

## Vice-Chancellor's Report to Council

October 2021

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While lockdown caused some disruption, we were able to resume delivery of in-person courses in Level 2, while observing distancing and face covering use.

Facilities Management continues to monitor signage and Quick Response (QR) codes, as well as provision of hand sanitiser. Additional focus has been given to the cleaning of high-use research, teaching and learning, hospitality and ablution spaces.

UC has also worked closely with the Canterbury District Health Board (CDHB) and Canterbury's M ori and Pacific providers to operate a pop-up COVID-19 vaccination centre on campus for students, staff and the wider community. The planned two days were so successful that the event was extended to a third day, with the result that more than 2,000 people in total were vaccinated. Music and kai were provided each day to create a fun and festival-like atmosphere for attendees.

UC is also working with the CDHB to develop a contingency plan for our response if a positive CLT and the Security and Campus Community Support team working

in residential halls on a plan to educate students on safe and enjoyable end-of



and commitment of our UC students who continued this work despite the challenges that they also faced during lockdown.

National media coverage included 1,340 mentions of UC. The location with the highest volume of coverage was Auckland, while coverage with the highest potential reach was in Wellington. With his extensive media engagement to discuss COVID-19 modelling as the virus continues to dominate the news cycle, Mathematics Professor Michael Plank accounts for the majority of mentions with Criminal Justice Director Dr Jarrod Gilbert quoted as a regular *New Zealand Herald* columnist and expert on gangs.

In October UC was proud to sign as a partner of the new South Island women's rugby team, Matatā. This new partnership enables internships for students and new research into women's performance and elite sport. Nearly a quarter of the players contracted so far for Matatā (the team name gifted by Ngā i Te Whāriki) are UC-educated women, and we are so proud to help support these elite women pave the way for future generations. Matatā will compete in the Super Rugby Aupiki competition taking place over four weekends in March 2022.

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The focus of education for this last quarter was the hybrid shift to Level 2, for which the University was well prepared. The Future Learning and Development (FLD) team worked closely with academics to deliver support at this alert level. The situation was unique in that some other parts of the country were at Level 3. Extra tutors were brought in to assist academics with online support for the students elsewhere who were impacted by the more severe lockdown levels.

Perhaps the greatest challenge is exams, with many more academics offering final examinations in a distance mode. FLD ran 11 drop-in sessions to support academics in this area. Exams have been scheduled with the ability to move seamlessly between alert levels if needed.

The second workshop for staff in the Aropapaki series on online course co-design was also adapted to run in hybrid mode. It demonstrated that an online delivery mode allows greater flexibility in meeting the individual needs of academics.

Associate Professor Cheryl Brown, School of Educational Studies and Leadership (EDSL), has again featured in *The Conversation* (23 September edition) as the co-author of "Beyond Zoom, Teams and video lectures – what do university students really want from online learning?" She also featured on the New Zealand Association for Research in Education blog (6 September) with a post on "University student online learning experiences (SOLE) in COVID-times". EDSL's Digital Education Futures Lab, of which Associate Professor Brown is a Co-Director, is increasing its profile in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting uplift in digital learning.

UC's Japanese studies programme took out three of the seven [Japanese Studies Aotearoa New Zealand national awards](#) that have just been announced. Dr Masa Ogino was awarded the Most Innovative Lecturer and Eri Kojima-Mathieson the Most Caring Lecturer (Highly Commended), while one of our top students, David Wells, was awarded Most Engaged Second Year Student.

The Library spaces remain closed to the public under Alert Level 2. The Central Library in Puaka-James Hight is limited to 700 people at Alert Level 2 based on one-metre distancing. It is often close to or over this number between 11am and 3pm, with queues forming at times. Currently only staff and students can access the libraries as this allows for a higher number of people in the Library. It





The Canterbury Medical Research Foundation awarded \$865,000 in funding to eight medical researchers – including five from the University of Canterbury – as part of its 2021 Major Project Grant funding round. The successful UC researchers (receiving approximately \$110,000 each) are:

- Dr Tim Allison (School of Physical and Chemical Sciences (SPCS)), to investigate the bacterium *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, which causes tuberculosis, a disease that kills over a million people per year
- Dr Daniel Foley (SPCS), for a project aiming to develop safe and effective treatments based on a better understanding of key molecular mechanisms underlying breast cancer
- Dr Vanessa Morris (School of Biological Sciences (SBS))







international political communication, public diplomacy, foreign policy and communication studies, who are located in the UK, the US, Belgium, Germany, Sweden, Ukraine, Spain, Israel, Lithuania and Austria. Within the framework of the F

UC recently held its completion ceremony for students who studied with us on a Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Manaaki Scholarship. Graduating scholars attended the ceremony, cheered on by their fellow scholars, whānau and UC academic and support staff. It has been a very difficult period for these students as they have been unable to return home for a scheduled reunion trip as is normally allowed (many students have children and other dependants back home). They are to be congratulated



VC Activities

22 September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attended Universities New Zealand Vice-Chancellors meeting via Zoom</li> </ul>
23 September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Met with Cheryl Hyman, Vice Provost from Arizona State University with Professor Catherine Moran via Zoom</li> <li>• Met with Amy Adams and Chancellor</li> </ul>
24 September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Met with Amy Adams and Associate Professor Te Maire Tau g cia _</li> </ul>