ALIENATION TO ALIEN NATION
Julian Burnside QC on the mistreatment of asylum seekers

WEIGHT LIFTING WARRIORS
Prostate cancer survivors fight to get back their fitness, and their life

FUTURE THINKING
If you couldn’t imagine the future, what kind of decisions would you make?

THE CORE IN PARIS
Fancy spending summer in the City of Light?

www.acu.edu.au/insight
In racing terms, there are favourites, odds-on favourites and unbackable favourites. Then there is Peter Cosgrove.

About the only person not certain over the past few months that Cosgrove would be appointed our next governor-general would be Kevin Rudd. He may still be waiting for the phone call.

Cosgrove is less qualified for the job than designed for it. He is a general, a war hero (he won the Military Cross in Vietnam) a civic hero (he oversaw the reconstruction of North Queensland after Cyclone Larry); and an international figure (for leading the peacekeeping force in East Timor).

He is the sort of person you would dislike on principle out of sheer jealousy, if he were not also one of the nicest and most down-to-earth blokes in Australia.

But, most important of all, the very qualities that underlie his accomplishments qualify him perfectly for the role of governor-general.

AN EMINENT AUSTRALIAN

The first is eminence. There is no uppity arrogance or subterfuge.

From soldiers to students, he greets everyone with the same genuine interest and lack of side.

A man with this record of achievement and this level of personal understanding will bring with him a sophisticated understanding of his office. Indeed, given the state of the odds, it would be surprising if he had not been reading up for some time.

Peter Cosgrove will comprehend his role perfectly. Publicly, he will not politicise, but he will be a serial empathiser. There will be no controversial speeches or gestures, but he will be a great conciliator and would be the last governor-general ever to press the trigger. But if he did, he would not miss, friend or foe alike.

These will be Cosgrove’s great strengths as governor-general. He has the judgement and the experience to understand the absolute limits of his role, and the dignity and toughness to carry it out. In an office that carries a light touch, no one will take him lightly.

He has, of course, the great advantage of the classic governor-general. He has literally nothing to gain. He has been everywhere and done everything. After a life of duty, the only thing that remains is to serve and maintain his reputation.

Were the Prime Minister, Tony Abbott, to fall after only one term, Cosgrove would offer exactly the same wise, friendly counsel to any Labor leader. And the same absolutely principled discharge of his office.

The same would apply in the incredibaly unlikely event that Australia were to become a republic on Cosgrove’s watch. He would serve as impeccably as an apolitical head of state as he would as a viceroy.

In a sense, this implacable ethic of non-political service is what makes former eminent military personnel so genuinely suitable as vice-regal appointees, despite the usual naval brush-off from head and sabres. They have lived lives of initiative and achievement, but in service and without political ambition of their own.

Cosgrove also brings with him a rare bonus in his wife, Lynne. As clever and as funny as her husband, she is the veteran of innumerable parades, fundraisers and graduations.

With three children of her own and a newly graduated, she is another people- lover who will make the Cosgroves a very Australian gubernatorial combination.

All in all, Australia has the very model of a modern governor-general.

PETER COSGROVE, GROOMED BY A LIFE OF SERVICE TO BE OUR GG

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Daniel Quin, Master of Psychology (Educational and Developmental)/Doctor of Philosophy

“When I was teaching in high schools, an ex-student of mine posted on Facebook that he had just been suspended and was at the TAB having a bet. All of his classmates commented favourably on his status which got me thinking.

I had taught in high schools for five years before enrolling at ACU. I first met Sheryl Hemphill when I was trying to decide on a supervisor for my psychology honours project. I had a vague idea I wanted to look at school suspension and whether it was a punishment or reward for students. It was suggested I talk to Sheryl. I wasn’t aware of her research so I had a look and was instantly inspired.

Sheryl’s 2006 study demonstrated that school suspension doesn’t necessarily decrease anti-social behaviour as intended, but instead students who have been suspended are more likely to engage in anti-social behaviour in the subsequent 12 months. I wanted to know why and I wanted to work with Sheryl. We embarked on a joint study in 2011 which aimed to explore the experiences of students who had been previously suspended.

My long-term goal is to work as a psychologist with schools and children. This research will help me have a better understanding of why schools suspend students; how schools can support at-risk students and what students who have been suspended experience. It is a very complex issue with no easy solution. One of the things the research suggested was that suspension has a negative impact on student-teacher relationships. I think that if this research raises awareness of this then hopefully teachers, students and schools can work together in new ways to build stronger relationships.”

Professor Sheryl Hemphill, Professor of Psychology

"It was clear that Daniel knew a lot about how schools operate and that he was (and is) very concerned about the health and wellbeing of young people. He had a lot to contribute as he understood from a teacher’s perspective the challenges schools face in managing student behaviour. He was particularly interested in the experience of suspended students. This is one of my main areas of research so we agreed it would be great to do a study together on the topic.

Our joint research project commenced in 2011 and we collected data in schools for most of that year. The biggest challenge was to get enough students to fill out the survey so that we could run our statistical analyses. We eventually surveyed 74 previously suspended adolescents from five Victorian schools. They reported their understanding of the process of being suspended; what they did and with whom they spent the days of their suspension; and their perceptions of their return to school post-suspension.

Our results showed that a minority of suspended students received adult supervision and most participated in benign leisure activities. They reported their understanding of the process of being suspended; what they did and with whom they spent the days of their suspension; and their perceptions of their return to school post-suspension. Our results showed that a minority of suspended students received adult supervision and most participated in benign leisure activities. Upon return to school, students reported diminished teacher assistance and found that suspension did not help resolve the underlying issues that led to the suspension in the first place.

We are optimistic and believe the research will benefit all members of the school community, including students, school staff and parents. By increasing the understanding of the unique experience of suspended students and making suggestions about alternative ways of managing student behaviour, there are likely to be better outcomes for suspended students and their classmates. Daniel is currently undertaking a PhD with me on student engagement so we are continuing to build our research in this area. Working in collaboration with ACU students like Daniel is a win-win. It helps me conduct specific projects in my own areas of interest and can inform larger studies by providing pilot data for future research. It helps to build the global knowledge base and the students learn how to conduct research and the ways that research can make a difference in the world. I also encourage students to plan on publishing a peer-reviewed paper from their research – it’s a great experience for students to see their work in print.”

Students’ experiences of school suspension by Daniel Quin and Professor Sheryl Hemphill was recently accepted for publication in the Health Promotion Journal of Australia.
FOOD DESERTS, FOOD SWAMPS AND LOCAVORES: Growing gardens, growing communities and growing good health

According to the guide books, Australia has 10 official deserts spanning across its vast red centre from east to west, and north to south. However, there is another type of desert lurking within our larger cities. Food deserts are residential areas with poor access to healthful food due to factors such as geography, in-store choice and affordability. Some of these areas are also saturated with a plethora of junk food outlets, being described as food swamps by some experts. There is clear evidence that living in food deserts (and indeed food swamps) is associated with poorer health – the usual suspects: higher rates of diabetes, coronary heart disease, hypertension and obesity.

A small but ‘growing’ movement has emerged over the past few decades to counter some of the inadequacies in urban food supplies. In many cities throughout the industrialised world, local groups have rallied together to connect their communities to healthful food supplies through the establishment of urban community gardens.

The concept of community gardens per se is not new. They are commonplace in many traditional rural agricultural settings throughout the South Pacific, Asia, Africa and South America. What is new, however, is that community gardens are becoming much more prevalent in the urban environments of major cities across the industrialised world.

To the untrained eye, community gardens can look messy, disorganised, cluttered, confused and confusing. Looks can be deceiving and closer examination reveals method to this confusion. Contemporary urban community gardens have strong permaculture elements, which is sometimes at odds with traditional manicured French topiary gardens and commercial monoculture farming practices. Environmental diversity is an important element running through community gardens. Our recent research shows an interesting relationship with dietary diversity, which is linked to better health.

Community gardens can take many forms, with many being opportunistic by occupying land that is otherwise underutilised. As far as community gardens in Australia are concerned, there are two icons that stand out in terms of their longevity and their role as cultural and community hubs. CERES covers four hectares of rehabilitated land in the inner Melbourne suburb of East Brunswick. In Brisbane, Northey Street Cityfarm occupies the flood-prone southern bank of Breakfast Creek in Windsor, and is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year.

These and other community gardens are more than just a source of food for locavores (those who choose to consume food produced locally). They offer an alternative to contemporary consumerism and often are hubs for many other community-based activities such as art, politics, social outreach, education, healthcare, and commerce. They are also part of networks to supply organics, community supported agriculture and reduction of food wastage through community-based start-ups like Food Connect and Second Bite.

Many university campuses, including that of ACU in Brisbane, have established a community garden. In one study we conducted in Brisbane, we found that a campus-based community garden can enhance the well-being of marginalised groups such as new migrants – connecting with their new country as well as supporting continuation with their new cultural heritage. In addition, community gardens can contribute significantly to food security through enhanced access to culturally appropriate foods in an environment that values and builds upon social and cultural assets. In particular, participation in a community food garden can offer tangible and constructive means for humanitarian migrants to build community networks and connect with their new country.

The evidence that community gardens build community capacity and wealth is clear and growing. Gardens in the centre of Brisbane and Melbourne have built substantial social and commercial networks through organic plant nurseries, cafes, organic food markets, education and training facilities, and above all a place for local communities to hang out and engage. Our own research has shown that community gardeners benefit through enhanced diet, physical activity, mental health and social connection, as well as enhancing employment prospects through expanding education and training.

School gardens are a particular manifestation of community gardens that have gained in popularity over the past decade or so. One of our earlier studies showed that about 30 per cent of Queensland primary schools had a functioning food garden. An important factor in maximising the health benefits of school gardens is that they need to be integrated into school life: both curriculum and extracurricular activities. School gardens epitomise the tenants of success for health and nutrition programs in children, being activity based, theory driven, implemented in the school environment, and involving parents and the wider community.

In a study where we introduced a food garden into a Brisbane primary school, we found positive changes in knowledge and attitudes towards vegetable and fruit consumption – exactly the foods to target for long-term prevention of chronic disease. This and other studies in Australia and the USA show clear and consistent effects of school gardens on determinants of diet and chronic disease in children. We are currently working on the best ways to position gardens within pedagogic frameworks, which is an ongoing challenge towards a better understanding of the potential for school gardens to enhance health.

Students are not the only group that school-based programs can influence. We are also looking at the broader impacts of school gardens on parents, teachers and the wider school community. The transition from the start-up phase to long-term maintenance of garden initiatives is an important area for further work to enhance sustainability of gardens and thus the duration of effects on determinants of health.

The evidence that community gardens build community capacity and wealth is clear and growing.

The biophilia hypothesis suggests an instinctive bond between humans and other living organisms. It is one of the proposed mechanisms that drove the Mesopotamians from hunter-gatherer to agrarian society 10,000 years ago. It is consistent with the observation that people today across all generations engage in and derive substantial pleasure from gardening. All studies on the various manifestations of community gardens point to two key elements of success: community and participation. On that basis, community gardens provide an important general message about how communities can grow and flourish.

The concept of community gardens per se is not new. They are commonplace in many traditional rural agricultural settings throughout the South Pacific, Asia, Africa and South America. What is new, however, is that community gardens are becoming much more prevalent in the urban environments of major cities across the industrialised world.

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ACU GRADUATE NAMED BALLARAT'S YOUNGEST MAYOR

On his 30th birthday, Joshua Morris was elected to the Ballarat Council. Twelve months later, in January this year, he became the youngest mayor of Ballarat. It’s been a speedy rise to the top for the ACU Bachelor of Education (Primary) graduate, who worked as a physical education teacher at various primary schools in regional Victoria before deciding to join the council.

Joshua said it was his love for his hometown and desire to see the city become an even better place to live, which convinced him to try the political life. “Never in my wildest dreams did I imagine myself as mayor of Ballarat,” he said. “But now that I am in the role I am honoured and humbled at the same time, and excited by the opportunities that I see before the city.”

With three children and another on the way, 2014 is set to be an extremely busy year for Joshua, who has identified the growth of the city and its infrastructure as his top priorities. “I often speak to my kids about what it is like to work at council, and they definitely keep me on my toes – telling me to improve playgrounds here there and everywhere around the city.”

Due to the significant time commitment involved in being mayor, Joshua has taken 12 months leave from his current job as a primary school teacher.

“Teaching is a good profession to be able to take breaks and then come back to it and be a better teacher when you return,” he said.

“There is no doubt I will miss teaching. I didn’t realise how much until I went back to work recently and saw the kids that I teach. I felt quite sad to think that I would miss out on seeing them develop over the next 12 months.”

HISTORIC AGREEMENT FOR CATHOLIC UNIVERSITIES

Australia’s two Catholic universities, ACU and the University of Notre Dame Australia, signed a significant agreement recently. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) agrees to deepen the co-operation, collaboration and mutual support between the two.

Professor Cecilia Hammond of Notre Dame and Professor Greg Craven of ACU signed the agreement at Cathedral House of Notre Dame and Professor Greg Craven of Vice-Chancellors Professor Celia Hammond and Professor Craven said the two universities were naturally bound together in a commitment to academic excellence.

The agreement covers the following areas:

- sharing services and facilities; exchanging information and expertise;
- facilitating appointments of staff; conducting research; appointments of staff; conducting research; sharing services and facilities; exchanging information and expertise; and facilitating mutual collaboration with other higher education Catholic institutions in Australia.

A priority area will be teacher education in Sydney, where both institutions have a presence.

Professor Hammond said the University of Notre Dame was pleased at having the opportunity to foster an agreement with ACU, especially in Sydney where both universities have fast-growing and vibrant campuses. “The development of stronger relationships between universities, nationally and internationally, is vital for every university – as it provides opportunities for collaborative excellence in student learning, research, business services, and other important university initiatives,” she said.

Professor Craven said the two universities were naturally bound together in a relationship of shared faith, values and a commitment to academic excellence.

“The MoU is an historic event that formalises the commitment of both universities to deepen their co-operation, collaboration and mutual support. It is aimed at the sharing of services, resources, knowledge and research between ACU and Notre Dame, particularly in relation to the operations of the universities in Sydney, where each has campuses, as well as disciplines in common.”

ACU EXPANDS TO ADELAIDE

ACU and the Archdiocese of Adelaide have entered a new partnership to deliver theological education in South Australia this year, at what will be the University’s seventh campus.

From 2014, ACU Adelaide is offering the following degrees: Graduate Certificate in Theological Studies, Graduate Diploma in Theological Studies, Master of Theological Studies, Master of Theology, and Doctor of Philosophy. ACU’s postgraduate degrees in religious education and educational leadership will continue to be available.

Catholic Theological College (Adelaide) will be absorbed into the Faculty of Theology and Philosophy. The centre for theological education will move from its current location at Brooklyn Park to the George Street, Thebarton site where it will be co-located with Catholic Education South Australia.

“This partnership will ensure the continuation of the Archdiocese’s long and strong tradition of theological education and leadership formation in Adelaide and South Australia and I am proud ACU has been able to take advantage of this opportunity,” Vice-Chancellor, Professor Greg Craven said.

“It is really wonderful for us to welcome the Catholic Theological College as part of the ACU Family. We’re very proud to have such a distinguished organisation with such distinguished members linking with us and, importantly, us with them.”

The partnership expands the University to seven campuses: Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, North Sydney, Strathfield, Canberra and Ballarat.

Executive Dean of Theology and Philosophy, Professor Anne Hunt, said it was exciting that the partnership had been formed at a time of tremendous growth for the University.

“We count it a great source of pleasure and pride and a great source of honour to be coming to Adelaide and to be building on that long and strong tradition of theological education in the Archdiocese of Adelaide and indeed in the state of South Australia,” she said.

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“This partnership will ensure the continuation of the Archdiocese’s long and strong tradition of theological education and leadership formation in Adelaide and South Australia and I am proud ACU has been able to take advantage of this opportunity,” Vice-Chancellor, Professor Greg Craven said.

“It is really wonderful for us to welcome the Catholic Theological College as part of the ACU Family. We’re very proud to have such a distinguished organisation with such distinguished members linking with us and, importantly, us with them.”

The partnership expands the University to seven campuses: Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, North Sydney, Strathfield, Canberra and Ballarat.

Executive Dean of Theology and Philosophy, Professor Anne Hunt, said it was exciting that the partnership had been formed at a time of tremendous growth for the University.

“We count it a great source of pleasure and pride and a great source of honour to be coming to Adelaide and to be building on that long and strong tradition of theological education in the Archdiocese of Adelaide and indeed in the state of South Australia,” she said.
new study led by ACU's Professor John Hawley has demonstrated that alcohol consumption essentially undoes the positive effects of exercise, as it impairs the growth of muscle repairing proteins.

Professor Hawley and his colleagues conducted three experimental trials with eight male athletes after a strenuous bout of exercise. They sought to determine the effects of a modest alcohol binge - or the equivalent of 12 standard drinks - on the body's ability to synthesise protein, and therefore repair itself.

In addition to alcohol, the athletes were also given protein (to maximise the anabolic response in skeletal muscle), and carbohydrates (to partially offset the damaging effects of alcohol intake on post-exercise muscle repair).

“The results clearly demonstrated that alcohol consumption reduced rates of muscle protein synthesis following exercise, and that this impairment in the muscle's anabolic machinery occurred even when alcohol was co-ingested with protein or carbohydrate,” Professor Hawley said.

The culture in many team sports is to consume large amounts of alcohol after a gruelling athletic session in celebration of a big win, or commiseration of a loss. Yet Professor Hawley said his research showed that drinking alcohol in excess had very measurable consequences for the muscles' consequent recovery, and moderation was essential.

“Our data will be of interest to athletes and coaches alike, and provide an evidence-base for a message of moderation in alcohol intake to promote recovery after exercise, with the potential to alter current sports culture athlete practices,” he said.

Professor Hawley’s study, Alcohol Impairs Muscle Recovery From Exercise, was undertaken in collaboration with the Sports Nutrition team at the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) and the Department of Kinesiology at McMaster University in Canada. It was published in the American science journal PLOS ONE in February.

Professor Swain was consulted in her capacity as an expert on the history of forced adoptions in Australia. Her book, The Market in Babies: Stories of Australian Adoptees, was co-written with Marian Quaunt and Denise Cutthbert, and launched last year. It tells the history of adoption in Australia from its beginnings in the nineteenth century to its decline at the beginning of the twenty-first.

Professor Swain is the leader of ACU’s newly formed Historical Studies Research Concentration, comprising of 10 historians from three campuses. The new research concentration will allow the University to increase its reputation for high-quality historical research, and the impact of that research on public policy debates.

The trial has received considerable commercial support from Cave Pharmaceuticals, the 3M Corporation, Radiometer and Coleman Paltinoid Wound Care. ACU has provided a $10,000 Faculty of Health Sciences grant for a research nurse, and the Prince Charles Hospital Foundation has given $5,000 to fund the camera equipment and computer software needed to document the healing process.

The team involved in the study includes Dr Lord, Professor Paul Fulbrook, Sandy Miles, Ewan Kinneir, Damian Williams and Dr Jeff Rowland.

The new research suggests that weather patterns have a measurable effect on the activity of Somali pirates in the Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea, particularly during the northern hemisphere summer.

The study found the summer monsoon to be a significant deterrent to pirate attacks, which are an ongoing threat to international shipping and maritime security in the region. Somali Piracy and the Monsoon by ACUs Dr Duncan Cook, and Ms Sally Garrett from the Defence Telecommunications Agency of New Zealand, provides the first detailed analysis of the weather and ocean conditions during recent pirate attacks in the Indian Ocean region. There has been very little direct scientific monitoring of the region in recent years, partly due to the extent of maritime piracy. The researchers therefore observed the wind and wave conditions of individual pirate attacks via satellites from the safety of space.

“It is the high winds and rough seas of the summer monsoon that have proved to be the toughest anti-piracy measure in recent years,” said Dr Cook. “Our research suggests that the transition of the summer monsoon limits maritime piracy. It also considers the role of non-climatic causes for the hiatus in piracy over the summer months.”

Dr Cook and Ms Garrett’s research results have been incorporated into military briefings for the Royal New Zealand Navy’s HNZMNZs Te Kaha – part of the multinational taskforce fighting piracy in the region.

Somatic Piracy and the Monsoon was published in the Weather, Climate, and Society journal.
NRL & ACU team up to tackle bullying

One student in four in Australian schools is affected by bullying, and more than half of them will never report it. As a school kid, St George Illawarra Dragons player Matt Cooper stepped in and stopped his best friend from bullying a smaller boy. Former Eels captain Nathan Hindmarsh remembers seeing bullying taking place and not doing anything to stop it.

The two led a 24-man team from all 16 National Rugby League (NRL) clubs recently in an initiative aimed to educate up to 300,000 schoolchildren in a month on how to ‘tackle bullying’ issues. Armed and trained, the ‘Tackle Bullying Green Hand’, a five-fingered resource developed by the ACU team was especially effective to have these vital bullying strategies delivered by the high profile people that kids look up to.

A key resource developed by the ACU team was the ‘Tackle Bullying Green Hand’ DVD featuring football legends Andrew Ryan, St George Illawarra Dragons player Matt Cooper; and Dr Lorraine McDonald, also from the Strathfield education lecturer Suzan Hirsch conjunction with ACU staff, players are heroes in the children’s eyes. It’s especially effective to have these vital bullying strategies delivered by the high profile people that kids look up to.

The certified action plan encourages children to:
- Respond confidently
- Walk away
- Report
- Stand strong

The NRL also developed a Tackle Bullying DVD featuring football legends Andrew Ryan, Nathan Hindmarsh, Hazem El Masri and Mario Fenech – calling on students to take action.

“We know it’s an issue within our schools. You hear about it, and you can brush it off and say yeah everyone gets teased, but there are kids out there that don’t want to go to school because they’re being bullied,” said Nathan.

“For me it was the fact that if one of my children came home from school and said they were being bullied, before this program I would have said well harken, forget about it you’ll be fine. But for kids that are actually getting bullied, they can’t ignore it, every day it’s in their face, and they get home and it’s on Facebook or on the internet, or other social media sites.”

Tackle Bullyin is ACU’s second successful collaboration with the NRL. Suzan also collaborates with the sport on the Rugby League Reads campaign, which encourages primary school aged children, especially boys, to engage with reading.

The initiative uses NRL players as role models for reading in primary schools, and provides quality rugby league focused magazines, written by Suzan, linked to the English syllabus.

It’s hard to imagine a great hulking rugby league player ever having a problem with bullies. But they weren’t always that big, and plenty of great players either fell victim to bullies, or witnessed them in action during their school years. Alisse Grafitti looks at how ACU and the NRL are working together to stop the abuse.

A CU Vice-Chancellor Professor Greg Craven has been appointed by Federal Education Minister Christopher Pyne to head a review into teacher training.

Professor Craven said as vice-chancellor of the university who produces the largest number of teachers in Australia, he was particularly delighted to be appointed to chair the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group.

“Teacher education is as vital to ACU as it is to the nation,” he said. “Teachers deserve our support. Teacher bashing diminishes the profession, lowers morale and discourages good students to choose it as a career.”

The eight-member panel will focus on three key areas: the ways teachers teach their students, how well teachers understand the subject content they are teaching, and the opportunities available for pre-service teachers to put the theory into practice.

“The Ministerial Advisory Group needs to work out better ways to marry both the theory and practice components of teacher education,” Professor Craven said.

“From a university degree, teachers should know their subject, know how to impart their knowledge and develop the skills to laterally deal with diverse classroom. From their professional experience they should see a demonstration of great craft, have a chance to put theory into practice and find a mentor who can provide quality feedback and career guidance.”

The group will undertake extensive public and stakeholder consultation. They will identify gaps in current teacher education, the main areas to improve, and recommend implementation timesframes.

Mr Pyne said he had asked the group to conduct a benchmark research study of world’s best practice in initial teacher education programmes.

“We want to build on world standards for initial teacher education programmes and explore how best practice can be implemented into teaching and classrooms in our own schools,” he said.

The group is due to report back later in the year. The other appointees are the University of Wollongong’s deputy vice-chancellor, Evaa Leinonen, the Graftan Institute’s education program director, Ben Jensen, the Melbourne University dean of education, Field Richards; the president of the Australian Association of Mathematics Teachers, Kim Bessick; the chief executive of Independent Schools Victoria, Michelle Green; the deputy principal of Haileybury independent school in Victoria, John Fleming, and the principal of Eastern Fleurieu School in South Australia, Trevor Fletcher.

Professor Craven said he looked forward to working with his colleagues to make practical recommendations on improving the quality of teacher education in Australia.

“Any new models of teacher education must be affordable, have to satisfy growing social demands, have a skill mix to meet economic demands, and be responsive to the needs of employers, and students from economically and socially diverse backgrounds,” he said. “It may surprise some to learn that I was not always a great student. I spent most of my teaching career seeing dealing with students from much more varied backgrounds, particularly in rural Australia, where I taught high school and students from economically and socially diverse backgrounds. Eventually, I realized not only that initial teacher education is a good career, but that there is far more to being a good professional than a good score at the age of 17.”

It’s time to stop focusing on how a student enters the university, and start looking at how they leave.

ON THE ATAR CUT-OFF

Professor Greg Craven

Over the last few years, governments have been refining their ideas around teacher entry policy. I fear however, that too much of the debate about teacher quality focuses on the ATAR cut-offs for courses, rather than the quality of the teaching graduate produced at the end. While we attract a significant number of high ATAR students to our education courses – we do not believe that a student’s ATAR is necessarily the sole determinant of their success at university or as a teacher. A focus on ATAR as a measure of quality undervalues the role universities play in adding value to the student’s knowledge and performance as a teacher.

The ATAR does not measure knowledge, skills, aptitude or intellect. It is merely a rank representing the number of students a person performs better than in any given year. When ATARs are applied to university courses, they merely measure supply and demand.

Perhaps even more troubling is that a number cannot take into account human factors which might affect a person’s capacity in high school, university and beyond. It does not measure passion, commitment, communication skills, compassion, enthusiasm, ethics or social disadvantage, to name a few attributes which could help or hinder a student or a teacher succeeding in the wider world.

Furthermore, our experience is that once in university, high and low entry students perform similarly, and in many instances students with lower entry scores perform as well, if not better, than students who entered on higher grades.

It may surprise some to learn that I was not always of this view. I spent most of my teaching career in the Law School at The University of Melbourne, which I had myself attended, and which is renowned by nothing but students with elite scores, drawn mainly from elite schools and elite suburbs. Into my mid-thirties, subsisting in this privileged bubble, I could not imagine quality students who would become quality lawyers without stellar Year 12 scores.

Sadly, experience has a habit of undermining youthful confidence. My later university and teaching career saw me dealing with students from much more varied backgrounds, particularly in rural Australia, where I taught high school and students from economically and socially diverse backgrounds. Eventually, I realized not only that initial teacher education is a good career, but that there is far more to being a good professional than a good score at the age of 17.

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It’s time to stop focusing on how a student enters the university, and start looking at how they leave.
In a gym at ACU’s Strathfield Campus, a group of prostate cancer survivors are sweating it out to get their fitness back, and finding they get their life back too. Alisse Grafitti and Tristan Velasco spoke to the hardest workers at ACU.

Bill Watson loves his golf, and for more than 20 years he had without fail given the end of year address at his club. In 2011, after tackling prostate cancer, he informed the club he no longer felt fit for the job because he had that same problem and can tell you how to handle it. ”

Dr Hartwig said trials had shown that exercise, and particularly resistance training, could increase muscle mass, slow the rate of bone mineral density loss, reduce fat mass, reduce the frequency and duration of hospital visits, and reduce the incidence of mental illnesses. “With such strong evidence for the benefits of exercise, many GPs and specialists are now referring their cancer patients to accredited exercise physiologists working in the ACU Exercise Physiology Clinic, and plans are afoot to offer the resistance training sessions to other cancer and chronic disease groups.

And as for Bill, he will gladly tell you how in 2013, at 76 years old and just 12 months after joining the group, he bounded up the stairs to once again give the end of year address at his golf club.

To find out more about the prostate cancer exercise program contact Dr Tim Hartwig at timothy.hartwig@acu.edu.au
Both sides of politics are in a race to the bottom in the mistreatment of asylum seekers.

I had a conversation with Tim Costello some years ago which significantly changed my way of seeing things. He told me of a time when he was running the Collins St Baptist Church. A guy who had been sleeping rough for quite a while had turned up at the church wanting a feed. Tim was talking to him. The guy said that the conversation was the first time in two weeks he had made eye contact with any other human being. I can scarcely imagine what that must be like. That man had, at least in his own mind, completely disappeared.

I have thought about that conversation often. The idea of such alienation haunts me. But there are many people in our society who have, in their own minds, disappeared. These are the people who, because of mental health problems, or simple bad luck, find themselves nursing a grievance that no one wants to hear about. The more they complain, the more they are ignored. The louder they complain, the more they are avoided, viewed with suspicion. And once that cycle sets in, their problems become more and more real to them, and less and less real to those around them.

These are the people who ring late night talkback radio and harangue the host until even the panel operators know to filter them out. They are the new outcasts.

My conversation with Tim came in useful during the first round of Australia’s recent panic about asylum seekers. Between 2001 and about 2006, a lot of Australians were persuaded to be anxious about boat people arriving here. After all, the Howard government had told us they were illegal; that they had thrown their children into the sea; that they had jumped a queue somewhere. And the struggle to prevent the country from being swamped by this tide of potential terrorists was paraded as ‘border protection’.

Howard recognised that there were votes to be taken from One Nation if only he could make us fear the alien horde and position himself as our protector. It worked.

There is a story that I have on fair authority which shows clearly what was going on. Howard was about to enter the House of Representatives to deliver his speech explaining the government’s response to the Tampa. Jackie Kelly approached him in the lobby. She said that a lot of her constituents were deserting to One Nation. Howard waved his speech in front of her and said, “don’t worry – this will fix it”.

As most people thought at the time, the government’s response to the Tampa was purely political. Of course, Howard had a great run of good luck in 2001. His government refused to let the Tampa put its bedraggled cargo of rescued Hazaras ashore on Christmas Island; he cobbled together the Pacific Solution while the court case about Tampa continued. The judgment at first instance in the Tampa case was handed down at 2:15 Eastern Standard Time, on September 11, 2001. The result was not noticed in the newspapers the next morning, because a group of Islamic extremists had attacked America.

From that moment, there were no terrorists but Muslim terrorists. There were no boat people but Muslim boat people, and although it was never clearly stated, all boat people were suspected terrorists – our worst nightmare. For those who did not see through the political opportunism, boat people were aliens to be feared. Of course, if the true facts were understood, our response would have seemed rather odd. It did not suit the politicians to acknowledge that boat people were not illegal, that there was no queue, that they had not thrown their children overboard, and that they were trying to escape the same extremists we were so frightened of.

For my sins, I became involved in the issue. I was regularly asked to speak, at public events and private, about asylum seekers. It seemed to me that the key to the problem was to explain the facts. Naively I thought that most Australians would recoil at the idea of welfully mistreating men, women and children who had done nothing wrong but try to escape to safety.

A couple of unexpected things happened. First, I got a few death threats. It surprised me that, having done a few pretty contentious cases in my career, I should receive death threats for going to court pro bono on behalf of people who were, self-evidently, voiceless and powerless.

And whenever I was quoted in the media saying something outrageous like “it is wrong to imprison innocent children and drive them to suicide”, I would receive a torrent of hate mail. The anger and intensity of the hate mail astonished me then, and it still does. It struck me as remarkable that people would write to a complete stranger in such bluntly abusive terms. And the mail I got was seriously, viciously abusive.

Over the course of thousands of bits of hate mail, I estimate that about 50 per cent ended up saying, in substance, “thank you for discussing this issue with me. I agree with you now”, and about 25 per cent ended up saying, in substance, “thank you for discussing this issue with me. I don’t agree with you, but it is good that you stand up for what you believe”. The other 25 per cent remained entirely unconvinced and, I assume, continued to vote for John Howard.

What struck me in all this was the story Tim had told me. I guessed that the people who wrote to me – and who did not expect a reply – were so alienated from the community that their only means of expressing their anger and fear and resentment and confusion was by writing to someone mildly prominent. It occurred to me then that the passion which drove their initial hostility was the mark of people who were alienated from the community: they were accustomed to being ignored, so they fall to shouting abuse as a way of getting attention. Just once listen to them, and they quickly fall back to observing the ordinary rules of civil behaviour.

This is not just an argument for good manners: I have thought about that conversation often. The other 25 per cent remained entirely unconvinced and, I assume, continued to vote for John Howard. Still, I resolved to answer all the mail I could. Mail that came by post was impossible to answer because, as a rule, people who use the postal service are a forgetful lot who did not include a name or address. But most of it came by email and, even if I did not know the sender’s identity, I could respond by simply hitting the reply button.

I sat up late at night answering emails: thousands of them, mostly abusive. Some of them all in capitals; lots of exclamation marks and lots of rude words. I am not shrinking violet, but I was astonished by the rudeness of many of the emails I got. Unpopularity brings strange rewards.

Since their complaints fell into a few recognisable patterns, I had a few standard responses. Typically I would get my teeth and say something like: “Thank you for your email. I gather you do not agree with me. But did you realise that… they do not break any law by coming here asking for protection; there is no queue… etc.

If I was surprised by the rudeness and vehemence of most of the emails, what followed was even more astonishing. Nearly all of them responded to my reply… and every response was polite. The responses fell into a few patterns, but typically they said, “thank you for answering me. I did not expect to hear from you. The facts you sent me are all very well, but…” and then they would set out other objections. I replied with more facts to answer those objections.

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Since I had set myself the goal of converting all of Australia to understanding the facts, I decided to answer all the hate mail. After all, these people had self-identified as disagreeing with my views. My reasoning, flawed as it looks now, was that if only the people who disagreed with me could understand the facts, then they would come around to my way of seeing things. If enough people changed their views, the government policy would have to change. Clearly I did not know what I was dealing with.

While the court case about Tampa continued, the country from being swamped by this tide of potential terrorists was paraded as ‘border protection’.

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This is not just an argument for good manners: I have thought it goes much deeper. Too many people in our community feel alienated from it and that alienation is unstable: it tends not to self-correct, but to amplify itself.

We are a prosperous country: most of us are genuinely lucky. But we are not good at
The fact is that boat people do not break any law by coming here the way they do. Over the past 15 years, all of them have ultimately been assessed as refugees entitled to our protection. Their arrival over the last 12 months has been much higher than the historic average, but even now it represents only four weeks’ worth of population growth. While an estimated 25,000 boat people arrived in Australia in the 12 months to June 30, 2013, we received 16,685 new permanent migrants and over six million visitors came to our shores in the year ending December 2012. Boat people do not present a demographic problem for Australia.

Spooked by tabloid scare-mongering, both major parties have chosen deterrent policies: treat them harshly, push them off to small, impoverished Pacific neighbours. The low point of this is the recent Coalition promise to bring in the military to deal with the ‘emergency’.

The spectacular cost of these measures passes without complaint because it is seen as a kind of protection. While it is difficult to separate out the various components of the cost, independent estimates put the cost at around $160,000 per person per year as of 2011-12. The actual cost varies: metropolitan detention is cheaper. It gets more and more expensive as the place of detention is more remote. On current estimates, we will spend about four billion dollars on processing each boat person who has committed no offence and have done nothing worse than ask for protection.

It is not easy to understand how this has happened. Those of us who think Australia is a fair and decent society, might quickly amend the law to account for these few anomalous cases. But what the government did, in fact, was to argue the way the High Court that Al Kateb, even though he has committed no offence in Australia, can be held in detention for the rest of his life. The High Court agreed.

Parallel with the Al Kateb case was the case of Behrouz. That case tested the question: if the conditions in detention are as harsh as human ingenuity can devise, does the harshness make any difference to the lawfulness of that detention. The answer is no.

Al Kateb and Behrouz were decided together in 2004. Between them, they stand for the miserable proposition that indefinite detention, even for life, in the worst conditions imaginable, is lawful. A third case decided that year held that the provisions apply equally to children.

The Rudd government in 2008 introduced significant changes in the treatment of asylum seekers. They were welcomed by those of us who felt that the values of the nation had been betrayed by the Howard government. In retrospect, it may be that Rudd could afford to be more nice to asylum seekers because none were arriving. Things changed in 2009, after Tony Abbott had won leadership of the Coalition and started talking tough about asylum seekers.

The recent election saw the major political parties engaged in a competition to outdo each other in their promises to mistreat boat people. The theory is that this will deter others from seeking protection here. Promising to treat innocent people badly is not usually a vote-winner. In most cases it would be seen as a mark of depravity.

But the argument starts at the wrong place. It starts with the Coalition’s oft-repeated statement that boat people are ‘illegals’. It starts from the language of ‘border protection’ and ‘queue-jumping’. Language calculated to make the public think boat people are undesirable, people to be feared, people we need to be protected from.

We forget how different it was for 85,000 Vietnamese boat people 30 years ago. They were resettled here swiftly and without fuss, thanks to the simple human decency which Malcolm Fraser and Gough Whitlam showed, and which Abbott and Rudd so conspicuously lack. We forget how hideously we scarred Vietnam; how we showed them with Agent Orange and trashed their villages and destroyed their people. Just as we forget that Oskar Schindler was a people smuggler, and so was Captain Schroeder.

And so was Gustav Schroeder, captain of the ship that brought in Hazara refugees in 1945. It was a bloodbath, of Afghanistan, the Taliban will declare open season on Hazaras. It will be a bloodbath, and some Hazaras will end up seeking protection here.

We forget that the right which every person has in international law to seek asylum in any country they can reach. We forget that boat people who come here to ask for protection are not illegal in any sense – they are exercising the right which every person has in international law to seek asylum in any country they can reach.

We forget that the greatest number of unauthorised boats to arrive in a single day got here on January 26, 1788.

We forget that the first white settlers in this country were true ‘illegals’: sent here by English courts for a range of criminal offences, and the soldiers who, following London’s instructions, stole the country from its original inhabitants, who, if possession is nine points of the law, had the backing of 40,000 years of law to justify calling the white invaders ‘illegals’.

Many recent boat people are Hazaras from Afghanistan. They are targeted ruthlessly by the Taliban, who are bent on ethnic cleansing. The Hazara population of Afghanistan has fallen dramatically over the past decade, as Hazaras escape or are killed. The Taliban want to get rid of all of us. We have forgotten that we are locked in mortal combat with the Taliban. When our troops have all pulled out of Afghanistan, the Taliban will declare open season on Hazaras. It will be a bloodbath, and some Hazaras will end up seeking protection here.

We forget that, without the help of people smugglers, refugees are left to face persecution or death at the hands of whatever tyranny threatens them. Let Rudd or Abbott say publicly that, in the same circumstances, they would not use a people smuggler if they had to.

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How will we respond? Coldly, it seems.

So here we are. Australia in 2013. We have forgotten our origins and our good fortune; we are blind to our own selfishness. In place of memory we cling to a national myth of a generous, welcoming country, a land of new arrivals where everyone gets a fair go: a myth in which vanity fills the emptiness where the truth was forgotten.

During the election campaign, many of us watched aghast as both major parties promised mistreatment so harsh that it would cause bereavement, emotional so unpleasant that it would seem more attractive to stay home and face the Taliban rather than flee.

It is painful to recognise that we are now a country which would brutalise one group with the intention that other people in distress will choose not to ask us for help.

The sight of the major parties competing to promise greater cruelty to boat people is new in Australian Politics. We have never been perfect, but this was something without precedent.

But some of us remember how things once were, some of us see how things could be.

And we grieve: aliens in our own land.
Exercise and health science student, Meg Lanning, made history when she became the youngest national captain in the history of Australian cricket this year. She talks to Sara Coen about Ricky Ponting, her studies and the challenges of 'camp'.

Despite staying in a prime location, amidst beaches, vineyards and rolling hills, Meg Lanning’s recent trip to Perth was no holiday. She didn’t even pack her togs. She was there to play cricket for Australia in the women’s Ashes series.

Meg, 21, is the newly-appointed vice-captain of the Australian women’s cricket team, the Southern Stars. She recently stepped into the lead role after captain Jodie Fields was injured, making her the youngest ever Australian cricket captain, male or female.

Meg started playing cricket in the backyard when she was 10, and then at school before joining her local club. She made her domestic debut for Victoria in 2008 at the age of 16 and quickly settled into top order. In December 2012, at the age of 18, she broke the record for the fastest 50 and fastest 100 in a One Day International by an Australian female cricketer.

“In cricket circles, ‘camp’ is the week-long preparation period prior to a series. It’s time to put the bat down and think strategically about the game,” said Meg.

The women’s Ashes series commenced in Perth on January 10 with a Test match, followed by three one-day matches and three Twenty20 games across Melbourne, Hobart and Sydney. The Southern Stars went into camp on January 4 just three days after playing in the final two rounds of the women’s national league. It was Meg’s stellar performance in that competition which earned her the vice-captaincy.

“Camp can be frustrating as I really want to be out there playing,” she said. “But I know that when I put in the hard yards off the pitch, it pays off.”

The week in Perth before the series was dedicated to tactical meetings with Southern Stars players and support staff – including coaches, media managers and strength and conditioning trainers. They met formally each day to take a critical look at individual players from the opposing teams to identify their key strengths and weaknesses.

“The aim was to try to find ways to get them out, and to prevent them from scoring,” said Meg. “For example, one of the captains from another team was strong on the leg side so we made a decision to bowl outside of stump to throw her off.

“As opening batter for the series, the pressure was on me to set the tone for the innings. My personal strategy was to stay on the crease as long as possible and to put the opposition on the back foot early on.

“Batting is definitely my strength, but it can be quite frustrating too. You have to ride with it. When the runs are easy, you make the most of it while you can, while you’re on a roll.

“I think a lot of my strategy comes from watching cricket. Growing up, my cricket idol was Ricky Ponting and I watched him throughout his entire career. He batted in a similar position to me and I loved the way he batted. He has been a massive influence in the way I’ve developed my own batting style.

“Strategy is good to a certain degree, but overthinking things can be detrimental to my game. I am a true believer in keeping it simple. When I play, there is no time to think. I just have to be in the zone.

“The first 50 over game in Hobart was a team highlight of the Ashes series. There was a big partnership at the end between Ellyse Perry and Erin Osborne that got us over the line. We looked like we were going to lose it, and then we made a comeback right at the last minute.”

At the Melbourne Cricket Ground, Meg stepped in as Southern Stars captain for the first time and was captain throughout the entire shorter format series.

“It was tough trying to focus on my own game and lead by example at the same time. But I think the biggest challenge of the series for the team was switching between the Test Match and T20 formats. They are both incredibly different so it can be hard to adapt.

“I’m from Melbourne so to have all my family and friends there to cheer me on as I stepped in was the ultimate high. My family have always been incredibly supportive of my cricket career.

“My younger sister, Anna, plays cricket in the Victorian state squad so batting could be in the genes. I hope she gets her baggy green one day.”

Ricky Ponting has been a massive influence in the way I’ve developed my own batting style...........
Father Bob Maguire takes most things in his stride. He even managed to host a TV show while he was temporarily off his feet. Ironically the show is called Walk in my shoez, Sara Coen writes.

Walk in my shoez is a panel-style TV series about people in a sphere of influence or an area of life where most of us would fear to tread.

The series investigates the issue of disadvantaged youth and showcases people and organisations that are doing something about it. Produced by ACU media and communications students, the show will air later this year on Channel 31.

When ACU lecturer Diane Charleson first approached 79-year-old Father Bob to host the series, he was not in good shape.

“I was on a walking frame at the time,” he said. “It was a strange autoimmune thing that affected my mobility. The doctor said it was treatable so it didn’t bother me that much. My legs stopped working, not my mouth. That was fortunate.”

“Yes. Diane Charleson got me into all this. I told her a hundred times: don’t waste your time and energy getting me on board because you can do better. I am old, you see, and God knows I haven’t done much in the way of facilitating or being a host before.

“Even with John Safran in Speaking in Tongues I was never the host. He was the key player in that, not me. But Diane insisted I was the right Bob for the job. I thought: well if they want me that badly, I’ll do it.

“I love a few things about the series, and the first thing was that I eventually did get involved in it. I am an old social activist and after being made temporarily ‘inactive’ I found the experience uplifting and it gave my life a boost.

“I would have preferred to be a bit more presentable, but we worked out a way to plonk me in the corner of the couch without frightening the kiddies too much.

“The series was good because all the panellists they brought in were involved in doing wonderful things for the community. They are people who are flying the flag for compassion and working for the unloved and the unlovely.”

Each 30-minute episode features three guests who talk to Father Bob and each other about issues such as homelessness, drug addiction, refugees, disability and multiculturalism.

Panellists included Les Twentynine, prominent youth outreach worker and community activist; Shanaka Fernando, founder of Lentil as Anything community restaurants; and Ryan Harbottle, YMCA Riverside Skate Park Centre director.

Approximately 50 second and third year ACU students participated in the production as part of their unit Media Production and Social Justice. They were assisted by ACU’s award-winning Channel 31 producer Al Noveloso.

“Getting mixed up with the younger generation at ACU was great,” said Father Bob.

“The students running the show were all so professional, wise and humble. God love them at 20 years of age for putting up with an old fool like me in the chair. They were considerate and hospitable enough that I was able to do my job with confidence.”

Diane Charleson said the title Walk in my shoez was selected by the students to represent the message of sharing and inclusiveness that the show aims to promote.

“Students benefited as they worked in a real professional environment where the unit was run as it would be in industry. They had to work collaboratively to really tough details and to high-level broadcast standards,” she said.

Every student was allocated several roles which covered the various stages of the making of a TV series – including pre-production, filming in the studio and on site, and post-production editing for broadcast.

“We will continue to produce the series each year from the ACU Melbourne studios with Channel 31. We hope that the program will promote greater understanding of issues relating to young people in the broader community,” Diane said.

ACU student Dylan Eltridge said the experience was a great eye-opener to the media industry.

“I was series producer for the episode about youth and disability – and I organised a segment on my sister Kristen and her work in the community. She has mild cerebral palsy in the right side of her body.

Another personal highlight for me was sitting in for the guests in a dress rehearsal with Father Bob before we filmed the episodes. I spoke to Bob throughout the rehearsal and it was clear he loved working with young people. He is young at heart.”

Father Bob said that his participation in the series was mutually beneficial.

“They were claiming that I was giving the show a boost,” he said. “But you see it was a two-way street. I found the topics inspiring and the enthusiasm shown by the students helped me battle on through my period of illness. Otherwise, my life at the time would have been hell.

“I think the danger for Australia is that we are so well off, free and successful as a nation that we can often be satisfied with just being known as a society, rather than a community.

“A society is a social collective, whereas a community is more focused on caring for the less fortunate. And that’s what I love about Walk in my Shoez. It shines the spotlight on the community and people in it who care about people.”

Walk in my shoez will premier this year on Channel 31. The series can also be viewed online at Channel 31 and www.walkinmyshoez.com
Glory is usually reserved for those who seek a life and career in the spotlight, but behind the scenes, everyday people may be the ones who really make a difference. Caitlin Ganter spoke to Annabel Pike, a nurse who makes a career out of improving others’ lives.

For many of us, a hard day at work involves too many meetings or a run-in with our supervisor. But for Annabel Pike, graduate nurse, a tough day can involve so much more.

“Nursing has many rewards, but there are also challenges. For one, death is part of the reality of the job and you need to cope with it – but that doesn’t make you immune to it. The most difficult moment I have experienced at work was the first time I saw a patient pass away.”

Annabel works as an intensive care nurse at Mater Hospital in Brisbane. Every shift, she works with critical-care patients – those who have life-threatening conditions and require sophisticated organ support and invasive monitoring.

“Becoming too attached to patients and their families can be a big challenge,” she said. “Intensive care and oncology patients are long-term patients of the hospital, so I can’t help but get to know them and their families.

“I go through the ups and downs with them. I feel their pain and joy, and share in their successes and their hurdles. Obviously, with critically ill patients this is bound to bring personal challenges. However, I really don’t see this as a professional flaw or a negative as it makes me a more compassionate nurse. In the end, doing what is best for the patient is what nursing is all about.”

Despite the challenges of the career, Annabel always knew she wanted to become a nurse.

“I am also a person who loves to be challenged, so nursing satisfies this desire to constantly set new goals and be able to strive for new achievements. I’ve already had so many amazing experiences, and I think nursing is a career that can provide great opportunities as long as you are willing to work hard and look for them.”

Annabel completed a Bachelor of Nursing at ACU. Due to her considerable sporting and charity achievements while at school, she received early acceptance into the course as part of ACU’s Early Achievers’ Program. She was also a student ambassador for the nursing program during her studies.

“Being a student ambassador was great; I loved studying nursing and was excited to educate future students about the joys of the profession. I like to get involved, so while I was at uni I took on roles coordinating and contributing to symposiums and projects whenever I could. I was invited to participate in quite a few interesting projects and between these, prac and study I was always very busy.”

Annabel excelled during her studies, including the clinical practicum requirements of the degree.

“Practicum was such a rewarding experience and after my first shift I was elated – I knew nursing was right for me. I have never regretted my decision to become a nurse.

“I think I’m very lucky; I’ve always had amazing support. My family and friends have been at the forefront of my success thus far. I have had the good fortune of working with and meeting some amazing mentors who have inspired me with their compassion, skill and professionalism.

“Of course the profession can be confronting and overwhelming at times, but the rewards are wonderful. To see a patient transfer out of intensive care to the ward, or discharged home is such a rewarding feeling. To know that you have assisted with their transition from being a critically ill patient to well enough to go home makes the stressful days worth it.”

Despite being only a recent graduate, Annabel has already achieved success as a nurse. She was awarded Mater Graduate Nurse of the Year, and also took home an award in the prestigious national HESTA Australian Nursing Awards, where she was voted outstanding graduate of the year.

The Outstanding Graduate Award recognises a nurse or midwife who has provided exceptional patient care, improved quality-care processes and improved their own skills while demonstrating their value as a team member. Annabel won the award for her holistic approach to patient care, exceptional technical and clinical skills, and for showing leadership in her role as an intensive-care nurse.

“To be nominated for this award was humbling and an honour. Winning was beyond words – I was completely shocked and immensely grateful. It was fantastic to be recognised for my work, but one thing that really touched me was that I had been nominated by a few of my patients.”

In the end with all its rewards and challenges, Annabel loves nursing because of the patients.

“The trust a patient has in us as nurses is truly humbling. It’s an honour to be a part of their lives and hopefully I can assist in turning a scary, traumatic experience into something less confronting and positive. There have been times when I’ve been asked to stay and hold a patient’s hand while they are being told life-changing news, and I knew I had made a difference.”

To further her skills, Annabel has enrolled in the Queensland Health Transition Program for Intensive Care Nursing. Although this is a one-year course, Annabel has hopes to complete it in six months, so she can commence her graduate certificate in July and undertake a master’s degree in 2015.

“I love my job and all its diversity... I hope to make a positive difference in healthcare for a long time to come. Who knows exactly what my future holds, I have a lot of paths I am interested in taking, but one thing that won’t change is I always want my job to be about the patients.”
key aspect of ACU’s Core Curriculum program is giving students the opportunity to learn beyond the walls of the university classroom. Students now have the chance to apply to spend two weeks in Paris, France over the European summer in June and July.

The study program is offered by ACU, in partnership with the Institut Catholique de Paris (ICP) and St. John’s University, New York City. Students will complete the Core unit UNCC100 Understanding Self and Society: Contemporary Perspectives. The class will be made up of students from ACU as well as ICP and other international partner institutions.

Professor Pauline Nugent, Provost, said the unit would be taught by ACU faculty both in the classroom and online. The unit begins with students from three continents meeting up over webinar. Students then complete a week of study online, before the Australian students fly to Paris to join the rest of the cohort.

“Students will attend 12 hours of classes over two weeks while at the ICP campus, and will need to complete extensive further study online as well as undertaking site visits,” she said. “However, in addition to completing their study requirements, students will be able to spend time exploring the City of Light. Accommodation is in the wonderful St Germain neighbourhood in the 6th Arrondissement – the heart of Paris.”

The program is open to all ACU undergraduate students eligible to undertake UNCC100 with a GPA of 4.5 or above. Students must have completed UNCC100 and one year of study prior to departure.

Generous scholarships will be available for up to 10 candidates. All participants are also eligible to receive the ACU Vice Chancellor’s Travel Grant valued at $2,500, to assist with the cost of airfares.

The Core Curriculum in Paris Program is offered in addition to the existing Florence Program. Also taking place over the European summer, students spend three weeks in Florence, Italy, completing a unit of study offered by Fairfield University (USA) and working with Misericordia – the largest volunteer-led welfare organisation in Florence. The unit is then credited to meet the 300-level Core Curriculum requirement.

Additional international programs are being added to the Core Curriculum each year.

THE CORE SNAPSHOT

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The Core Curriculum is an innovative program for ACU undergraduates, designed to engage students in discussion about contemporary social issues of importance to our world and society. Drawing from the University’s distinct identity and mission, the Core Curriculum develops frameworks for thinking about the common good and the dignity of the human person. The units do not extend the length of the degree.

STRUCTURE?
The Core is comprised of five units:

• Two University Core Curriculum units undertaken by all undergraduate students.

• Two program Core Curriculum units that are specific to each particular course and build explicitly on the University Core units.

• One Community Engagement unit, serving to draw the Core experience together and offer students an opportunity to live the Core in action.

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When Father Frank Brennan SJ addressed the room of more than 100 new law students, you could have heard a pin drop. They may be new to their studies but they are well aware of the reputation held by the Jesuit priest and professor of law at ACU.

Some come to study law wanting to change the world, others come wanting a secure, remunerative professional life,” Father Brennan said. “Some expect both. The modern lawyer needs to have a good handle on law, public morality and human rights. We need to ensure that our law graduates are well equipped to engage in moral argument in a pluralistic legal environment.”

The lifelong human rights campaigner spoke of his first year as a law student in 1971, when Queensland Premier Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen declared a state of emergency during the rugby tour of the all-white Springboks. And he spoke of Aboriginal land rights, and the High Court’s Mabo decision in 1992.

“It’s more than 30 years since I appeared in court. But as a priest in the public square, and political morality, law and social justice, I always have been of enormous benefit to me. Wrestling with the relationship between law and political morality, law and social justice, I have found that our law graduates are well equipped to engage in moral argument in a pluralistic legal environment.”

The first cohort of law students at ACU’s North Sydney Campus kicked off their studies recently with a packed induction week. Students visited the Federal Circuit Court of Australia, examined in a moot court whether Google had breached the laws around web advertising, and heard Father Frank Brennan speak on the modern lawyers challenge of contributing to justice according to law.

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“It’s more than 30 years since I appeared in court. But as a priest in the public square, and political morality, law and social justice, I always have been of enormous benefit to me. Wrestling with the relationship between law and political morality, law and social justice, I have found that our law graduates are well equipped to engage in moral argument in a pluralistic legal environment.”

The first cohort of law students at ACU’s North Sydney Campus kicked off their studies recently with a packed induction week. Students visited the Federal Circuit Court of Australia, examined in a moot court whether Google had breached the laws around web advertising, and heard Father Frank Brennan speak on the modern lawyers challenge of contributing to justice according to law.

When Father Frank Brennan SJ AO addressed the room of more than 100 new law students, you could have heard a pin drop. They may be new to their studies but they are well aware of the reputation held by the Jesuit priest and professor of law at ACU.

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The Raheen Library at ACU’s Melbourne Campus was recently shortlisted for both the 2013 Interior Design Excellence Awards (IDEA), and the 2014 Australian Interior Design Awards in the Public Design Category.

Designed by Woods Bagot, the revamp was in response to the significant rise in student numbers at the campus. The vision was to create a space that was appealing to students, and an environment that was both inspirational and promoted learning.

A third level was added to the original two-storey library building, and existing spaces reconfigured to include new staff workspaces and a new law area.

Design leader Sue Fenton said that when approaching the aesthetics, Woods Bagot drew on the ultimate symbol of the library – books.

“The materiality of the space was inspired by paper, referencing textures such as folding, sewing, endpaper designs and bookbinding,” she said. “Blonde timbers, crumpled paper lightshades and graphics that reference origami all complete the paper theme.

“To align with the spectrum of learning spaces, a diverse range of furniture was selected, providing a variety of both formal and informal, mobile and fixed furniture arrangements, injected with bright colours and ambient lighting features.”
Ethan's gift

Faced with the greatest of losses, Ballarat student Michelle Secull and husband Jon gave the greatest of gifts. The second-year Bachelor of Nursing/Bachelor of Paramedicine student told her family's story to Dimity May.

On October 1, 2011, Michelle and Jon’s three-year-old son Ethan was clipped by a V/Line passenger train that ran behind the family’s home in Wallace, rural Victoria, after climbing the gate to wave to the train. He was airlifted to the Mons story to Dimity May.

Bachelor of Paramedicine
Bachelor of Nursing/
Jon gave the greatest of losses, Ballarat student Michelle Secull and husband Jon gave the greatest of gifts. The second-year Bachelor of Nursing/Bachelor of Paramedicine student told her family's story to Dimity May.

Jon's three-year-old son Ethan was looking at a bicycle and suddenly he fell. Michelle wasย&&

"Of course there are mornings when all you want to do is cry and you don't want to get out of bed. But there's always a little person at the end of the bed wanting their breakfast. And we were very conscious that we didn't want our kids getting the impression they're not worth getting out of bed for."

"We didn't want anyone to ever have to feel what we were feeling right then. The hospital staff were incredible. After theatre, we were able to come to back to give Ethan a cuddle, to have one last cuddle with him."

For the Seculls, being able to donate Ethan's organs and tissues, and knowing their decision helped to save three lives, gave them some comfort.

"In some ways it was a miracle we were even able to do this," Michelle said. "Only one per cent of people die in a way that makes them eligible to donate their organs. You either have to be pronounced brain dead and in ICU and donation can take place after that, or on life support in ICU and you opt to donate and you turn off the life support."

"There's a window of just 90 minutes after death where organs can be donated. Tissues are different in that just about anybody who dies can donate tissues up to 24 hours after death. It depends on so much, and Ethan was the only child at the Royal Children's Hospital to donate his organs in 2011. If he had died at the scene, or in the helicopter, or in the emergency ward, we wouldn't have been able to do this. And for us, that has helped, because there are families out there who haven't had the opportunity to go through what we did."

Their tragic experience has seen Michelle and Jon become passionate advocates of organ and tissue donation. They now work closely with DonateLife, speaking at events around the country to promote awareness of the need for increased levels of organ and tissue donation in Australia.

"I'd always been passionate about organ donation, now even more so," said Michelle.

"Australia has one of the highest success rates in transplantation yet one of the lowest organ donation rates in the world. We just want to get people talking. Would you rather think about it now, or once you're standing next to a loved one on a life-support system?"

For Michelle and Jon, being able to work with DonateLife has provided a sense of purpose.

"Working with DonateLife, it's allowed us to talk about what's happened in a more positive way. Ethan's death is something we'll never get over. People grieve in different ways but promoting organ donation has been something Jon and I can do together, while remembering Ethan."

The years since Ethan's death have been impossibly challenging. But Michelle said falling in a heap was never an option, especially with three young children to look after.

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To add to her challenges, after 12 years working in a variety of administrative roles at Ballarat’s St John of God Hospital, Michelle made the brave decision to embark on a four-year Bachelor of Nursing/Bachelor of Paramedicine degree at ACU in Ballarat.

"It’s what I’ve always wanted to do, but it was a big decision. We talked a lot about whether we could actually do it, manage with the kids and with only one salary. But after something like this, you realise you just have to get on with it.”

In recognition of her exceptional contribution to the community through her work with DonateLife, Michelle has just been awarded two prestigious scholarships, which will offer much-needed financial support as she progresses through her studies.

The first, the George Alexander Foundation Scholarship, was founded by the late industrialist and philanthropist George Alexander AM for the purpose of assisting outstanding rural students especially those experiencing economic disadvantage, to achieve their undergraduate educational goals successfully. This scholarship will provide Michelle with $15,000 over the course of her degree.

The second, the Sophia Scholarship, provides a one-off payment of up to $5,000 recognising students for outstanding contributions to the common good.

For me, Michelle is fitting in study around the demands of three children, while paying fulfilling her lifelong dream of studying nursing and paramedicine.

"You can’t change the past, so I just take it one day at a time, sometimes one minute at a time. You just keep putting one foot in front of the other, and eventually you’ll make it.”

To find out more about ACU scholarships, visit acu.edu.au/scholarships.

To register as an organ donor, visit donatelife.gov.au.

Last year I had the great fortune to pack my bags, and board a plane for a semester at the University of Bradford in England. Fitting in an overseas experience while completing my studies had always been a goal of mine. When I reached my second last year of university, I decided it was the perfect time to give it a go, and receiving a study abroad scholarship made my dreams a reality.

I studied three units in the UK, through the University’s Faculty of Social and International Studies – concentrating on war and peace studies, poverty development and globalisation, and humanities.

My six months abroad didn’t just give me the chance to study in a new environment, it also meant travel, and lots of it. In a relatively short amount of time, I managed to visit 12 countries across three continents. I scuba dived in the Red Sea, was awed by the Blue Mosque in Istanbul, and saw Venice the way it should be seen – from a gondola steered by a handsome Italian.

However it wasn’t all about adding stamps to my passport. Being away from home made me much more independent, and the balance I had to draw between study and travel made me more responsible. The different countries I visited, of varying degrees of development, gave me a heightened global perspective and an appreciation of the many differences and similarities between cultures.

My time at the University of Bradford helped expand my knowledge in both the majors and minors of my degrees. Politics takes on a very different perspective when it’s discussed in a different country.

In my philosophy studies, I was honoured to have seasoned lecturers and internationally renowned authors teaching me personally. I can now bring these ideas and contrasting perspectives back home into my current units which has already proved greatly valuable. Surprisingly, a study abroad experience is nowhere near as expensive as you might think. ACU International and the Australian Government provide an array of financial assistance to students interested in undertaking an overseas experience of any kind. My advice is to research all aspects of your potential overseas experience and talk to ACU International, as it is more than possible for any student.

The exchange opportunity enriched my life both professionally and personally. Not only has it given me a competitive edge on my CV, but it has helped me grow personally, and given me experiences I would never have come across in Melbourne. It has broadened my horizons, and allowed me to aim higher and dream bigger. And above all it has given me memories that I will truly treasure forever.

I hope to take the things I’ve learnt into my graduate career, and would like to make a difference to our diverse society – ensuring it remains global, competitive and enriching into the future.

To find out about exchange opportunities at ACU, visit www.acu.edu.au/exchange
UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

MELBOURNE CAMPUS

Exhibition: ACU Foundation Thai Burma Show
This exhibition features prints and video by ACU photographer Tristan Velasco, who travelled to the town of Mae Sot on the Thai Burma border in 2013. Here he documented the lives of students in ACU’s refugee program, and the camps in which they live.
Date: 7 – 23 July

Exhibition: The Pixel Prize for high school photography
An exhibition of photographs by high school students from across Victoria.
Visit: www.acu.edu.au

BRISBANE CAMPUS THE PETER W SHEEHAN GALLERY

Exhibition: Art from the Inside, Prison Fellowship Australia
This annual exhibition showcases art from current and former inmates from correctional centres around Queensland – featuring paintings, drawings, and applied art.
Date: 14 – 17 April

Exhibition: Recovery: Touring Art Exhibition, Deb Mostert
Each still life in this exhibition is a portrait of an object recovered by victims of the 2011 Queensland floods. Their offerings have been posed and meticulously painted in oils in the style of the Dutch masters by Deb Mostert, herself of Dutch origin.
Date: 28 July – 28 August

STRATHFIELD CAMPUS MCGLADE GALLERY

Exhibition: Sogetsu Ikebana
The Sogetsu School of Ikebana is a modernist school of ikebana that has had a tremendous influence on western art. The school uses both plant and found materials and emphasises the influence on western art. The school holds both ikebana and art knowledge.
Exhibition: ARTEXPRESS
This selection of student artworks was developed for the Visual Arts HSC examination in NSW.

Exhibition: Danielle Dent and Friends
Four Aboriginal artists who are both staff and students at ACU will exhibit paintings, photographs and sculptures that explore contemporary Aboriginal culture through the journey of their lives.
Date: 12 – 28 June

Exhibition: Hidden Treasures
ACU holds a wealth of art and artefacts that describe our heritage as a university in the Catholic tradition. Works rarely seen outside their particular campus will be brought together for the first time in this touring exhibition.
Date: 10 – 26 July

Exhibition: Arts of the Kimberley entrusted to the SOSJ
This selection of artworks including sculptures, sacred objects, and paintings are held by the Sisters of St Joseph, and describe a broader interaction of the Sisters with communities throughout the Kimberley.
Date: 7 – 23 August

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Get a head start with student jobs on campus

A new ACU initiative is helping students along their career path by providing them with job opportunities within the University.

“Students on Campus sources a range of job openings and connects suitable students with the ACU employers who are looking to hire staff. The roles can be casual or part-time and vary from a few weeks work to extended periods.

Students in the program gain meaningful work experience, develop graduate attributes and transferable life-skills, engage with the university community and earn an income. Staff also benefit, with improved student engagement, retention and participation on campus.

Student Jobs on Campus is parts of ACU’s Career Development Service.

I’m an international student from Sri Lanka. After completing a Bachelor of Business Management degree at the University of Wales, I worked in the staffing assessment centre at Randstad for five years before moving to Australia to pursue a dual masters degree.

I believe a company’s culture is something that is intangible but at the same time can be just as important to success as revenues or growth. I’ve been at ACU for almost 19 months now and I have to admit that I’m very impressed by the easy going, relaxed, yet goal-oriented corporate culture of ACU.

The major benefits I’ve noticed at ACU is a system of flexible working hours, which gives me some choice over what hours I work so I have time for my study and other commitments.

Student Jobs on Campus is a service funded by Student Services and Amenities Fees.

For more information about how you can be involved, please visit: students.acu.edu.au/482300
In July 2013, a group of ACU students travelled through South America on a pilgrimage towards World Youth Day in Rio di Janeiro, Brazil. Their first destination was the small shanty town of Pamplona in Peru, where they spent five days building a chapel for the local people from the ground up. For the majority of students, this was the first time they had experienced any poverty. For some, it was the first time they had travelled overseas. The students and the locals communicated through smiles, gestures, and laughter. Working side by side they made strong connections, and the students soon realised they would gain even more from the experience than the township. The new chapel of San Juan Apostle sits on one of the many rolling hills on the poverty stricken outskirts of Peru, and serves as a small reminder of the impact that selfless giving can have on our lives. Photography: Tristan Velasco