

Vice Chancellor's Report to Council

June 2022

Introduction

At the time of writing this report, we are anticipating the end of the first semester of the 2022 academic year and many students and staff are looking forward to a well-deserved mid-year break. The year continues to be impacted by Covid with several staff and students isolating and working or studying remotely. On the other hand, with the resumption of international travel, many among the university community are travelling or have plans to travel this year.

This month began with the Queen's Birthday Honours, and we are proud of the UC alumni and former staff recognised. Two UC Honorary Doctorates who have been recognised with the most senior honours were Honourable Dame Silvia Cartwright, PCNZM, DBE, QSO, DSTJ for services to women and women's rights and Tā Tipene O'Regan for services to improve economical, cultural and social standing of Māori communities. More information follows in this report.

Regrettably, the April graduation ceremonies were cancelled due to Covid settings earlier this year and to provide an opportunity to celebrate our graduates' success on Thursday 9 and Friday 10 June graduates had an opportunity to hire regalia and have professional photos taken with either the Vice-Chancellor or one of the Deputy Vice-Chancellors. There were also activations around campus that gave them more informal opportunities to take photos. We look forward to the August celebrations where we will celebrate the student's academic journey with their whānau, alumni and wider Christchurch community in a traditional way. This graduation will include students who graduated in December 2021 and April 2022.

On Wednesday, 8 June UC held Te Rā Tuhura | Discovery Day, an exciting event with a programme of lectures that provide secondary school students with a taste of subjects that UC has on offer. A total of 1,470 year 12 students joined us on campus for the one-day event, an increase of 4% from 2021. Students had the opportunity to discover career pathways, explore UC's subject options and understand the importance of their year 12 results for future opportunities. Since the event, students have also been able to watch the sessions on demand at any time on the Discovery Day website. Participants gave positive feedback in our survey.

Leading up to 2023, when UC will mark its 150th anniversary in 2023 UC announced it will offer hundreds of new scholarships. In 2023, the scholarship – named Te Kakau a Māui will cover full course fees for 150 school-leaving students from the South Island, with a further 150 full-fee scholarships will be offered in 2024. Te Kakau a Māui scholarships are in line with Government plans to focus on equity in education.

Engagement

The sixth annual Matariki awards were broadcast live from the National Museum of New Zealand, Te Papa Tongarewa on 13 June in Wellington. Marcus Akuhata-Brown received the Tupuānuku, Education Award. Marcus is an experienced educator who has focussed his efforts on addressing the learning and development needs of youth at risk and young offenders. UC's sponsorship of this award, alongside UC's attendance and presentation at the event, reflects our values of a diverse and inclusive community, which provides a sense of belonging and builds on our bicultural foundations, in alignment with UC's Strategic Vision.

UC's Faculty of Health was a proud sponsor of the 2022 Sport Canterbury Coaches of the Year Award. The Coaches of the Year Award is presented to coaches who have created a positive culture, encouraged fair play, and shown great commitment to their chosen code. The winners of the 2022 Award were Sebastián González Moreno (Volley Blacks and Volley Ferns coach) and Alex Nilov (New Zealand Olympic Gymnastics coach).

Faculty of Health Professor Nick Draper and representatives from the other organisations joined the May meeting of the Health Precinct Advisory Council (HPAC) to discuss existing connections between Te Papa Hauora and the Te Parakiore | Metro Sport Centre. All HPAC partners are interested in working on developing opportunities that are available in the wellbeing and rehabilitation areas as the construction of Parakiore progresses.

Associate Professors Cheryl Brown and Kathryn MacCallum from the School of Educational Studies and Leadership are now UC members of the Waitaha Regional Digital Equity Steering Group. They participated in a one-day wānanga with the steering group on 5 May and Cheryl Brown did an interview with Creative Good on digital equity in New Zealand.

Ruth McManus (Sociology) was recently interviewed for a Science Vs podcast on sustainable death/composting. Based in New York, "Science Vs is wildly acclaimed for its exploration of the science behind contemporary issues. It won gold for its audio reporting on the COVID-19 pandemic from the American Association for the Advancement of Science Kavli Science Journalism Awards.

European and European Union Studies staff and the National Centre for Research on Europe held the annual Model European Union (EU) welcoming around 135 students to their two-day event. The programme is a model simulation event of the EU proceedings included a keynote address from the Ambassador of the European Union to New Zealand, Nina Obermaier.

Spanish language staff were joined by over 250 secondary school students for their Spanish Immersion Day National Certificate of Education Achievement (NCEA) workshop. Students took part in Spanish language sessions, games and the Spanish dance video project. Mr Juan Lueiro García, the Deputy Head of Mission from the Embassy of Spain, and keynote speaker, Kara Morrison from Tui Tuia Learning Circle spoke to students during the event.

Similarly, Japanese had 390 students from 15 schools across Canterbury join them for their popular NCEA Japanese workshop. Also in attendance were Mr Tsuguyoshi Hada, Director of the Consular Office of Japan, and the keynote speaker Krystal Boland. Students took part in the Dance Project video shoot which will be available to view later in the month.

The inaugural Seeing Science photography competition is open for all UC students, to submit photos showing how they see science and/or mātauranga Māori in Aotearoa. Categories cover astronomy,

behaviour, people, earth science and climatology, economy and environmental science and micro-imaging. An exhibition of the three finalists in each category will be presented in the Ernest Rutherford building from 1 September and an awards event will be held that evening. The exhibition will then run through to Open Day on Friday 9 September.

To celebrate National Volunteer Week, UC is supporting Te Akatoki with a workshop at the Waiutuutu | UC Community Gardens. This is part of the Matariki celebrations, building knowledge about harvesting through the star Tupuānuku.

UC final year health students India Wellesley, Nursing and Andrea Musgrave, Psychology, attended the HPAC sponsored Health Future Leaders course. UC, University of Otago and Ara deliver this one-week intensive course for their students in partnership with Canterbury District Health Board.

Disaster Risk and Resilience staff in the School of Earth and Environment contributed to the Toloa Pacific Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths (STEAM) Challenge. The Toloa Programme led by the Ministry for Pacific Peoples, awards scholarships to Pacific students to pursue studies in STEAM and become future innovators and leaders in STEAM-related subjects. The Pacific STEAM Challenge tasks year 9 to 12 students to work in teams to design an innovative solution to a tricky problem and present their product/idea to a panel of judges.

Recent successful conference bids included the following:

- Dr Catherine Theys has won the bid for the 2024 World Congress of the International Fluency. This conference is expected to attract 400 delegates and will be held at Te Pae Christchurch in July 2024.
- Systems Change for Learner Success is confirmed for 5-6 September. The 100-delegate conference will be held at Haere-roa, with an evening function at Te Pae Christchurch on 5 September.
- New Zealand Geographical Society Conference is confirmed to take place in the Engineering Core over 21-25 November 2022. The 200-delegate conference is led by Dr Edward Challies of the Faculty of Science.
- The International Conference on Human-Agent Interaction is confirmed for 5-8 December 2022. The conference of 100 to 250 delegates will be held on campus in the A1 lecture theatre. The lead academic is the Faculty of Engineering's Associate Professor Christoph Bartneck.
- The (De)Constructing Minorities and Freedom Conference, involving 100 delegates, will be held on campus in Rehua from 7-9 December 2022. The lead academic is Dr Antonio Viselli, Faculty of Arts.

Education – Accessible, Flexible Future Focussed

The focus for students and staff this month has been on exams. In total, students completed over 400 different exams during the end-of-semester exam time. The large outbreak of Omicron at the beginning of Semester 1, led to the decision to hold exams online where possible, with the result that over 350 of the exams were online. We expect Semester 2 will see more face-to-face exams, although not necessarily to the extent that we had before the pandemic as many courses have changed their assessment style and non-invigilated exams are now the most common type of exam. This change reflects the move to more accessible delivery.

Flexible and accessible pathways for students continue to grow across UC. For instance, the School of Teacher Education, has created new entry pathways for students who want to become technology

and te reo Māori teachers. In May 2022 enrolments showed a dramatic upswing in the number of students training to be technology teachers from six, last year to 21 this year. As part of this new entry pathway, the expanded cohort of technology teachers receive support, starting from when they are recruited and including weekly meetings with their cohort, to ensure they are having a successful learning experience.

Another example of flexible education is the ongoing development of micro-credentials. The School of Teacher Education has received a \$5,000 grant from the Tertiary Education Commission towards the development of a micro-credential in mentoring in Initial Teacher Education (ITE), with the title “Leadership for Emerging Educational Practitioners micro-credential”. Lecturer Nic Dunham is the project manager and is working with Lecturer Nikki Tod, Grant Buchanan (Teacher), Senior Lecturer Dr Sandra Williamson-Leadley, and Senior Lecturer Sue Wilson alongside UC’s learning design staff.

Successful teaching comes from successful teaching development. It is a delight to be able to congratulate the following individuals and groups who have been selected as scholars for the latest round of Distributed Leadership in Teaching Development Programme:

- Associate Professor Ann-Marie Kennedy: “Incorporating student voice in student engagement with online learning”.
- Nic Dunham: “Story globe: Immersive narratives for teaching and learning”.
- Associate Professor Arindam Basu: “Building the "Metaversity" of Canterbury”.
- Associate Professors Darren Gravely and Billy O’Steen: “Blending field science education with social entrepreneurship and environmental conservation through a virtual zipline”.
- Hilary Kingston and Nikki Tod: “Building authentic partnerships to inform using narrative pedagogy in ITE programmes”.

Research – Impact on a Changing World

The 2023 Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University rankings have been announced recently. Although UC has slid 26 positions from 258 to 284, it remains the fourth best among New Zealand universities in this ranking system behind Auckland, Otago, and Victoria University of Wellington (VUW). As with all ranking systems, QS rankings are relative against six constituent scores. The biggest drop for UC occurred in the Citations per Faculty score, which for the 2023 ranking was based on publications in the period of 2016-2020 and subsequently accrued citations over the period of 2016-2021. UC actually improved its citations per faculty by about 10%, but the global mean improved by a greater percentage, resulting in a relative decrease in UC ranking. On the other hand, UC’s Faculty to Student ratio did improve in the 2023 round. By way of context, six of the eight New Zealand universities dropped in this ranking round, with Otago dropping out of top 200 for the first time, and VUW dropping 39 places to 275.

Nonetheless, UC researchers continue to undertake research that has impact locally and globally. Sian Troath, Political Science and International Relations postdoctoral fellow, provided analysis of the Australian general election in: [“Resets and Challenges: Implications of Australia’s 2022 Federal Election”](#)

Associate Professor Jim Ockey, also Political Science and International Relations chaired the Southeast Asia Research Initiative international roundtable on “Analysing the Recent Election in the

Philippines with panellists from the University of Hawaii at Manoa, the Australian National University and UC.

Dr Jarrod Gilbert, Sociology, completed a major research project funded by the Law Foundation titled “Making Gang Laws in a Panic”. He also completed an evaluation of He Kete, a women’s residential drug and alcohol treatment programme, which was funded by the Department of Corrections.

A just-completed study by researchers from the Faculty of Health will inform future autism research and funding decisions in a New Zealand context. Senior Lecturer Dr Lisa Emerson, Associate Professor Laurie McLay, Dr Ruth Monk from the University of Auckland and Dr Larah van der Meer from Victoria University asked autistic people and the autism community what specific research they would like to see in Aotearoa. Respondents gave clear call for understanding the needs of the population in this country. Co-investigators Lisa and Laurie are establishing the Autism Research Collaborative at UC. The collaborative will support community inclusion in its research through the Autistic Research Partnership, a group of autistic people who will influence research strategy, design and outputs.

The discovery of the Wicked Bible in Christchurch has once again attracted media attention, this time drawing TVNZ to the Macmillan Brown Library to interview Associate Professor Chris Jones for *Seven Sharp*. As well as highlighting research on UC rare books, the interview showcased the expertise of Macmillan Brown specialist staff.

Professor Ann Brower’s research report from 16 years ago and her ongoing work on high-country land tenure were influential in the passing of the third reading of the Crown Pastoral Land Reform Bill in May 2022. Ann’s research has expose the dysfunctions of the high-country tenure review process (that began in 1998) and the conservation losses that have occurred. The new Act will prevent the future carve-up of about 500,000 hectares of some of our most iconic southern landscapes.

Associate Professor Laura Revell and PhD candidate Alex Aves recently published research finding the first evidence of microplastics in Antarctica. The research has received significant interest from the global media, with live interviews and stories featuring in the BBC, Al Jazeera, Canadian public radio, the Washington Post and ABC Australia, as well as in New Zealand media.

Associate Professor Wolfgang Rack was the deputy science leader in the research team led by the Scott Polar Research Institute’s Professor Julian Dowdeswell in the Weddell Sea expedition in 2019. The team didn’t find Ernest Shackleton’s ship Endurance at that time (that happened this year during a second voyage), but it did learn about the relative stability of ice shelf margins in the whole region over the past 20 years since the Larsen B ice shelf collapse in 2002. In research, since published in *Nature Geoscience* the team describes the land-ice stabilising effect of sea ice and its finding that large scale anomalies in atmospheric circulation patterns significantly influence the abundance and drift of sea ice.

Three emerging University of Canterbury researchers have won prestigious Health Research Council Emerging Researcher awards for their studies. Dr Matthew Hobbs, Senior Lecturer in Public Health and Co-Director of the GeoHealth Laboratory, will undertake a study into “Cumulative impacts of air pollution exposure on adult physical and mental health”, Dr Olivia Ogilvie, Biomolecular Interaction Centre, will study “Investigating the Diet–Microbiome Connection in Paediatric Coeliac Disease”, Dr Shinya Uekusa, School of Language, Social and Political Sciences will study “Older Informal Caregiver Experiences following the COVID-19 Pandemic in Aotearoa”.

Similarly, UC post-graduate students continue to make their mark. Amongst the Fulbright New Zealand award winners announced for 2022 is one of our Mechanical Engineering students, Briana Steven, who is among the Fulbright New Zealand Science and Innovation Graduate Award winners. She is using the award to complete a Masters of Engineering in Bioengineering at UC Berkeley. Briana has also received a UC Aho Hīnāture Scholarship, but this has been put on hold to allow her to complete her studies at UC Berkeley before she returns to UC to start her PhD.

Biological Sciences master's student Aaron Millar has been awarded a grant from the Brian Mason Scientific and Technical Trust to fund his research on stopping the spread of monkeyflower, an attractive but invasive North American plant that is getting a foothold in pristine areas of Canterbury and Otago.

As a member of the National Energy Research Institute, (NERI) UC along with two other universities and two Crown research institutes has engaged with MBIE science advisors and industry associations (such as New Zealand Geothermal Association, Transporting New Zealand, New Zealand Wind Energy Association, and Bioenergy Association). The purpose of this work is to map out the gap between industry needs and newly announced Government strategies and budget announcements, as New Zealand moves to carbon-neutrality. A major gap is the lack of more medium-term applied research that is not currently funded by either Endeavour or Marsden. NERI is developing a position paper that outlines the issues, options, and potential pathways for de-carbonising New Zealand's energy system by 2035.

Two new e-book collections are available from Cambridge University Press and JSTOR. These provide access to over 3,500 titles from a wide range of disciplines. They both use innovative purchase methods that minimise initial spend, while focusing on publishers whose content has fewer limits on multiple user access, thus improving equity of access to resources.

People – Nurturing Staff, Thriving Students

The University's COVID-19 response, albeit now on a more business-as-usual basis, has continued to draw on significant resources and effort. The focus with students continues to be on connecting with those who test COVID positive and providing them with academic and other advice, along with practical support as needed. The emphasis with staff has likewise been on providing of support via managers and colleagues. COVID-19 and influenza have had a significant effect on several work teams throughout the month, in terms of both back-filling for absent co-workers and progressing programmes of work. I continue to be grateful for the dedication and hard work of staff over this challenging period.

The People and Culture team has been working with six staff and 20 students and the University of Canterbury Students' Association, to support the UC Ukrainian community as much as possible during this difficult time. This includes providing opportunities for informal gatherings to share ideas and resources, paid access to specialist counselling, assistance in liaising with the immigration authorities about relatives who are moving to New Zealand at short notice, and help finding the services that those family members need, for example English language tuition.

Following on from the 2021 launch of the Ruahinetanga: Menopause at Work Programme, UC Health Centre general practitioners, Dr Jane Scott and Dr Victoria Price recently ran a seminar on this subject. The programme has also included a series of café-style networking events.

The annual Academic Promotions round has commenced. As part of the preparation for staff applications, an inter-disciplinary group of senior female academics has run a workshop for female colleagues about the process. This important event is one of a series of initiatives aiming to achieve equitable access and opportunities for all staff who want to progress up the academic ranks.

The Director of Student Wellbeing, as part of his initial information-gathering in his new role, has run a series of workshops and meetings to gather feedback from students and staff about UC's wellbeing services for students.

On Pink Shirt Day, students and staff ran a number of successful events promote a stop to bullying and to celebrate diversity, kindness and inclusiveness. It was good to see so many members of the UC community joining in the spirit of the day by donning pink clothing.

The Director of Accommodation Services hosted a meeting between Sarah Pallett, MP for Ilam, and the principals of our student accommodation partners. As well as providing a briefing to Ms Pallett on the halls and their services, the forum was an opportunity to canvas a range of issues such as student safety, and relationships with University neighbours.

The following UC alumni and staff were awarded Queen's Birthday Honours:

Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit:

- Mrs Lorraine Scanlon of Nelson for services to victim support and the community
- Dr Oliver Sutherland of Nelson for services to law and Māori and Pacific communities
- Ms Anne Urlwin of Wanaka for services to business

Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit:

- Mr Nicolas Atkins of Christchurch for services to science and the community
- Mr David Ayers of Christchurch for services of local government and the community
- Reverend Louise Deans of Canterbury for services to the community and women
- Ms Kim Shannon of Christchurch for services to education and the Public Service
- Mrs Karla Sanders of Alexandra for services to bullying prevention

Queen's Service Order:

- Ms Susan Hume of Christchurch for services to education
- Ms Nedra Johnson of Christchurch for services to the community and education

Queen's Service Medal:

- Ms Jeanette Leebody, JP, of Dunedin for services to netball and the community
- Mr Craig McFarlane of Papamoa for services to education and music
- Mr Larry Morgan of Napier for services to canoe sports and viticulture.
- Ms Lynda Wallace of Akaroa for services to heritage preservation and the community.

Internationalisation – Locally Engaged, Globally Networked

With normal student visa processing resuming from 31 July 2022, the border exception class to bring up to 5,000 international students to New Zealand is now in its final stages. UC has been allocated 138 students and half has had their visas approved. The first students have begun to arrive in New Zealand to undertake their study and the orientation is on 13 July.

Two of our International Office team Dr Anna Foster and Monique van Veen joined Minister of Education the Hon Chris Hipkins at the largest conference in the world. The Annual Conference and expo of NAFSA Association for International Education that took place in Denver, USA in the first week of June. Education New Zealand sponsored the opening plenary, giving the Minister a speaking slot, organised the New Zealand stand at the trade expo, and launched a new branding campaign “Take a New Look at a New Zealand Education”. Eight of UC’s international students wore a newly designed kākahu graduation gown at the event. Among those to have an individual profile was Bryann Avendaño, from Colombia, who is studying Civil and Natural Resources Engineering at UC.

The Minister’s comments echoed the government’s mantra of value over volume as borders reopen. Changes to post-study work (PSW) rights have been confirmed and are not as significantly changed for the university sector as the original proposal. Masters and PhD graduates continue to benefit from a three-year open post-study work visa after a minimum of two semesters of study on-shore. Bachelors graduates can receive up to three years proportional to their time spent on-shore. Off-shore, online, and pathways studies are not recognised as contributing towards the minimum 30 weeks of study on-shore required for PSW rights.

In preparation for the new marketing push, faculties identified priority programmes for growth potential. We developed a new incentive package for new international students in 2023 and 2024 that includes a regional cultural excursion as well as access to experiential learning opportunities, such as virtual micro-internships. The response from key channels was positive in Denver. However, as the government resumes off-shore student visa processing after two years of border closure, we anticipate challenges to returning to stable enrolment patterns over the next two to three years.

Organisational Efficacy – of a sustainable scale by 2030

A key foundation and enabler of our digital transformation is our platform for requesting help and services, not just from Digital Services but across the many service provider teams here at UC. Last year Digital Services kicked off the Service Experience programme and this month the new ServiceNow powered platform launches. This platform will make it far easier for all staff and students to ask for help and find information about the services available at UC. The help is not just for IT services, all significant service provider departments will be onboarded to make the experience far easier. The platform will also enable new process automation and orchestration capabilities, which will be increasingly leveraged for efficiencies.

The continued strategic drive to make finding information easier will be complemented by the launch of the new UC intranet in Quarter 3. Progressing the final designs involves extensive activity with content administrators across UC, helping them understand the opportunities the new SharePoint online platform opens up for sharing information, search, rich visual interaction and personalisation.

In May, Council endorsed the CyberSecurity strategy and business case is currently under consideration. Whilst the team have been progressing the strategy and programme business case they have continued to drive many roadmap items with the cyber ‘hit squad’. Multi-factor-authentication (MFA) has been rolled out to all students and now Alumni. The team will be continuing to improve and optimise the MFA experience as we balance the need for protection with making the process as convenient and simple as possible.

Environmentally Sustainable

Throughout May we celebrated World Biodiversity Day with a range of events and activities. These included an online panel discussion entitled “Riccarton Community: Working together to improve biodiversity” as part of the Ako Ōtautahi | Learning Days festival, a campus biodiversity tour, and a planting day with children from Ilam School and our Grounds Department (funded by Environment Canterbury).

The UC Biodiversity Plan is now completed and other progress included the adoption of the UC Waste Plan, and the publication of the annual UC Sustainability Report, as well as the Sustainability Plan.

The University has been chosen by ANZ Bank for a case study of our journey towards carbon net neutrality by 2030, in their second ANZ Insights Paper. This is part of a series aimed at helping New Zealand businesses build foundations for change. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor Sustainability, Professor Jan Evans-Freeman, was interviewed by them in May and the University features prominently in their paper which will be published in June. They have included our transition away from burning coal as a heating source, and our consideration of future air travel planning. We were chosen because we have successfully set and achieved emissions reductions targets.

Lecturer Lindsey Conrow, Professor Simon Kingham and Senior Research Fellow Matt Hobbs have been awarded one of the recently advertised UC Sustainability Research PhD scholarships for a project that will examine urban amenity access with a focus on equity and wellbeing. Work on this project will inform on how we might achieve equitable access while developing sustainable, inclusive and healthy cities.

Year three, Faculty of Education student, Tyler Rogers, from the Early Childhood BTchLn, has won the 2022 Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Student Award for her ‘Interactive Sustainability Felt Book for Infants and Toddlers. Tyler originally submitted her resource as part of the course, TECP319 Sustainability and Social Justice. The resource was notable for its relevance for very young children, who have limited access to suitable resources on sustainability <https://omepworld.org/library3/>

VC Activities

28 May 2022	Attended the Africa Day Expo event
6 June 2022	Attended The Organ Curator's Happy Anniversaries concert 2022 at the Christchurch City Hall
9 June 2022	Met with alumnus Bruce Ullrich
11 June 2022	Attended the World Premier screening of the feature documentary Behrouz at the Isaac Royal Theatre.
13 June 2022	Meeting with Professor Pal Ahluwalia. Vice-Chancellor, University of South Pacific via Zoom
16 June 2022	Attended the UNZ Vice-Chancellor's meeting in Wellington
21 June 2022	Speaker at the Master of Māori and Indigenous Leadership celebrations in Rotorua
25 June 2022	Attended the Te Akatoki Matariki Formal Celebrations at Ngaio Marsh Theatre
28 June 2022	Attended a Better City Business Event hosted by Christchurch Foundation.
30 June 2022	New Zealand Qualifications Authority Board meeting in Wellington