

Chancellor's Welcome

Welcome to the 2011 Annual Report of the University of Canterbury, covering one of the most challenging years faced in the life of the University.

Little did we know when the first semester began on Monday 21 February that just over 24 hours later the University would be closed following a devastating 6.3 magnitude earthquake in Christchurch. The aftershocks that continued throughout 2011 made it a difficult and challenging year for staff, students and the wider community, and the quakes that hit on 23 December were a reminder that the seismic uncertainty continues. As a result of the 22 February earthquake, a number of staff members and students suffered significant personal loss and disruption, however, there were no major injuries on campus. Teaching, although interrupted by aftershocks and adverse weather, was completed within the planned academic year.

I am very proud of what students and staff achieved individually and collectively. These achievements were gained through teamwork and collaboration, which helps make UC a truly resilient organisation. The 2011 cohort of students endured disruption of their personal lives and their learning routines yet their application to their study and wider contribution to Christchurch is something we can all be proud of.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Vice-Chancellor Dr Rod Carr for his leadership and to acknowledge the work the Senior Management Team and staff put into the University's emergency response and its recovery process. Despite personal hardships suffered by many, staff showed great resilience, tolerance and flexibility as they got on with the job at hand, often teaching in unusual places at unusual times such as their commitment to delivering a high-quality academic programme.

I would also like to record the University's appreciation of the many offers of help that flooded in following the earthquakes. The

spirit of generosity from our colleagues in other New Zealand universities was gratifying with not only places offered to our students but also staff loaned to provide valuable backup and support in wide ranging areas. The University of Auckland kindly hosted a graduation ceremony for nearly 40 of our graduates. We were truly humbled by the willingness and speed of response of the many people, suppliers and organisations that helped us following the earthquakes.

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Despite the earthquakes our vision remains intact: we aim to provide a world-class learning environment where research, teaching and learning take place in ways that are inspirational and innovative, and where we are known for attracting people with the greatest potential to make a difference. Post-earthquake Christchurch offers an even greater opportunity to deliver on this vision.

UC has both the responsibility and strong desire to support the city's recovery. In our submissions to the Christchurch City Council and Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) recovery plans, we identified a number of potential initiatives in addition to the more than 130 research projects that have already been initiated or are due to start in 2012.

Financial outcomes for 2011 are materially affected by the accounting treatment of earthquake-related insurance proceeds, operating expenditure and capital investments. Capital spending, while not as

planned, will reach nearly double the budgeted level as insurance and University-funded remediation projects are progressed and necessary space created.

Excluding earthquake-related revenue and costs is rather difficult but identifying the ongoing revenue and recurring costs of the University suggests a surplus of \$10million in 2011 and the prospect of material deficits in 2012, 2013 and 2014. At present the best estimates are that it will be five years before

the University covers annual costs from annual revenue and seven years before revenue is sufficient to generate capital required to support ongoing reinvestment.

The generosity of our alumni and friends resulted in more than \$270,000 being raised in the Earthquake Scholarship Appeal. Ninety-five new scholarships have been offered to students returning for the 2012 academic year. My sincere thanks go to the UC Foundation whose trustees generously give their time to help raise funds and awareness for UC. They play a crucial role in helping the University sustain and progress our mission to educate tomorrow's leaders and develop the knowledge that will help drive us as a progressive, research-led, globally connected university.

The University's graduation ceremonies are one of the most enjoyable and rewarding aspects of the role of Chancellor and the satisfaction of the graduates and the pride of friends and families make for joyful occasions.

Two graduate celebrations were held in the “Super Top” tent on Ilam Fields in April to recognise the achievement of graduates who had been due to attend graduation ceremonies in the central city that were cancelled as a result of the 22 February earthquake. It was very special to be back on our own campus to celebrate the achievements of more than 600 graduates. With the Christchurch Town Hall still off limits, 1400 students graduated in December in ceremonies held in the CBS Canterbury Arena in Addington. A further 94 students from the College of Education graduated in a ceremony held at the Rotorua Convention Centre.

The University is a large and complex organisation and its governance is broad. During 2011 there were nine formal meetings of Council, 14 informal workshops, seven meetings of the Audit and Risk Committee, 10 meetings of the Finance, Planning and Resources Committee, three meetings of the Vice-Chancellor Employment Committee, one meeting of the Ad Hoc Honorary Doctorates Committee and the Council Appeals Committee heard four student appeals.

There were a number of changes to Council membership during the year. Professor Simon Kemp and Dr Andy Pratt joined as members of the academic staff while the University of Canterbury Students' Association was represented for a one-year term by President Kohan McNab and Kristy Merrick. I would like to thank all Council members for their hard work during what was a very challenging year. It was great to see the Council work constructively to support the University management in its recovery efforts.

While I will continue to serve on the University Council in 2012 I have stepped down as Chancellor after three years in the role. It has been an honour and a pleasure to have chaired the Council and I wish my successor, Dr John Wood, all the best for the year ahead.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rex Williams'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Rex Williams

Chancellor

28 February 2012