



Holyoke Community College drone pilot course instructor Lawrence Harmon is co-director of the GeoGraphics Laboratory at Bridgewater State University.

HOLYOKE

HCC offers drone pilot certification course

Holyoke Community College will once again offer a hands-on program for individuals who want to become FAA-licensed drone pilots.

“Flying Drones for Profit, Public Safety and Commercial Applications” will run on four consecutive Saturdays, Sept. 29 through Oct. 20, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the main campus of HCC, 303 Homestead Ave., Holyoke.

The course will prepare individuals to take the Federal Aviation Administration Remote Pilot in Charge exam, which they must pass to become licensed drone operators. All classes will be taught by Larry Harmon, co-director of the GeoGraphics Laboratory at Bridgewater State University and an industry consultant on small, unmanned aircraft systems.

“Larry is the expert in New England on this,” said Ken White, HCC Dean of Community Services.

The lecture portion of the course will meet in the HCC Kittredge Center for Business and Workforce Development on the main campus. Students will fly drones outside nearby on the college sports fields.

The course focuses on all content required to pass the FAA Remote Pilot test, including regulations, national airspace system rules,

Drones will be provided for use in class.

weather, aircraft loading, aircraft performance and flight operations.

“You have to understand everything the FAA needs you to know about flying a drone, what the rules are, how you fly legally and how you fly safely,” Harmon said.

The cost for the four-week, non-credit course is \$315. Space is limited. Drones will be provided for use in class. Participants can bring their own but that is not necessary.

This is the second time HCC has offered the drone pilot course. In the spring, HCC became the first college in western Massachusetts to offer a drone pilot course to the general public, White said.

The course should appeal to professionals in a wide range of industries, White said, including engineering, construction, insurance, agriculture, emergency services, public safety, security, environmental management, transportation, and retail as well as those involved in more artistic pursuits like movies, video and photography.

To register, go online to hcc.edu/bce or call 413-552-2324.