

For-credit classes coming to Wickenburg

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What's new in Wickenburg?

Starting Monday, the far Northwest Valley town gets its first for-credit collegiate class offerings in 17 years, through a program coordinated by the Wickenburg Chamber of Commerce and Estrella Mountain Community College. The program was launched in response to a survey last year of 136 town residents by the college and the chamber.

Addressing an educational need

Wickenburg's growth has created a strong desire among residents to expand local higher-ed offerings. Nearly two decades ago, it was one of the first rural areas to offer college classes to residents through a program with Rio Salado College, said Julie Brooks, executive director of the Wickenburg Chamber of Commerce. As Rio Salado expanded, however, it ended its relationship with Wickenburg to focus on growth elsewhere in the Valley. For the past five years, the chamber has worked with Arizona State University at the West campus to offer non-credit classes such as Spanish and Web design. "A lot of people are taking (for-credit) classes online," Brooks said. Others drive 75 minutes to either Glendale

Community College or Estrella's campus in Avondale.

Put on your thinking caps

Wickenburg's fall college program will offer three, three-credit classes at Wickenburg High School, 1090 S. Vulture Mine Road, in subjects determined by last year's survey of residents:

- Introduction to Psychology and Introduction to Business, both to be held from 6 to 9 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays.
- Survey of Computer Information Systems, from 6 to 9 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays.

None of the courses has required prerequisites, and cost \$71 per credit or \$213 per course.

Future possibilities

Brooks said the chamber's long-term goal is to land some kind of permanent, higher-education facility. Because Wickenburg is home to a variety of addiction rehabilitation and treatment centers, she said a school that offers health-care courses would be ideal.

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