



# California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo



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**Cal Poly** (also known as **California Polytechnic State University**,<sup>[6]</sup> and **Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo**<sup>[6]</sup>) is a public university located in San Luis Obispo, California, known for its "Learn by Doing" philosophy that encourages students to combine theory with practice to solve real-world problems.<sup>[7][8][9]</sup> It is one of two polytechnics in the California State University system.

The university is organized into six colleges offering 64 bachelor's and 32 master's degrees. Cal Poly San Luis Obispo primarily focuses on undergraduate education with 20,425 undergraduate and 881 graduate students.<sup>[10][11]</sup> The university is located in San Luis Obispo, California, often noted as one of the happiest cities in the United States,<sup>[12][13][14][15]</sup> with many alumni in Silicon Valley.<sup>[16]</sup> The university participates in the Big West Conference in athletics.

## History

### Overview

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo was established as the California Polytechnic School in 1901 when Governor Henry T. Gage signed the California Polytechnic School Bill after a campaign by journalist Myron Angel. The polytechnic school held its first classes on October 1, 1903 to 20 students, offering secondary level courses of study, which took three years to complete.<sup>[17]</sup> The school continued to grow steadily, except during a period from

## California Polytechnic State University



<b>Motto</b>	<i>Discere Faciendo</i> (Latin)
<b>Motto in English</b>	Learn by Doing
<b>Type</b>	Public Space grant
<b>Established</b>	March 8, 1901
<b>Endowment</b>	\$209.8 million (2017) <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>President</b>	Jeffrey Armstrong
<b>Provost</b>	Kathleen Enz Finken
<b>Academic staff</b>	1,361 (Fall 2015) <sup>[2]</sup>
<b>Students</b>	21,306 (Fall 2016) <sup>[3]</sup>
<b>Undergraduates</b>	20,425 (Fall 2016) <sup>[3]</sup>
<b>Postgraduates</b>	881 (Fall 2016) <sup>[3]</sup>
<b>Location</b>	San Luis Obispo, California, U.S.
<b>Campus</b>	Suburban, 9,678 acres (3,917 ha) Total; 1,321 acres (535 ha) for the Main Campus; 155 acres (63 ha) for the Campus Core <sup>[4]</sup>



the mid 1910s to the early 1920s when World War I led to drops in enrollment and drastic budget cuts forced fewer class offerings.

In 1924, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo was placed under the control of the California State Board of Education. In 1933, the Board of Education changed Cal Poly San Luis Obispo into a two-year technical and vocational school. The institution began to offer Bachelor of Arts degrees in 1940, with the first baccalaureate exercises held in 1942. The school was renamed the California State Polytechnic College in 1947 to better reflect its higher education offerings, and in 1949, a Master of Arts degree in education was added. In 1960, control of Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and all other state colleges was transferred from the State Board of Education to an independent Board of Trustees, which later became the California State University system.<sup>[18]</sup>

The college was authorized to offer Master of Science degrees in 1967, and from then to 1970, the school's curriculum was reorganized into different units, such as the School of Science and Math, the School of Agriculture and Natural Resources, and the School of Architecture. Cal Poly San Luis Obispo's FM radio station, KCPR, began as a senior project in 1968. The state legislature changed the school's official name again in 1971 to California Polytechnic State University, and since the 1970s the university has seen steady enrollment growth and building construction. Cal Poly San Luis Obispo celebrated its centennial in 2001 and kicked off a \$225 million fundraising campaign, the largest fund-raising effort undertaken in CSU history. The Centennial Campaign raised over \$264 million from over 81,000 donors, more than tripling the university's endowment from \$43 million to over \$140 million. Cal Poly's \$190.3 million endowment in 2016 was ranked 308th out of 815 colleges and universities in the United States and Canada.<sup>[19]</sup>

## Relationship with Cal Poly Pomona

Cal Poly Pomona began as a satellite campus of Cal Poly San Luis Obispo in 1938 when a completely equipped school and farm were donated by Charles Voorhis and his son Jerry Voorhis of Pasadena, California, and was initially called the Voorhis Unit. The W.K. Kellogg Foundation then donated an 812-acre (329 ha) horse ranch in Pomona, California to Cal Poly San Luis Obispo in 1949. Located about one mile (1.6 km) from the Voorhis campus, the two became known as Cal Poly Kellogg-Voorhis. Cal Poly Kellogg-Voorhis broke off from Cal Poly in 1966, becoming the fully independent university, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (Cal Poly Pomona). Since 1949, the two

<b>Colors</b>	Green and Gold <sup>[5]</sup> 
<b>Nickname</b>	<u>Mustangs</u>
<b>Affiliations</b>	<u>California State University</u> <u>AASCU</u> <u>APLU</u>
<b>Mascot</b>	Musty the Mustang
<b>Website</b>	<u>www.calpoly.edu</u> ( <u>http://www.calpoly.edu</u> )
	



The California Polytechnic School



The Dexter Lawn – Cal Poly San Luis Obispo's unofficial social center and meeting place.<sup>[20]</sup>

campuses have cooperated on creating a float for the Rose Parade. Today, the long-running float program still boasts floats designed and constructed entirely by students year-round on both campuses.

## 1960 football team plane crash

On October 29, 1960, a chartered plane carrying the Cal Poly San Luis Obispo football team, hours after a loss to Bowling Green State University, crashed on takeoff at the Toledo Express Airport in Toledo, Ohio. Twenty-two of the 48 people on board were killed, including 16 players.

## Female admissions

In 1903, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo opened as a coeducational school with 20 students enrolled, 16 new male students and 4 new female students.<sup>[21]</sup> In 1930, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo banned women from the entire school until 1956 when it once again began admitting female students. The university remains coeducational today, with women constituting 46.7% of the Fall 2015 total student population.<sup>[22]</sup>



Jespersen Hall

## Name

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The university's style guide indicates its official names are "California Polytechnic State University" and "Cal Poly."<sup>[23]</sup> When necessary to distinguish between Cal Poly and its former satellite campus, Cal Poly Pomona, the lengthier "Cal Poly at San Luis Obispo" is occasionally used. The California State University system's style guide identifies the university as "California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo" and the elided "Cal Poly San Luis Obispo."<sup>[24]</sup>

## Directors and presidents<sup>[25]</sup>

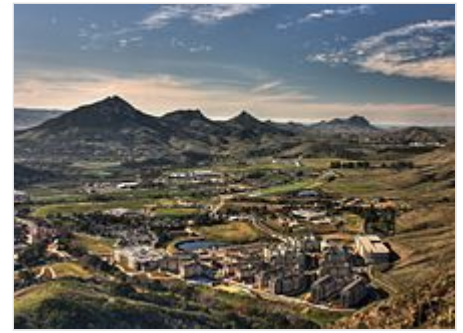
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- Leroy Anderson, 1902–1907
- Leroy Burns Smith, 1908–1914
- Robert Weir Ryder, 1914–1921
- Nicholas Ricciardi, 1921–1924
- Margaret Chase (Acting), 1924
- Benjamin Ray Crandall, 1924–1933
- Julian A. McPhee, 1933–1966
- Dale W. Andrews (acting), 1966–1967
- Robert E. Kennedy, 1967–1979
- Warren J. Baker, 1979–2010
- Robert Glidden (Acting), 2010–2011
- Jeffrey D. Armstrong, 2011–present

## Campus

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Cal Poly has one of the largest college campuses in the United States.<sup>[26]</sup> It owns 9,678 acres and is the second largest land-holding university in California.<sup>[27]</sup> The lands are used for student education and include the main campus, two nearby agricultural lands, and two properties in Santa Cruz County. Part of the Cal Poly property is the Swanton Pacific Ranch, a 3,200-acre (1,300 ha) ranch located in Santa Cruz County, California, outside the town of Davenport. The ranch provides educational and research opportunities, encompasses rangeland, livestock, and forestry operations for the College of Agriculture, Food, and Environmental sciences, and fosters Cal Poly's teaching philosophy of "Learn by Doing" with emphasis on sustainable management of agricultural practices with a mix of laboratory experiments.



Poly Canyon Village student housing, new in 2009

## Expansion

The Cal Poly Master Plan calls to increase student population from approximately 17,000 students to 20,900 students by the year 2020–2021.<sup>[28]</sup> To maintain the university's "Learn by Doing" philosophy and low class sizes, the master plan calls for an increase in classrooms, laboratories, and professors.



Chase Hall

## Current construction

Student Housing South: Cal Poly Student Housing South project is a dormitory style student community located at the corner of Slack Street and Grand Avenue. The project will consist of seven 3- to 5-story concrete framed freshman residence hall buildings with 1,475 beds and an adjacent four-level parking structure. Additional community space for the housing complex and the campus will wrap the parking structure on three sides. These spaces will include a small café, community room, game room, mail room, welcome center, offices, and maintenance shop. Site improvements will include a large open space in the center of the project for activities and group events, volleyball and basketball courts, and outdoor gathering spaces at each building. Webcor Builders and Valerio Dewalt Train Associates is the Design Build Team. Projected construction completion is Summer 2018.<sup>[29]</sup>



Cal Poly's Performing Arts Center

## Recent construction

The Warren J. Baker Center for Science and Mathematics was dedicated November 1, 2013.<sup>[30]</sup> It replaced the aging "spider" Science Building 52, built in the 1950s, with a new 189,000-square-foot (17,600 m<sup>2</sup>) structure. The \$119 million, six-story building was made possible by voter-approved state education bonds and \$18 million in private donations.<sup>[31]</sup> The Center adds new laboratories, classrooms, and offices for the physics, chemistry and soil science programs, as well as an open area and terraces for student study and meeting places. The top floor of the Center houses labs and offices for the school's Western Coatings Technologies Center and

the Environmental Biotechnology Institute. It is the second largest and most technologically advanced structure on campus. In the space between the remaining wings of the old "Spider Building" and the new Center is Centennial Park, a landscaped central green.

## **Planned construction**

**The Academic Center and Library Building Project:** A program planning for an expanded Library and Academic Center began in 2007. Current plans call for a design phase to begin in 2013, with a two-year construction phase projected to begin in 2015 or earlier. The new Academic Center will be a LEED-certified building of nearly 113,000 gsf, connected with the original Kennedy Library by a broad, above ground concourse. Formal and informal meeting spaces, including ample collaborative spaces, will encourage interactions among students, faculty, and staff from across the entire campus and community.<sup>[32]</sup>

**The J.G. Boswell Agricultural Research Center:** The Agricultural Research Center was announced in May 2014 with a \$8 million gift from the James G. Boswell Foundation. The research center will include laboratories to support sensory, food safety, plant pathology, enology and genomics. The Boswell Center will be built on the current site of the remaining portion of the "spider" science building.<sup>[33]</sup>

## **Commuting**

Campus parking is limited. In its most recent survey of available parking spaces on campus, the Cal Poly University Police reported 2,892 general purpose parking spaces, 3,492 dorm resident spaces, and 8,648 total spaces.<sup>[34]</sup> In its facilities Master Plan, the university admits that while more parking spots will be added, the actual ratio of parking to students will decrease since enrollment is expected to increase sharply.<sup>[35]</sup> To resolve the disparity, the Master Plan calls on the university to reduce the demand for individual vehicle parking. As part of that plan, the university has constructed additional dorms and has tried to make campus life more desirable. In addition, Cal Poly Commuter and Access Services has successfully promoted alternatives to commuting in single occupancy vehicles: in the past 10 years, bus use has more than doubled and the use of bicycles has close to quadrupled.<sup>[36]</sup>

Currently, there are over 6,500 bike rack spaces and 224 secure bike lockers available on campus; 57% of students and 33% of faculty/staff live within 5 miles of the Cal Poly campus, an easy bike commute.<sup>[37]</sup> The city's SLO Transit bus system provides service to and from campus. Cal Poly financially supports SLO Transit with funding from parking citation revenue (not from state general funds nor from student tuition), so faculty, staff, and students ride for free.<sup>[37]</sup> Bus service throughout the county is provided by SLO Regional Transit Authority. Discounted passes are available to the Cal Poly community.





360° panorama from the top of Poly Canyon; the main Cal Poly campus and agricultural area can be seen below.

## Academics

### Colleges

The university currently offers bachelor's degrees and master's degrees in six colleges:

- College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences
- College of Architecture and Environmental Design
- Orfalea College of Business
- College of Engineering
- College of Liberal Arts
- College of Science and Mathematics



The Agricultural Sciences Building

### Bachelor's projects

All undergraduate students at Cal Poly are required to complete a senior project. The senior project is intended to be a capstone experience for students receiving a baccalaureate degree by integrating theory and application from across a student's undergraduate educational experiences.<sup>[38]</sup> The senior project consists of one or more of the following: a design or construction experience, an experiment, a self-guided study or research project, a presentation, a report based on internship, co-op, or service learning experience, and/or a public portfolio display or performance.<sup>[39]</sup> Senior projects have often led to students obtaining jobs or recognition for their work. In July 2011, a company created from a Senior Project, Punchd, was acquired by Google.<sup>[40]</sup> Jamba Juice, founded as "Juice Club", was inspired by the Senior Project idea, but was founded after the founders had graduated.<sup>[41]</sup>



The Orfalea College of Business

## Admissions

Cal Poly's admissions process is "more selective" according to *U.S. News & World Report*.<sup>[45]</sup>

For students admitted Fall 2017, 16,695 freshmen were accepted out of 48,571 applicants, a 34.4% acceptance rate. Fall 2017 admitted students have an average GPA of 4.04, average ACT score of 30, and average SAT score of 1391.

For Fall 2017 admitted transfer students, Cal Poly accepted 1,758 of 8,348 applicants, a 21.0% acceptance rate. Fall 2017 admitted transfer students have an average college GPA of 3.41.<sup>[46]</sup>

### Enrolled Fall Freshman Statistics<sup>[42][43][44]</sup>

	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
<b>Applicants</b>	48,571	48,162	46,820	43,812	40,402	36,941
<b>Admits</b>	16,695	14,202	14,651	13,533	13,953	11,545
<b>% Admitted</b>	34.4	29.5	31.3	30.9	34.5	31.3
<b>Enrolled</b>	5,253	4,341	4,943	4,662	4,871	3,701
<b>GPA</b>	4.04	3.92	3.92	3.88	3.87	3.87
<b>ACT Average</b>	30	28.4	28.0	27.5	27.3	27.1
<b>SAT Composite*</b>	1391	1251	1239	1234	1232	1231
* SAT out of 1600						

For Fall 2016 students, the average high school GPA was 3.92. The middle 50% range of SAT scores for the Fall 2016 enrolled freshmen was 560–660 for critical reading and 590–700 for math, while the ACT Composite range was 26–31.<sup>[43]</sup> Men constituted 50.3% of the incoming class of 2020, women 49.7%.<sup>[43]</sup>

Cal Poly requires students to declare a major when applying for admission, and the university then admits the most competitive applicants within each major based on GPA and SAT or ACT scores. As a result, changing majors at the university is not guaranteed. Each major has a specific change of major plan which includes required classes to be taken while maintaining a certain GPA (usually between 2.5–2.75) in order to be considered as a candidate. In some cases students wishing to change majors transfer to other universities.

## Rankings

Cal Poly ranked 32nd in the nation on *PayScale*'s 2016 "College ROI Report," which ranked 1,343 colleges and universities. According to *PayScale*'s projections, Cal Poly has a 20-year net return on investment of \$698,000. This ROI is the highest in the California State University system and is higher than all of the University of California schools except UC Berkeley.<sup>[50]</sup>

*Washington Monthly* ranked Cal Poly 40th in the "National Universities - Masters" category in 2016 based on its contribution to the public good in three broad categories: social mobility, research, and service.

<b>Academic rankings</b>	
<b>Master's</b>	
<b><i>Washington Monthly</i></b> <sup>[47]</sup>	40
<b>Regional</b>	
<b><i>U.S. News &amp; World Report</i></b> <sup>[48]</sup>	11
<b>National</b>	
<b><i>Forbes</i></b> <sup>[49]</sup>	153

Cal Poly is ranked 83rd in the nation in *The Daily Beast*'s 2014 "Guide to the Best Colleges", which evaluated nearly 2,000 colleges and universities.<sup>[51]</sup>

In 2016, *Forbes* magazine rated Cal Poly No. 167 out of the 660 best private and public colleges and universities in America. In 2008, the first year of the list, Cal Poly was ranked No. 369 out of 569.<sup>[52]</sup>

*Money* magazine ranked Cal Poly 131st in the country out of 705 schools evaluated for its 2016 "Best Value College Rankings."<sup>[53]</sup>

For 2017, *Kiplinger* ranked Cal Poly 21st out of the top 100 best-value public colleges and universities in the nation, and 5th in California.<sup>[54]</sup>

*The Wall Street Journal's* rankings by major placed Cal Poly 18th for engineering majors and 22nd for business or economics majors in 2010.<sup>[55]</sup>

In the 2016 edition of "America's Best Architecture & Design Schools" published by the architecture and design journal *DesignIntelligence*, Cal Poly was ranked the No. 2 undergraduate architecture program in the nation. The landscape architecture program was ranked 6th in the country and 1st in the Western region.<sup>[56]</sup>

Cal Poly's Orfalea College of Business was named to *BusinessWeek* magazine's list of the nation's top undergraduate business colleges, ranked No. 70 on the 2014 list.<sup>[57]</sup>

Cal Poly's graduate program in City and Regional Planning ranked No. 1 in the *Planetizen* 2011 Guide to Graduate Urban Planning Programs in the U.S. for programs whose highest degree is a Master's.<sup>[58]</sup>

In 2009, the magazine *Diverse Issues in Higher Education* placed Cal Poly among the top 10 of its "Top 100 Degree Producers 2009" ranking. This places the university in the top 10 schools in the nation in granting degrees to Hispanic, Asian and other minority students in agriculture, architecture and engineering.<sup>[59]</sup>

Cal Poly was ranked the 37th top college in the United States by the Social Mobility Index college rankings.<sup>[60]</sup>

According to *U.S. News & World Report's* 2017 "America's Best Colleges" report, Cal Poly is ranked 1st in the Western United States for regional public schools whose highest degree is a Master's, and tied for 9th overall (including private schools).<sup>[61]</sup> The same report ranked the College of Engineering tied for 5th of undergraduate engineering schools in the U.S. whose highest degree is a Master's,<sup>[61]</sup> with national program rankings of:<sup>[61]</sup>

- Environmental/Environmental Health engineering: 1st
- Civil Engineering: 3rd
- Electrical Engineering: tied for 4th
- Mechanical Engineering: 5th

## Financial

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### Tuition

Due to continued reductions in state funding, Fall 2011 fees for the average student reached approximately \$2,600 per quarter.<sup>[62]</sup> For comparison, the Spring 2002 fees for the average student were \$760 per quarter. While total yearly fees for an in-state student were just \$2,976 in 2002, students entering in fall 2011 faced an annual fee of over \$7,900.<sup>[63]</sup>



Of the students enrolled in fall 2014, 61.6% of undergraduates and 70.0% of first-time freshmen received some form of financial aid in 2014–15.<sup>[10]</sup> The amount of financial aid awarded in 2014–15 totaled \$151.5 million, of which 64.3% came from federal funds, 11.9% came from state funds and 17.5% came from institutional funds.<sup>[10]</sup> Loans comprised 55.6% of the financial aid, 31.2% came in the form of grants, and 10.2% in scholarships.<sup>[10]</sup>

## Endowment

Cal Poly's endowment more than tripled during its Centennial Campaign from \$43.1 million to \$140.1 million. Growth is attributed to gifts and prudent stewardship. However, since 2007, the university's endowment has fluctuated dramatically, going from \$181.7 million in 2007<sup>[64]</sup> to \$130.9 million in 2009,<sup>[65]</sup> before rebounding to \$190.3 million in 2016.<sup>[19]</sup> On May 3, 2017, Cal Poly received one of the largest endowment towards public education to be received in California from Cal Poly alumnus William L. and Linda Frost in the amount of \$110 million.<sup>[66]</sup>

## Student life

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### Residence halls

File:Cal Poly SLO  
housing.png

Residential halls

Cal Poly's on-campus student housing of 6,239 spaces<sup>[67]</sup> is the largest student housing program in the California State University system.<sup>[68]</sup> Cal Poly housed 35.9% of fall 2015 undergraduates in 28 dorms on campus, and 98.7% of first-time freshmen lived on campus. In addition, 28.7% of Cal Poly sophomores lived on campus in fall 2015.<sup>[10]</sup>

There are five distinct groups of residence halls on the Cal Poly campus. The five North Mountain halls, constructed in the 1950s, are the oldest on campus still used for residential purposes. The six "red-brick" halls were completed shortly afterward in 1959.<sup>[69]</sup> The Sierra Madre and Yosemite halls were finished by 1968, and the Cerro Vista Apartments were completed in 2003. The Poly Canyon Village housing complex, with a similar style as the Cerro Vista apartments, was completed in 2009 at a cost of \$300 million, making it the California State University system's largest construction project to date.<sup>[70]</sup>

Each of the residence halls represent a different living community on campus. The six red-brick halls are the Living-Learning Program halls for the different colleges of Cal Poly. The five North Mountain halls are organizationally a part of the engineering Living-Learning Program. The Sierra Madre and Yosemite halls are the First-Year Connection Program halls and focus on freshman-oriented transition programs. All buildings

house students of all majors. The Cerro Vista Apartments is the Transitions community for first-year and second-year students. Poly Canyon Village is the Sophomore Success Program community, which is open to primarily to sophomores, but also juniors and seniors, and helps students transition into independent living.

## Greek life

Fraternities (NIC) <sup>[71]</sup>			Sororities (NPC) <sup>[72]</sup>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">Alpha Epsilon Pi</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Alpha Gamma Rho</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Alpha Gamma Omega</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Beta Theta Pi</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Delta Chi</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">Delta Upsilon</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Kappa Sigma</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Nu Alpha Kappa</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Lambda Chi Alpha</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Phi Kappa Psi</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Phi Sigma Kappa</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Pi Kappa Phi</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">Sigma Nu</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Sigma Pi</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Tau Kappa Epsilon</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Theta Chi</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Zeta Beta Tau</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">Alpha Chi Omega</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Alpha Gamma Delta</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Alpha Epsilon Phi</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Alpha Omicron Pi</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Alpha Phi</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">Chi Omega</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Delta Gamma</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Gamma Phi Beta</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Kappa Alpha Theta</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Kappa Kappa Gamma</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Sigma Kappa</a></li> </ul>

Greek organizations have been at Cal Poly since 1949. The Greek community consists of three governing councils at Cal Poly: United Sorority and Fraternity Council (USFC), Interfraternity Council (IFC), and Panhellenic Association (PHA). Cal Poly also offers Greek organizations based on academic fields of study.<sup>[73]</sup>

As of April 17, 2018, Greek Life has been suspended indefinitely by the university following a number of racial controversies, the most recent of which being the 2018 Cal Poly Blackface Incident.<sup>[74]</sup>

## Week of Welcome orientation program

The Week of Welcome program, more commonly known as "WOW", serves as a volunteer-based orientation program for new students during the first week after move-in during the beginning of the school year in September. Its purpose is to introduce students to the campus and the community and prepare them for a successful college career. Freshmen are placed in a group with 10–12 other new students while transfer students are in groups of 40-60; each group is led by two current Cal Poly student orientation leaders. The "WOW" groups participate in an array of orientation events in addition to activities both on- and off-campus. In 2010, the awareness section of the program won the 2010 National Orientation Directors Association (NODAC) Media & Publications Showcase Award in the Emerging Technologies. The awareness section was entirely developed by student volunteers. The program started in 1956 and is now the largest volunteer orientation program in the nation.<sup>[75]</sup>

## Clubs and independent student organizations

Cal Poly has many recognized clubs and independent student organizations operating on campus. Included (a full list available on the [Associated Students, Incorporated \(http://www.asi.calpoly.edu/university\\_union/club\\_services\)](http://www.asi.calpoly.edu/university_union/club_services) website) are over 150 groups, including, among many others, cultural clubs and exchanges, mathematics and science clubs, religious and atheistic groups, service organizations, engineering research and development clubs, professional development organizations, a perennial Rose Parade Float design program, LGBTQ+ and

Multicultural groups, competitive and social athletic teams, and academic honors clubs. Especially impressive are the engineering clubs and independent student organizations on campus such as Prove Lab, PolySat, CubeSat, and QL<sup>[76]</sup>.

## Racial and economic diversity of student body

As of 2018, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo has the least racially diverse student population of all California State University and University of California campuses, though it is still far more diverse than the surrounding community it serves.<sup>[77]</sup> President Armstrong has been working to increase the percentage of non-white students on campus, boasting a drop of white students as a share of the university student body from 63% to 55%.<sup>[78]</sup> The city of San Luis Obispo is 84.5% white.<sup>[79]</sup>

The *Los Angeles Times* reported that the university "was ranked one of the nation's worst seven institutions for Latino student success."<sup>[80][81]</sup>

The *Education Trust* lists the university as an "Engine of Inequality" because "very few students come from working-class and low-income families." It's one among 20 public institutions in the U.S. with this negative distinction.<sup>[82]</sup>

*Demographics of student body (Fall 2015)*<sup>[22]</sup>

	All students
<u>African American</u>	0.7%
<u>Asian American</u>	12.4%
<u>Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</u>	0.1%
<u>Hispanic American (of any race)</u>	16.0%
<u>Multi-Racial</u>	7.1%
<u>Native American</u>	0.1%
<u>Non-resident Alien</u>	2.3%
<u>White American</u>	56.4%
<u>Ethnicity unknown/other</u>	4.8%
<u>Male</u>	52.8%
<u>Female</u>	

## Relations with local community

Though generally regarded as a positive for the area due to the economic impact, Cal Poly has received criticism for both the behavior of students upsetting the community, and the effects on local housing market. Parties and gatherings have gotten wilder due to an increased student body size and social media presence, leading to the university being named the #9 party school in California by Niche.<sup>[83]</sup> In 2017, the median home price in San Luis Obispo was \$530,000.<sup>[84]</sup> In May 2018, Zillow estimated that the median home value has increased to \$694,027.<sup>[85]</sup> While the city has been building hundreds of single family housing on the south end of town, large areas of the north end in older neighborhoods have been converted to rental student housing because of a major increase in the number of students admitted to and attending the university and the lack of university supplied housing. The university is currently building housing on campus to attempt to house up to 65% of students and plans to cap enrollment at 25,000, meaning that 11,250 students must find off-campus housing.<sup>[86]</sup> This has created an affordability crisis for the city itself, as most apartments that would generally be occupied by lower income families and individuals are now occupied solely by Cal Poly students, reducing supply and pushing low-income residents outside of the city. Approximately 27% of the residents live below the poverty line, a similar percentage to Cleveland, Ohio.

## Athletics

Cal Poly fields 21 varsity sports (10 for men and 11 for women)<sup>[87]</sup> and participates in the NCAA's Division I.

Cal Poly competes in the Big West Conference, except for football and wrestling (neither of which are sponsored by the Big West). Cal Poly's football team competes in the Big Sky Conference; the wrestling team is a member of the Pac-12 Conference. Prior to joining Division I in 1994, the school won 35 NCAA Division II national team championships<sup>[88]</sup> and competed in the NCAA Division II California Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA). Cal Poly's mascot is Musty the Mustang, and the spirit group is the Mustang Maniacs.



The new side of the Alex G. Spanos Stadium

Cal Poly also offers various non varsity sports. The Mustangs play college rugby in the California conference of Division 1-A. The Mustangs are often ranked in the Top 25 nationwide,<sup>[89]</sup> and their rugby sevens team has been ranked as high as 7th.<sup>[90]</sup> The Mustangs finished 8th in the nation at the 2011 USA Rugby Sevens Collegiate National Championships, and 12th at the 2012 competition.<sup>[91]</sup>

## Incidents and controversies

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### Poly Royal Riots

On April 29, 1990, San Luis Obispo police responded to a call of a bicyclist down at around 11pm. The activity drew heavily intoxicated crowds that began to get unruly. After unsuccessfully attempting to disperse the crowd, a mob began looting the nearby Campus Bottle Shoppe. The next day, dumpsters were set on fire during more rioting and 127 people were arrested.<sup>[92]</sup>

### Disappearance of Kristin Smart

On May 25, 1996, Cal Poly student Kristin Smart disappeared without a trace after a birthday party. The university and sheriff's department have been investigating leads, including excavating the land around the Cal Poly "P" on an adjoining hill. As of 2017, the excavation of the area surrounding has been completed with articles found, however the sheriff's department has not yet released what the findings are.<sup>[93]</sup>

### Crops House incident

In 2008, a university-owned house (known as Crops House) where agriculture students were given subsidized lodging in exchange for work on the school's farms displayed a racist sign posted during a party which read: "No niggers," along with a similar slur against gays. At a later date, the house displayed a confederate flag tacked above the entrance to the house, draped near a hangman's noose while a large Confederate flag laid painted on a table in front of the house.<sup>[94]</sup>

### Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity suspension

In 2015, the Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity was suspended for six years following a report of sexual assault, unsafe alcohol consumption and other conduct policy violations at a party in October, 2014.<sup>[95]</sup> In December, 2017, the chapter voted to surrender its national charter, officially dissolving the chapter.<sup>[96]</sup>

## **Blackface incident**

In 2018, the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity was suspended following a photo surfacing that showed a student wearing blackface.<sup>[97]</sup> In response to further protests, President Armstrong suspended all Greek Life on campus indefinitely.<sup>[78]</sup> This was followed with protests during Open House events for incoming freshmen. On May 4, 2018, President Armstrong announced yet another blackface incident that was mocking the prior incident. The incident is being investigated by the state.<sup>[98]</sup>

## **Administrative organization**

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### **Four administrative divisions**

The university is organized administratively into four divisions: Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Administration and Finance, and University Advancement. The academic division is organized into six colleges, each with its own dean. Academic Affairs also includes the Library, Research and Graduate Programs, and Information Technology Services.

### **Cal Poly Corporation**

The Cal Poly Corporation is a public-benefit, nonprofit corporation and university auxiliary. It provides commercial services, fiscal services, and key support services to assist and promote the educational mission of Cal Poly and the California State University System (CSU).<sup>[99]</sup> The Corporation engages only in those activities ancillary to state operation that are requested by Cal Poly's President and approved by the CSU. The corporation was founded in 1940 and was known as the Cal Poly Foundation until February 1, 2006.

### **Cal Poly Foundation**

The Cal Poly Foundation is an auxiliary organization and IRC 501(c)(3) public charity that accepts and administers tax deductible gifts to the university. The Cal Poly Foundation leads campus philanthropic activity by supporting fundraising activities and investing and managing the campus endowments.<sup>[100]</sup>

### **Cal Poly Extended Education**

The Cal Poly Extended Education provides access to degree, certificate, and professional development programs and services of the university to the citizens of San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Monterey Counties and through distance learning technologies to students across the country.<sup>[101]</sup>

### **Associated Students Inc.**

The Associated Students Inc. (ASI) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation owned and operated by Cal Poly student leaders. ASI has an annual operating budget in excess of \$12 million. ASI provides co-curricular experiences for students, faculty, and staff, including events, speakers, concerts, intramural sports, fitness programs, aquatics,



outdoor adventure trips, craft center enrichment courses, club services, and child development.<sup>[102]</sup> ASI manages the University Union, Recreation Center, Sports Complex, and Children's Center, totaling more than 450,000 square feet (42,000 m<sup>2</sup>) of campus facilities.

## Alumni Association

The Cal Poly Alumni Association seeks to engage and serve alumni; to foster a lifelong connection between the University and its alumni; and to foster goodwill and support for the University. The association includes 15 regional and special interest chapters.<sup>[103]</sup>

## Notable alumni

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Cal Poly has more than 170,000 alumni living and working everywhere from New York to Washington D.C. to Wisconsin to Idaho to Hawaii.<sup>[104]</sup> Alumni include Peter Oppenheimer, Chief Financial Officer of Apple Inc.; Farzad Nazem, Chief Technology Officer of Yahoo; Linda Ozawa, founder of Jamba Juice; Richard Bergquist, founder of PeopleSoft; Gary Erickson, founder of Clif Bar; Noel Lee, founder of Monster Cable; William Swansonsinger, CEO and founder of Raytheon; Burt Rutan, aerospace pioneer; Weird Al Yankovic, comedic musician; and John Madden, NFL Hall of Fame coach, David Nwaba, shooting guard for the Chicago Bulls, and Ozzie Smith, Baseball Hall of Fame Major League Baseball player, and NASA Astronaut Victor Glover.<sup>[105]</sup>

## See also

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- California Master Plan for Higher Education
- Leaning Pine Arboretum, north campus

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### Notes

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## External links

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- [Official website \(http://www.calpoly.edu/\)](http://www.calpoly.edu/)
  - [Cal Poly Athletics website \(http://www.gopoly.com\)](http://www.gopoly.com)
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