

Vice Chancellor's Report to Council

May 2021

Introduction

The 2020 Annual Report was released in late April, with key information about the way UC responded to and experienced the COVID-19 pandemic in that year and the resulting impact on our financial performance. For the first time the report includes a list of academic accolades including national and UC medal winners and our newly named Professores Emeriti.

The Ministry of Education released for consultation the [updated Education \(Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Students\) Code of Practice 2021](#). The Ministry intends to issue new pastoral code legislation in July 2021 to take effect from 1 January 2022. The deadline for all submissions is 21 May 2021. Universities New Zealand will be making a submission on the new code, as will UC and many other New Zealand universities independently.

A very exciting high-level sports competition, the University and Tertiary Sports New Zealand National Tertiary Championships is currently taking place between all eight universities, involving a variety of sports. At the end of all the sports events for 2021, the university that has earned the most points secures the championship shield. As at the time of writing this report, UC is in first place after three events (rowing, 3x3 basketball and futsal).

UC is also currently ranked first equal with three other universities for the Spirit trophy, which is awarded through popular vote by participants at the event for who shows the best 'spirit' of the game, is friendliest and is overall liked by the other universities. There are four more events to go to determine the winner.

Engagement

Increase our presence and impact in Ōtautahi Christchurch and Waitaha Canterbury.

This month UC had the opportunity to make a submission on the Long-Term Plan for Ōtautahi Christchurch. Both UC and the UC Students' Association (UCSA) made submissions, along with many staff who made individual submissions. Accompanied by Robyn Nuthall, I presented the UC perspective at the Christchurch City Council hearings to promote the concept of the Knowledge Commons. In short, we made the case that the Council could benefit significantly from a more structured approach to partnering with UC as an anchor institution. UC's 10-year Strategic Plan 2020 – 2030 is explicit about our commitment to engage more fully with the local community and city, particularly in advancing our aim to support local economic growth and social and environmental sustainability.

A few weeks earlier, I did a similar presentation, accompanied by Professor Ekant Veer and Robyn Nuthall at the Environment Canterbury Board hearings on the draft long-term plan.

Partner with Ngāi Tūāhuriri and Ngāi Tahu to uphold the mana and aspirations of the mana whenua.

A new catalogue “He pukapuka hei kai mā te hinengaro: Māori and Pasifika Books to feast your mind on” features four Canterbury University Press (CUP) titles ([view](#) a digital version, or [download](#) a printable version). It’s been produced by [Kete](#), an initiative of [The Coalition for Books](#), which aims to engage more audiences with a diverse range of Aotearoa New Zealand books and authors. The books featured are *A Long Time Coming* by Martin Fisher and *Water Rights for Ngāi Tahu* by Te Maire Tau, and two digital publications *Ngā Kōrero a Mohi Ruatapu: The writings of Mohi Ruatapu* and *Ngā Kōrero a Pita Kāpiti: The teachings of Pita Kāpiti* translated and edited by Anaru Reedy; these last two were first published in 1993 and 1997 respectively, and are out of print but now available as Open Access titles in UC’s research repository.

The Minister of Forestry, Hon Stuart Nash visited academic staff and Ngā Karahipi Uru Rākau scholarship recipients. Conversations were had around the new vision for the forestry industry moving forward and he took the opportunity to acknowledge the continuation of Ngā Karahipi Uru Rākau scholarship for a further three years.

Conferences and public events

UC’s reputation as a conference venue is growing with very positive feedback from both delegates and conference organisers. Participants range from international online audiences in Europe, Asia and Australasia to domestic audiences taking part in hybrid and face-to-face events on campus.

Agritech is a key business sector where Canterbury and the rest of New Zealand aspire to enhance its potential and deliver greater outcomes from it. The Government is committed to this outcome through the delivery of its Agritech Industry Transformation Plan (ITP). UC is an active member of AgritechNZ which is managing the implementation of the Agritech ITP. Recently this has involved regional roadshows, and we have forthcoming opportunities to engage on identified ‘agritech’ skills gaps and the proposed Agritech Skills Reference Group.

UC is contributing to the E Tipu: Boma NZ Agri Summit in Christchurch, with a significant presence at the two-day conference with the aim of raising the profile and capability of UC. Additionally, UC is sponsoring a \$50,000 researcher prize in the **Food, Fibre & Agritech Supernode Challenge**, with the awards announced at the conference. UC has one researcher-led technology participant (Maryam Shojaei, Chemical and Processing Engineering) among the 10 finalists.

Te Kura Pāngarau hosted the Canterbury Maths Association (CMA) for a conference focused on mathematics teaching in primary and secondary schools. A wide range of presentations was on offer, covering topics such as blended learning, Maths Craft, strategies for teaching mixed ability groups, incorporating mātauranga Māori into the classroom, and the new numeracy standards. Strategies for developing deeper algebraic thinking were discussed in several talks. We also honoured Kevin Hannah with a lifetime membership of the CMA for his many contributions to mathematics education in New Zealand.

Emeritus Professor Roger Robinson, author of *When Running Made History* (CUP, 2019), was interviewed about sports writing on Radio New Zealand’s [Standing Room Only](#). Roger took part in a panel at Featherston Booktown Karukatea Festival 2021 earlier in this month.

Next month, Te Hunga Rōia Māori o Aotearoa, Hui-Ā-Tau Conference 2021 will be held at UC, proudly supported by the School of Law and Canterbury Law Review Trust. The theme for the conference was gifted by Dr Moana Jackson, Māori Lawyers as Agents of Mana-Based Change. This nationwide event will bring together a large gathering of Māori legal practitioners, judges, parliamentarians, academics, policy-analysts, researchers and law students. It is an exciting opportunity to host this event at UC, where participants will discuss the changes involved in moving the legal system toward a bicultural setting.

Professor Elizabeth McDonald was the keynote speaker at this year's Health Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal training workshop, held in Wellington, in which she outlined the processes, practices and reform options for the hearing of proceedings involving sensitive claims. Her work on *Rape Myths as Barriers to Fair Trial Process: Comparing adult rape trials with those in the Aotearoa Sexual Violence Court Pilot* (CUP, 2020) was highly recommended in a review by Associate Professor Scott Optican in *Canterbury Law Review* 26.

Make a positive impact on social sustainability in Ōtautahi Christchurch and Waitaha Canterbury.

The Ministry of Education's new [Relationships and Sexuality Education](#) guidelines are out, and teachers and school leaders are getting support to bring the guidelines to life. UC has been awarded the Ministry of Education contract to create effective practice showcases and educator resources to help schools and teachers implement the guidelines. The resources are being designed by Dr Rachael Dixon and Dr Tracy Clelland, School of Health Sciences, who have both taught previously in schools. The resources will be housed on a dedicated section of the Ministry of Education's wellbeing website, with an expected release date of Term 3 2021.

The College of Education, Health and Human Development hosted Sport New Zealand's National Coach Development workshop. At this event, 20 coaches from around New Zealand experienced theoretical and practical coaching development. The organising group for this event included an ex-staff member (Hugh Galvan, now with Sport New Zealand), a BSpC graduate (Mike De Bono – event lead, Sport Canterbury) and a BSpC student intern (Sammy Colvin).

Industry professionals within the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) sector took over the Engineering Core on Thursday 6 May, giving UC students an opportunity to engage in conversations and explore internship and graduate opportunities with potential employers at the STEM Careers fair. The event facilitated connections between industry and students, and provided an opportunity to increase our presence and impact in Ōtautahi Christchurch and Waitaha Canterbury, as well as to retain and grow the diversity of talent in this region.

The UC participated in Open Christchurch, a free weekend festival of exceptional architecture, to raise awareness of UC's local engagement while celebrating UC's architecture, foster positive engagement with the local community, and to generate media coverage. The festival offered people in Christchurch the opportunity to connect with their city by uncovering new spaces and getting up close to the buildings they love. The Ilam campus opened its doors to Jack Erskine, Ernest Rutherford and Puaka-James Hight as well as hall of residence College House. A combined total of 300 attendees came through Ernest Rutherford, Jack Erskine and Puaka-James Hight over the course of the day. In the CBD, there was an opportunity to explore UC's Teece Museum of Classical Antiquities in the UC Arts reimaged 'Old Chemistry' building, in the Arts Centre which had a total of over 500 visitors throughout the weekend.

Education and Research

The future-focused Professional and Community Engagement (PACE) team delivers pan-university work integrated learning (WIL) internships, in line with the Tertiary Education Commission's (TEC's) emphasis on employability after graduating, as well as with evidence-based research on the value of best-practice WIL. Last month (29 and 30 April) the PACE team attended the WILNZ International Online Conference. Conference presentations from New Zealand and Australian WIL experts clarified that it is essential for UC to invest further in WIL to increase students' employability by developing skills such as agility, resilience and self-management.

Dr Myron Friesen, School of Educational Studies and Leadership, was a representative at the Wellington wānanga on early brain development related to communication, which was hosted by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet's Child Wellbeing Unit. Over 60 people attended, representing national and local government departments, philanthropists, leading not-for-profit organisations, private businesses and academics. The Parenting Place sponsored Dr Friesen's participation, reflecting his long-term collaboration in building effective parenting programmes. Professor Gail Gillon and Professor Brigid McNeill (School of Teacher Education) from the UC Child Well-being Research Institute also presented recent findings from their research on literacy interventions for tamariki from the Better Start National Science Challenge.

At the first presentation of the Professorial Lecture series 2021, Professor Brigid McNeill, School of Teacher Education, was celebrated for her substantive contribution to academe. Professor McNeill gave an outstanding presentation along with Professor Daniel Holland from the Department of Chemical and Process Engineering.

The Government has proposed moving control of water fluoridation from local councils to the Director-General of Health, in an effort to create a nationally consistent approach. The Bill to implement this proposal is supported by findings from research led by Professor Philip Schluter (School of Health Sciences) with a team of legal, public health, dental, water-quality and geospatial specialists, including Dr Martin Lee, Ms Helen Atkins, Mr Barry Mattingley and Dr Matthew Hobbs (School of Health Sciences). The findings showed children without a fluoridated water supply were 20% more likely to have severe tooth decay, and the lack of widespread community water fluoridation disproportionately affects children living in the most socioeconomically deprived areas. Moreover, Māori and Pacific children are more likely to experience worse oral health than Pākehā, even after accounting for key sociodemographic factors.

Professor Lianne Woodward, School of Health Sciences, together with researchers from Otago University and UC, interviewed 700 Kiwis and found that physical punishment of children is decreasing. In their article published in the *New Zealand Medical Journal*, the researchers reported that the practice of smacking a child on their bottom reduced by almost half from 2002 to 2017, and severe assaults declined by two-thirds. Despite the downward trend in reported cases of physical punishment, however, it remains a fairly common form of discipline since the legislation against it was introduced.

A new study led by Dr Laurie McLay (School of Health Sciences) has found one in four children on the autism spectrum in Aotearoa take melatonin to help them sleep and that it makes a huge difference to them and their families.

A nationwide cross-sectional study has generated data that may help mitigate potential inequality in our response to the COVID-19 pandemic, or indeed to future pandemics. Areas with high Māori and Pacific populations, including South Auckland and Porirua, are among the most vulnerable. Identifying areas of high vulnerability allows for better targeting of resources. This research was conducted by the College of Science's Postdoctoral Fellows Jesse Wikia and Lukas Marek, Professor Simon Kingham and Associate Professor Malcolm Campbell, along with Dr Matthew Hobbs, College of Education, Health and Human Development.

The UC Community Engagement Hub has partnered with Leadership in Communities, a year-long programme of professional development for community organisation leaders, to conduct research with its 500+ participants in the programme over the last eight years. Postdoctoral Fellow Hilary Dutton and Associate Professor Billy O'Steen will be collecting and analysing data related to how participants' involvement in the programme has affected the organisations they work for.

Australian and New Zealand Industrial and Applied Mathematics has awarded the 2020 Tuck Prize to Professor Mike Plank, School of Mathematics and Statistics. The prestigious prize, in honour of the late Professor Oliver Tuck, is awarded for outstanding research and distinguished service to the field of Applied Mathematics. It is only awarded to candidates deemed to be of sufficient merit and is limited to a maximum of one award per year.

Professor Julia Rucklidge's co-authored new book with Calgary research psychologist Bonnie Kaplan, *The Better Brain: How nutrition will help you overcome anxiety, depression, ADHD and stress*, has been called "one of the most important books of the year" by George Henderson of Newsroom NZ, who also states that description is an understatement.

New research co-authored by UC Economics and Finance staff – Head of Department Professor Jędrzej Białkowski, Dr Huong Dang and Dr Xiaopeng Wei – has been accepted for publication in the prestigious *Journal of Financial Economics* (ranked in the world's top two journals in this discipline). The paper, "[High policy uncertainty and low implied market volatility – an academic puzzle?](#)", will be published later this year.

Dr Annabel Ahuriri-Driscoll, School of Health Sciences, has been co-opted to be a member of the Health Research Council (HRC) Māori Health Committee. The Māori Health Committee, as a statutory committee of the HRC, is responsible for advising the Council on health research for Māori, including cultural issues relating to gathering, verifying and validating information. It is also responsible for distributing funds dedicated to Māori health research and career development.

UC's Digital Education Futures Lab and the School of Educational Studies and Leadership provided a satellite venue for the Flexible Learning Association of New Zealand conference, hosted from Victoria, Australia. As we were the only venue available for the South Island, a number of colleges from various tertiary institutes joined us in presenting and engaging from the UC campus. Five academics presented from the UC satellite hub, boasting the highest attendance of all hubs situated around the country.

Associate Professor Kathryn MacCallum from the School of Educational Studies and Leadership is engaged in planning the annual mLearn conference, the 20th World Conference on Mobile, Blended and Seamless Learning, which will be hosted in Estonia. She has been involved in a proposal for a symposium with key members of International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP TC3.3)

to be hosted at the OCCE 2021, which would explore the different curriculum approaches to integrating digital technologies around the world.

Enhancing postgraduate research

Komodo is a start-up tech company that was founded in 2018 and developed as an athlete monitoring app as part of the Centre of Entrepreneurship Summer Start-up programme. Komodo has evolved into @KomodoWellbeing for schools. UC graduates Chris Bacon (now a Sport Science PhD student, School of Health Sciences), Jack Wood and Matt Goodson develop tailored software solutions for schools. After building traction in the education space, Komodo has customers throughout Australia and New Zealand. The app provides a platform for students to open up about their wellbeing and allows staff to regularly check in with them, helping them to feel supported, safe and happy.

Postdoctoral Fellow Matui Prebble of Ngāi Tahu collaborated with a range of international researchers on a science paper on human impacts on island biodiversity. The researchers found that islands are among the last regions on Earth to be settled and transformed by human activities, and they provide replicated model systems for analysis of how people affect ecological functions.

Associate Professor Daniela Liggett (Gateway Antarctica), in partnership with Associate Professor Emma Stewart from Lincoln University, has written a chapter in a new book *Polar Cruise Tourism*. The authors discuss the legal framework for regulating tourism to the Arctic and Antarctica, in particular ship-borne tourism.

Tekapo's Dark Sky Reserve, which includes UC's Mount John Observatory, was named as the best place for stargazing in Aotearoa New Zealand by Tourism New Zealand and the *New Zealand Herald*. They commented, "If you asked any New Zealander about the most famous stargazing destination in the country, they're most likely to tell you Tekapo. It's an internationally recognised Dark Sky Reserve, and is home to the University of Canterbury Mt John Observatory, known as the top astronomical research observatory in the country."

People – Nurturing Staff, Thriving Students

Work continues on embedding our three core Organisational Values (Whanaungatanga, Manaakitanga and Tiakitanga) at UC. The April leadership drop-in sessions saw 90 UC leaders actively engaging in increasing their understanding of the Values and determining behaviours that align with them. Feedback from the workshops was very positive and June will see three more workshops offered. An online resource toolkit has been built as a support mechanism for building capability of staff as they look to align behaviours and processes with the Values. People and Culture has commenced reviewing its processes and policies to create alignment with the Values.

The Communications and Engagement team is a finalist for the Public Relations Institute of New Zealand's In-house Team of the Year Award. The team has been recognised for its work over the past year, including providing UC's COVID-19 communications response, delivering the new Strategic Vision to internal audiences and increasing UC's media impact score. The awards ceremony is taking place in Auckland on 28 May.

The New Zealand Book Awards for Children & Young Adults are a unique celebration of the contribution children's authors and illustrators in New Zealand make to building national identity and cultural heritage. Te Paea Paringatai, UC Library Manager, is a judge for Te Kura Pounamu Award in 2021.

A recent initiative shows the Library's continued focus on student wellbeing and collaboration across the University. LEGO Masters UC is a collaboration with Associate Professor Christoph Bartneck at HIT Lab. A challenge issued every Monday during Term 2 gives students the chance to work together or individually on a creative solution.

Our internal Campus Rhythm messaging in May was centred around the theme of "Be well, be prepared" as students start to get ready for exams. As part of our focus on wellbeing during this period, Young New Zealander of the Year Jazz Thornton took over UC's Instagram to engage with students. The Communications team will be sharing regular wellbeing messaging through our internal channels on exam preparation, coping with stress and taking care of mental and physical health with the support of UC's wellbeing services. This work supports UC's objective of providing a sustaining environment where the holistic wellbeing of students, staff and our community enables our people to be successful, engaged, empowered and making a difference.

During April and May all accommodation partners have participated in workshops focused on emergency management and business continuity planning. Individual halls are now working with the University to update plans towards a more cohesive approach at times of disruption.

Bishop Julius Hall has been rebranded as Arcady Hall, following a long period of consultation by the Principal and Board. Coinciding with this rebranding is a refocus on creating an environment well suited to STEM students and emphasising suitability for a diverse range of students.

Internationalisation – Locally Engaged, Globally Networked

Professor Karen Scott has been officially appointed as an International Partner of the Norwegian Centre for the Law of the Sea – a UiT Aurora Centre (formally K.G. Jebsen Centre for the Law of the Sea), University of Tromsø, Norway, from 1 April 2021.

UC continues to work across the tertiary education sector to help find growth opportunities. UC has taken the lead on a Smart Recruitment project with Education New Zealand (ENZ), and workshops have been held to look at ways the sector can work more effectively with ENZ to maximise our activities, such as through virtual events and lead tracking. This project will help both ENZ and universities work together more efficiently in the future, and will identify clear, common target markets that we can use to amplify the New Zealand education message more effectively.

Immigration New Zealand (INZ) is not currently processing visas for most individuals who are offshore unless they meet the strict border exemption criteria or are in a COVID-19 quarantine-free travel zone. This is because legally INZ is unable to grant visas to individuals who are unlikely to meet entry requirements. From 10 August 2020, the Government suspended the ability for most people offshore to apply for temporary entry class visas (including visitor, work, student, and limited visas). With its last extension of the suspension expiring on 7 May 2021, the Government has decided to again extend it for a further three months until 6 August 2021. This impacts on agents and prospective students as it becomes very clear to them that New Zealand will not be open for Semester 2, 2021 and that readiness for a start in Term 1, 2022 is in jeopardy.

UC has filled 100% of our quota of 82 students among the cohort of 1,000 approved by ENZ. We are continuing to nominate eligible students as the Ministry of Education has removed the quota for institutions; now a ‘first come, first served’ policy applies to try to fill up the 1,000 spaces as soon as possible. We now have 36 students who have been granted visas under this exemption class and we expect them to be back in time for Semester 2. Our support continues for offshore students who are returning to UC through managed isolation (MIQ) in time to continue studies on campus in July.

Organisational Efficacy – of a Sustainable Scale by 2030

Increase the economic impact of the University on the city and region.

The University’s economic impact on our region includes not just our direct and indirect investment in the region but also the development of the region’s economic growth capability. The MBA programme runs a Thought Leadership series to support this and the most recent event was another good success.

A large group of industry leaders and alumni were privileged to hear from UC alumnus and UC Business School Adjunct Fellow, Glenn Renwick. On 27 April he talked about “Leading during Times of Uncertainty” in the first event in the Thought Leadership series for 2021. His impressive career included 32 years with American insurance giant Progressive (16 years as CEO), building it from a US\$20 billion revenue insurer to a business that is now approaching US\$40 billion in revenue.

UC participated in Open Christchurch, a free weekend festival of exceptional architecture, to raise awareness of our local engagement while celebrating UC’s architecture, fostering positive engagement with the local community and generating media coverage. The festival offered people in

Christchurch the opportunity to connect with their city by uncovering new spaces and getting up close to the buildings they love. The Ilam campus opened the doors to its Jack Erskine, Ernest Rutherford and Puaka-James Hight buildings as well as to hall of residence College House. In the central city, the public had an opportunity to explore UC's Teece Museum of Classical Antiquities in the UC Arts reimagined 'Old Chemistry' building, in the Arts Centre.

Grow and diversify revenue to become an economically sustainable university able to initiate new, high-impact projects.

The University has completed the April forecast for 2021. The updated forecast projects a full-year operating surplus of \$8.5 million compared with the original budgeted deficit of (\$14.9) million.

The most significant favourable movement in the forecast is largely related to higher forecast student income, including Student Achievement Component (SAC) (forecasting to be \$21.4 million or 8.1% ahead of budget this year). This is driven by a strong increase in domestic students following the national COVID-19-related recession. We have some confidence that TEC will fund the SAC increases we are seeing above the 102% threshold, so the April forecast includes all SAC from enrolled students. However, SAC funding above the 102% threshold is payable at TEC's discretion, so the risk remains that it may not be funded. The value at risk is estimated at \$5.9 million.

Environmentally Sustainable

Grow and leverage our local, national and global sustainability networks to bring new thinking to our challenge and to share our practice.

Professor Jan Evans-Freeman recently attended a Zoom meeting of the New Zealand Universities Air Travel Consortium, a new group interested in commencing conversations about reducing university air travel in Aotearoa. Participants discussed the Terms of Reference and decided to establish a network of academics from all eight universities to address current high-carbon academic mobility practices in New Zealand. While academic staff account for most university travel, this network will consider all university staff travel, including senior managers and those engaged in brand promotion, global engagement and student recruitment. It will share research and best practice across all universities represented. It will also consider inviting Australian universities to join as we share many problems, the principal one being our distance from the northern hemisphere.