Cal Poly’s Wine and Viticulture Department offers a one-of-a-kind interdisciplinary major with a three-pronged curriculum that combines an understanding of viticulture, enology and the wine business. It is one of the largest and most respected bachelor degree programs of its kind in the nation.

Viticulture courses teach all aspects of quality wine grape production, including site evaluation and vineyard development, pest management, sustainability and state-of-the-art cultural practices. Enology, the science of wine and winemaking, gives students a strong foundation in chemistry and microbiology. Enology students monitor and assess wines and winemaking choices using sensory, chemical and microbiological analyses. Classes in wine business focus on operations, management and marketing strategies. The department’s 14-acre vineyard and pilot winery give students the hands-on experience that industry has come to expect from Cal Poly’s career-ready graduates — graduates prepared to make their mark in the multidimensional wine industry anywhere in the world.

Internships and participation in undergraduate research programs, clubs and enterprise projects expand students’ Learn by Doing experiences and further prepare them to make a difference in their chosen field from day one.

Cal Poly’s location in the heart of the Central Coast wine region assures students have access to some of the best growing conditions and internship opportunities in the industry. Our students gain valuable vineyard and winery experience locally in Paso Robles, San Luis Obispo, Santa Maria and Arroyo Grande; up and down the state of California; throughout the U.S.; and abroad.
$38,000
Median salary of Wine and Viticulture graduates within one year of graduation.

JUSTIN and J.LOHR Center for Wine & Viticulture
The new winery is anticipated to be open in 2019. Buildings will include crush, fermentation, barrel, sensory, enology and viticulture rooms, as well as teaching and research labs, a bonded winery, offices, and community and industry meeting spaces.

On the Job
Alumni have gone on to work as winery founders and owners, viticulturists, enologists, production assistants, cellar workers, chain sales merchandisers, account managers, lab technicians, wine and spirit managers, and marketing associates at places such as J. Lohr Vineyards and Wines, Jackson Family Wines, JUSTIN Vineyards and Winery, Trinchero Family Estates, and E&J Gallo.

Wine Production & Sales
The department offers three wine labels: student wines, made on-site by the students; commercial wine, sold both online and in select stores; and research wine, made by students during their senior projects. Cal Poly’s commercial wine is sold by a team of students working under faculty supervision. Cal Poly’s commercial winery was bonded in 2017, increasing Learn by Doing student opportunities.

14 Acres
The on-campus vineyard and pilot winery, comprised of 14 acres, enable hands-on, real-world learning every day. The vineyard promotes environmentally and economically sustainable vineyard practices, and includes six acres of Pinot Noir and around half acre of Chardonnay. The remaining area is used as a hands-on teaching vineyard involving the study of rootstock, table grapes and varietals.

Student Club
The student club promotes hands-on wine education and industry ties. Meetings feature guest speakers from the wine community, cooperative extension or related industry, who talk about relevant industry issues. The club also organizes the annual Winemakers’ Showcase dinner, the department’s largest annual fundraising event.

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