

THOUGHT PROCESS | GUIDE, D1

MINDTRIP

SCIENTIST SAYS UNCONSCIOUS MIND RULES



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CABRILLO COLLEGE CUTS

'There are job opportunities for graduates of (the wine) program. The local wine industry wants people who are familiar not only with wine, but also knowledgeable about our local wine industry.'

MARY LINDSAY, president of Viticulture Association of the S.C. Mountains



JOHN WILLIAMS/SENTINEL

Cabrillo College instructor Sue Slater stands next to some wine memorabilia at her home Monday. The college won't offer wine courses for the 2011-12 school year due to budget cuts.

Wine classes get the ax

Vineyard, winery owners upset with decision, say industry growing locally

By TOVIN LAPAN

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APTOS — Sue Slater has spent the past 11 years building from scratch Cabrillo College's course offerings on wine.

So, it is not surprising that she was crestfallen when she learned in March that all of the wine courses in the culinary program would be suspended for the 2011-2012 school year because of budget cuts.

But the instructor was not the only one who noticed the cut. Along with students who can no longer finish the full gamut of classes in the near

SEE WINE ON A2

AT A GLANCE

CABRILLO WINE PROGRAM

Faced with a \$5.3 million deficit for the 2011-2012 school year after cutting \$5.6 million the previous three school years, Cabrillo College decided to cut the culinary program's wine classes for this fall.

The classes, which cover all aspects of the wine industry, are suspended for 2011-2012, but could return.

Wine is a growing industry in the Santa Cruz Mountains, and local vineyards and wine makers are expressing their disappointment in the decision. Wine instructor Sue Slater says the classes fill up regularly with more than 60 students, and many of the students find work in the wine industry.

WINE

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future, the Santa Cruz Farm Bureau and local wineries and vineyards are all expressing disappointment in the decision by the college.

"There are job opportunities for graduates of this program. The local wine industry wants people who are familiar not only with wine, but also knowledgeable about our local wine industry," said Mary Lindsay, president of the Viticulture Association of the Santa Cruz Mountains.

Lindsay said 20 new wineries have sprung up in the Santa Cruz Mountains in the past few years, and the industry is growing locally.

Slater said the classes are typically at capacity, with 60 students, and the waitlist fills up as well.

"The wine classes are extremely popular every time," she said. "I understand the issues around the budget

cuts, but I feel like they took out the wrong class. These are classes that get people good-paying jobs."

Meanwhile, Slater, who has taught at Cabrillo since 1986, has been reassigned to other classes in the culinary program.

Cabrillo President Brian King acknowledged the value of the wine classes, but said the cuts have hit every area of campus and it could be said that many of Cabrillo's programs directly feed the local economy.

"I think that's true about every program the college offers," King said. "When you think of the early childhood program, there are Cabrillo graduates who provide child care services in the county. When you think of health care needs, chances are you will be touched by a Cabrillo graduate."

The wine classes are some of the most recent cuts in what have been yearly reductions since 2008.

Since then, Cabrillo has cut

\$5.56 million from its budget. In 2010, Cabrillo canceled its monthlong 2010-2011 winter session, and offered 400 fewer course sections this past school year than in 2009-2010.

Cabrillo is facing a \$5.3 million deficit next year as state funding reductions continue.

The various wine courses at Cabrillo instruct students on every aspect of the industry, from growing grapes to identifying wine characteristics, wine making and pairing wine with food.

"The reality is we are disappointed after every reduction we make," King said. "It's not surprising that the local community is disappointed. A lot of these cuts hit people's passions and touch a nerve."

Current and former students have rallied behind Slater and the wine classes, and have even started gathering signatures for a petition.

Cathy Bentley manager of MJA Vineyards, said Slater's classes "changed her life." She was the owner of Capitola Cof-

fee Roasters before selling the business to get into the wine industry.

Eryn Supple took all of Slater's classes and was a wine buyer for New Leaf before moving to Seattle and taking the same position at a Whole Foods.

"I was really surprised they cut it," Supple said. "It's an amazing program, and there really isn't another one like it."

Jess Brown, executive director of the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau, said he is trying to find other funding sources for the classes.

"We understand the dilemma the Cabrillo board is in," Brown said. "These are tough financial times and they do have to make cuts, we're not naive about that. But it is a unique program that has an economic element for the community, which is important. We want to not just criticize them but help them."

King said the classes could be reinstated in the future if funding becomes available.