



## Oaksterdam U. Gives New Meaning to Higher Education

Posted By [Sarah Rubenstein](#) On February 25, 2008 @ 6:01 pm In [Medical Education](#), [Drugs](#) | [7 Comments](#)

Learning how to get started in the medical marijuana business costs a lot less than an Ivy League education and takes as little as one weekend. Where did we go wrong?

So far, 60 students have completed two-day weekend sessions in the art and science of the medicinal herb at [Oaksterdam University](#) in Oakland, Calif., [the Associated Press reported](#).

The school prepares students for jobs in California's medical marijuana industry, teaching them how to cultivate cannabis, cook with it, dispense it and "protect your rights in a police encounter," among other things. The faculty also teach "which strains are best for various medical conditions." Individual classes cost \$75. Two-day weekend sessions are \$200. Textbooks aren't included.

Medical marijuana is [legal under state law in California](#), but federal marijuana laws can still be enforced.

"My basic idea is to try to professionalize the industry and have it taken seriously as a real industry, just like beer and distilling hard alcohol," Richard Lee, a pot-dispensary owner and the school's founder," told the AP.

Here's one of the [course descriptions](#) from the university's Web site:

### ***Cooking/Concentrates 101***

*Who knew that the fine art of baking and cooking could be so fun with cannabis? Hundreds of edible cannabis products are now available, including: confections, cheesecakes, salad dressings, and drinks. Learn about creating concentrates and extracts, regulating dosages, packaging, and food safety. Watch a step by step cannabutter demonstration. Learn about the different extraction methods and equipment used.*

So how are job prospects in the field? Entry-level workers make a little more than minimum wage; "bud tenders" can make over \$50,000 a year; owners and top managers make six figures, Lee told the AP.

An official with the Drug Enforcement Agency in San Francisco said authorities were aware of Oaksterdam U. but didn't see a reason to shut it down. After all, talking about marijuana is not illegal, and while a small amount of pot is kept on the premises, the DEA tries "to concentrate our case work on the most significant violators," the AP reported.

For more, see this [report from KTVU TV in Oakland on Oaksterdam University](#) via YouTube.

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