Skagit Valley College Expands Professional Marine Training with New Flexible Course Formats
Marine Surveying and Marine Canvas programs offer new opportunities for careers in the marine industry

ANACORTES, Wash. — Skagit Valley College (SVC) Marine Technology Center is expanding access to professional marine training through two newly redesigned programs: Marine Surveying and Marine Canvas. Offered through SVC Community Education and Cruisers College, both programs feature flexible formats designed to help working professionals, experienced boaters, and those seeking new careers develop valuable skills without putting their lives on hold.

Marine Surveying: A Growing Need for Qualified Professionals
With an increasing need for knowledgeable marine surveyors, SVC has redesigned its Professional Marine Surveying: Yachts & Small Craft course into a 16-week hybrid program. Twelve weeks are completed remotely, combining live online instruction with independent assignments, case studies, and practical exercises. Students spend four weeks at the Marine Technology Center in Anacortes for intensive hands-on training, vessel inspections, and field experience.

The program prepares students to evaluate recreational vessels up to 65 feet, covering vessel construction, marine systems, inspection procedures, valuation, report writing, and professional practices.

Marine surveying presents an excellent career opportunity for experienced boat owners, marine technicians, boatbuilders, and others with substantial boating knowledge. The flexible format allows students from across the country to participate while minimizing time away from work and home.

Marine Canvas: A New Classroom and Flexible Weekend Training
SVC has also expanded its Professional Marine Canvas program with a dedicated sewing classroom at the Marine Technology Center. The facility is equipped to simulate a professional canvas shop, featuring large worktables, eight industrial sewing machines, ten portable Sailrite machines, and specialized tools and materials.

Previously offered as an intensive two-week summer course, the program is now divided into five hands-on, two-day weekend modules. Topics include Canvas Bootcamp, Covers, Upholstery & Cushions, Bimini Tops, and Enclosures & Windows.

Students can complete individual modules to develop specific skills or take all five as preparation for entering the marine canvas industry. The new format allows participants to continue working while building professional skills and gaining practical experience.

With demand for skilled canvas professionals remaining strong and many shops facing lengthy backlogs, the program offers opportunities for those interested in employment, apprenticeships, or eventually starting their own businesses.

Supporting the Marine Industry
“These changes are about making professional marine education more accessible while maintaining the hands-on training that makes our programs valuable,” said Michael Beemer, Marine Technology Department Chair at Skagit Valley College. “There are tremendous opportunities in the marine industry for people who have boating experience and want to turn that knowledge into a rewarding career.”

Both programs are part of SVC's expanding professional marine education offerings, connecting experienced instructors, industry partners, and specialized training facilities with students from throughout the Pacific Northwest and beyond.

For course schedules, registration, and additional information, visit the Cruisers College website or Skagit Valley College Community Education.

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