Mechanical Engineering

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Academic Programs

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Mission Statement

To impart knowledge in the art and science of mechanical engineering through a comprehensive curriculum true to the traditional Cal Poly learn-by-doing philosophy that produces mechanical engineers of high ethics and skill, fully prepared for entry into industry, government, graduate school and private enterprise.

Program Educational Objectives

A mechanical engineering alumnus will:

1. Research, design, develop, test, evaluate, or implement engineering solutions to problems that are of a complexity encountered in professional practice.
2. Communicate and perform as an effective engineering professional in both individual and team-based project environments.
3. Recognize and determine the ethical implications and societal impacts of engineering solutions.

Program Description

The profession of mechanical engineering is directed toward the design, manufacture, and system integration of a very wide variety of equipment ranging from manufacturing machinery and power generation equipment to consumer goods. Of central concern to mechanical engineers is the sound application of basic principles of solid mechanics, fluid mechanics and thermal sciences in the design, manufacture, and application of this equipment. Mechanical Engineering graduates obtain employment primarily with manufacturers, energy companies, consultants, and government agencies. Types of work performed by graduates include product design, mechanical design, testing, engineering management, engineering sales, design of manufacturing systems, and development of maintenance procedures. Mechanical Engineering graduates also often enhance their careers through graduate study in engineering, and some students also study engineering to build a scientific and technical foundation as a prelude to enrollment in medical, law, and business schools.

The focus of the Cal Poly Mechanical Engineering program is on education based on our "learn by doing" educational philosophy. Thus, the curriculum includes a large number of hands-on laboratories, integration of design throughout, and a senior project requirement for all students. Students are enrolled in engineering laboratories in all years of the curriculum. The program is accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET, www.abet.org (http://www.abet.org).

The Mechanical Engineering Department is the home of the Donald E. Bently Center for Engineering Innovation. The center provides support for faculty, students, and visiting scholars for the advancement of research, education, and practice in mechanical engineering. A $6 million endowment to fund three professorships supports the center.

Upper division students in the General Concentration (Degree Requirements and Curriculum (http://catalog.calpoly.edu/collegesandprograms/collegeofengineering/mechanicalengineering/bsmechanicalengineering/generalconcentration)) can choose professional elective courses from such courses as turbomachinery, robotics, mechatronics, composite materials, rotor dynamics, advanced mechanics, solar systems, internal combustion engines, heat and mass transfer, and courses emphasizing the petroleum, air conditioning, ventilating, and refrigeration industries. Students in the Mechatronics Concentration (Degree Requirements and Curriculum (http://catalog.calpoly.edu/collegesandprograms/collegeofengineering/mechanicalengineering/bsmechanicalengineering/mechatronicsconcentration)) are prepared for professional practice in the design of “intelligent” products for use in factory automation, robotics, hybrid vehicles, alternate energy, and many other fields. The HVAC&R Concentration (Degree Requirements and Curriculum (http://catalog.calpoly.edu/collegesandprograms/collegeofengineering/mechanicalengineering/bsmechanicalengineering/hvacrconcentration)) prepares students for careers in the heating, ventilating, air-conditioning and refrigeration (HVAC&R) industry, with a focus on the design of mechanical systems for commercial and industrial buildings. Manufacturing Concentration (Degree Requirements and Curriculum (http://catalog.calpoly.edu/collegesandprograms/collegeofengineering/mechanicalengineering/bsmechanicalengineering/manufacturingconcentration)) graduates will be uniquely suited for career paths where the engineer blends design and manufacturing. These skills are needed at all modern product development companies.

There are six organized student clubs associated with the Mechanical Engineering Department. These are student chapters of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, Society of Petroleum Engineers, Society of Automotive Engineers, American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers, Alternative Energy Club, and the Pi Tau Sigma honorary society. All of these clubs offer students active programs in professional and leadership activities.

Undergraduate Program

BS Mechanical Engineering

The profession of mechanical engineering is directed toward the design, manufacture, and system integration of a very wide variety of equipment ranging from manufacturing machinery and power generation equipment to consumer goods.

Concentrations

- General Concentration
- Heating, Ventilating, Air-Conditioning and Refrigerating Concentration (HVAC&R)
- Mechatronics Concentration
- Manufacturing Concentration
Graduate Program
MS Mechanical Engineering

The masters program of the Mechanical Engineering department at Cal Poly is designed to prepare its graduates with skill and knowledge to be able to work as an engineer in research and development, analysis, or design of products and systems, or to continue toward PhD degree from other institutions. Due to the nature of the masters degree, students can select an area of emphasis based on their interest, or alternately, choose courses in a variety of different areas that gives them significant breadth of knowledge. At Cal Poly, masters degree candidates can also select a thesis option or a non-thesis option. The thesis option gives the candidates a more thorough knowledge in the area in which they do their research. The non-thesis option gives the candidates a more diverse knowledge from additional courses.

General Characteristics

The Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering prepares students to design and develop advanced products and systems; to conduct research and analysis; to work in industry; or to continue study toward a Ph.D. Graduate students enjoy the same flavor of learn-by-doing as other Cal Poly students. Students may choose their technical electives in the area that interests them, including thermo-sciences, controls and robotics, mechanics and stress analysis, composite materials.

Prerequisites

For admission as a classified graduate student, in addition to the University requirements, an applicant should hold a BS degree in Mechanical Engineering with a grade point average of 3.0. Other closely related majors may be accepted as conditionally classified graduate students until they take necessary prerequisite mechanical engineering courses as approved by the graduate advisor. For additional information on University requirements, please refer to the Graduate Programs (http://catalog.calpoly.edu/graduateeducation) of this catalog.

Two program options are available:

**Thesis option.** 36 units of advisor-approved coursework, 9 units of thesis research/design, and an oral thesis defense examination.

**Non-thesis option.** 45 units of advisor-approved coursework and a written comprehensive examination.

Blended BS + MS Mechanical Engineering

The blended program provides motivated students with an accelerated route to the MS Mechanical Engineering, with simultaneous conferring of both bachelor’s and master’s degrees. Students in the blended program are provided with a seamless process whereby they can progress from undergraduate to graduate status. Up to two technical electives can be taken as an undergraduate and counted towards the master’s degree.

Eligibility

Students majoring in BS Mechanical Engineering may be eligible to pursue the blended program toward the MS Mechanical Engineering (http://catalog.calpoly.edu/collegesandprograms/collegeofengineering/mechanicalengineering/msmechanicalengineering). Participation in the program is based on prior academic performance and other measures of professional promise, with a minimum GPA of 2.5 required, 3.0 recommended. Students are recommended for admission by a faculty committee. Please see Graduate Education (https://nextcatalog-admin.calpoly.edu/graduateeducation/#generalpoliciesgoverninggraduatetestudiestext) for eligibility criteria.

Two program options are available: **Thesis option.** 36 units of advisor-approved coursework, 9 units of thesis research/design, and an oral thesis defense examination. **Non-thesis option.** 45 units of advisor-approved coursework and a written comprehensive examination.