on expanding industries. Another new course, Fermentation Science,

explains the scientific processes of fermentation as it applies to both brewing and wine-making.

This fall, HCC is also unveiling new certificate and associate degree programs in a range of other academic areas, including behavioral neuroscience (degree), critical social thought (degree), geoscience (degree), child development (certificate), mental health (certificate) and veterinary assistant (certificate).

"Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, HCC continues to be innovative in creating new courses and programs that will set students up to either immediately enter the

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Katie Maiolatesi, chairwoman, HCC's Sustainability Studies program

workforce or prepare them for transfer to four-year schools," said Rachel Rubinstein, HCC vice president of Academic and Student Affairs.

All classes are being offered this fall in one of three formats: Online, Blended Remote, and Blended Face-to-Face.

Online courses follow a traditional, asynchronous online model with coursework deadlines established by instructors.

Blended Remote courses have both asynchronous online components and scheduled class meetings via video conference platforms such as Zoom.

Blended Face-to-Face combines Blended Remote with some in-person instruction on campus. This format is limited to culinary arts and health science programs that require clinical assessments: nursing, radiologic technology, veterinary technician, and medical assistant.