Walking the walk

New Vice-Chancellor and students step out in 2008
Business people deal with legal issues everyday: contracts, personal liability, finance and insurance law, company law, tax law and many others.

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or visit www.law.uq.edu.au/prospective-postgraduate
MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

It’s easy to see why people at other Australian universities describe UQ as being “on a roll”. In little over a decade, UQ has transformed itself from a predominantly undergraduate university with pockets of research strength into a national powerhouse in teaching, research, commercialisation and community interaction.

However, a close look at our international and national environments reveals many challenges that will demand some different approaches. Notwithstanding the new Federal Government’s promise to compensate universities for the phase-out from 2009 of full fee domestic undergraduate places, we cannot count on a marked increase in per student funding. Instead, student to staff ratios are likely to remain unacceptably high and Australian universities will continue to rely excessively for financial viability on international student fees.

We should not assume that the funding pipeline from Atlantic Philanthropies and the Queensland Government for research infrastructure will flow indefinitely. Also, while the Rudd Government has aborted the costly Research Quality Framework, any alternative funding scheme will have a much greater focus on research quality than in the past.

We can count on more intense competition for top students and staff, given the buoyant national economy and the maturing of higher education institutions in Australia’s neighbourhood.

To meet these and other challenges over the next decade, UQ will need to be distinguished by quality – as it relates to the student learning experience, research and research training, and commercial and broader interactions with the community. We must also prove more willing to engage with stakeholders – the schools that provide many of our students, the companies that employ our graduates and fund our research, our alumni and the broader community.

As we debate the future of higher education and the direction of UQ, our students must be at front of mind. The UQ learning experience is and must remain special, and will be enhanced by an expansion of undergraduate and postgraduate opportunities. The many aims of deeper engagement with national and global employers include improved options for student internships, courses and research projects that mesh more closely with current and projected industry trends, and stronger career prospects.

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CRISIS PREPARATION TRAINING KEY TO INSTANT RESPONSE

How well prepared is the University for a crisis? The answer to that question will become apparent during further training exercises this year at the St Lucia, Ipswich and Gatton campuses.

The exercises will be directed by an external consultant and conducted either with key UQ staff or the full University Crisis Management and Recovery team, led by Secretary and Registrar Douglas Porter.

Associate Director of the University’s Occupational Health and Safety Unit Gary Chaplin said the first exercise was likely to be in March.

Staff will be given an impromptu scenario such as a potential avian flu outbreak, a fire, or a terrorist attack, and be asked to develop a coordinated response in real time to test the effectiveness of the University’s crisis management and recovery planning.

“Desktop exercises are likely to be followed later in the year with a live crisis management and recovery exercise, also involving Emergency Services,” Mr Chaplin said.

Mr Chaplin said a crisis was defined as an event or events which could severely damage the University’s people, operations, environment, long-term prospects and/or reputation.

He said the University had a complete Crisis Management and Recovery Plan incorporating the latest thinking on the topic.

A Crisis Management Response Team has also been formed, with members taking part in hypothetical exercises and helping the University coordinate its response to real incidents last year, such as the Heron Island Research Station fire and the equine influenza outbreak at Gatton.

“The University is also examining mass evacuation plans for all the major campuses to complete, and those completing the program within eight weeks of its launch in February are eligible for prizes including a weekly, dinner-for-two restaurant voucher and electronic goods, as well as a grand prize of five nights on Hamilton Island for two, including airfares from Brisbane.

The induction takes about 45 minutes to complete, and those completing the program within eight weeks of its launch in February are eligible for prizes including a weekly, dinner-for-two restaurant voucher and electronic goods, as well as a grand prize of five nights on Hamilton Island for two, including airfares from Brisbane.

The presentation contains valuable information on maximising the safety and enjoyment of working at UQ including its alcohol and drugs policies, handling of hazardous materials, emergency procedures including evacuation routes, medical facilities and workers’ compensation claims, followed by a 20-question, multi-choice quiz.

The induction contains valuable information on maximising the safety and enjoyment of working at UQ including information on the correct procedures for manual tasks – which currently account for 50 percent of all workplace injuries at UQ,” Mr Porter said.

The induction will be accessible to staff through portals such as my.UQ, the Occupational Health and Safety web page (www.uq.edu.au/ohs/) and New Staff Induction page as well as through links to be published in UQ Update.

For further information about the initiative, contact Daniel Martin on 3346 9173 or email d.martin1@uq.edu.au

In the event of an emergency at any University site, the first phone number you should dial is 3365 3333.

That’s the message to staff from Gary Chaplin, Associate Director of UQ’s Occupational Health and Safety Unit.

“Last year we had several incidents at outlying University sites where staff were unsure who to notify in the event of a crisis or a major event,” Mr Chaplin said.

“People told their bosses about the event and the news travelled through their sections, but they belatedly notified the obvious place to call, University Security.

“In any emergency, University Security is the first point of emergency contact at telephone 3365 3333, not Emergency services on phone 000.

“You will find the emergency number on the back of your staff or student card.

“Security can provide a centrally co-ordinated response with external agencies and liaise within the University, advising senior executive members as appropriate.”

Mr Chaplin said the procedure to ring UQ Security first in the case of emergency applied to all campuses, remote research stations, faculties, schools, divisions, centres or institutes whether in their own premises, or in the premises of other organisations, such as hospitals.

Last year the Occupational Health and Safety Unit produced laminated emergency procedure cards for every UQ staff member, with information on emergency evacuation for fire, medical emergencies and environmental incidents.

Cards are available by telephoning 3365 1111 or dial internal UQ extension 9.
ENHANCING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE IS A PRIORITY FOR UQ’S NEW VICE-CHAIRMAN AND DEPUTY VICE-CHAIRMAN.

UQ’s new Vice-Chairman, Professor Paul Greenfield, has created the portfolio of Deputy Vice-Chairman (Teaching and Learning), promoted Professor Debbie Terry into the position, and given her wide-ranging responsibility for the learning environment.

Professor Greenfield said improving the learning environment would mean more than simply enhancing the quality of UQ’s teachers and physical learning spaces.

“It encompasses the many ways in which both undergraduate and postgraduate students learn and all aspects of the student experience. It’s not limited to campuses and facilities, it’s limited only by our imaginations,” he said.

“I want it to be made easier for students to study at high-quality overseas universities for one or two semesters, while gaining credit towards their UQ degrees.

“I would also like more undergraduates to be able to experience the kind of research usually reserved for postgraduates. Undergraduates should be able to compete to spend a semester or a summer break in labs and research settings. They will require support from mentors and financial support from the University or the community to facilitate these activities.

“Also, as UQ forges new and stronger networks with industry, government and other Australian and international employers, students should enjoy more opportunities to work in areas related to their studies while accruing credit.”

Professor Terry’s role will also include improving links with prospective students and guiding preparation for the 2009 Australian Universities Quality Agency audit of UQ.

Professor Terry said her challenges would be to identify, promote and support the unique advantages of the UQ student experience, and to deliver a distinctive experience enriched by the University’s research capacity.

“It will be global in its goals and at the same time be strongly engaged with industry and the professions,” she said.

“We need to enhance the depth and breadth of the UQ student experience, and ensure that it is underpinned by the highest standards of excellence in teaching, with support of state-of-the-art physical and technological infrastructure.”

Professor Greenfield was UQ’s Senior Deputy Vice-Chairman before he succeeded Professor Emeritus John Hay on January 1.

“Professor Emeritus Hay put UQ on the map in terms of teaching and learning,” Professor Greenfield said. “I am very fortunate to have his strong legacy to build upon.”

“The titles of the other Deputy Vice-Chancellors are unchanged, although some of their responsibilities have altered as a result of Professor Greenfield’s promotion.

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RED FOR GREEN

Green zone on-campus car parking fees will not increase in 2008.

The UQ Senate has voted to leave the casual fee at $3 a day because most students use the green zone for parking.

The price of annual permits increases by five percent, and all casual zone fees (except green) increase by 8.3 percent.

Parking in yellow zone areas will be $2.60 per hour, in the purple zone $1.30 per hour, and in the pink zone (Ipswich) will be $1.30 per day.

A new off-peak permit, valid from 5pm to 8am, will be $62.40 annually.

Staff holding valid permanent parking permits can move their vehicles to yellow zones from 5pm weekdays, at no additional cost.

RESEARCHERS HONOURED

Three UQ researchers won inaugural National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) awards in December.

They were Professors John Hancock and Robert Parton from UQ’s Institute for Molecular Bionescience (IMB) and Dr David Copland from the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences.

Professors Hancock and Parton received the NHMRC Achievement Award (Program Grant), recognising their work in studying the surface of the cell.

Dr Copland won an NHMRC Achievement Award (Career Development Award), for his work on the effects of neurological injury or disease on language and shedding light on the brain mechanisms underpinning language treatment and recovery.

OUR WAY TO VIRGINIA

UQ’s successful exhibition of Lockhart River Aboriginal art is continuing its international tour with a two-month showing at the University of Virginia.

The Virginia leg of the Our Way: Contemporary Aboriginal Art from Lockhart River tour opened on January 15 and will remain on show until March 15, following a successful stint at Stony Brook University in New York.

UQ lecturer in art history and exhibition curator Dr Sally Butler was in Virginia for the opening.

Our Way is on display within the Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection – a museum established in 1997 that exclusively exhibits Australian Aboriginal art.
A STUDY HAS LINKED YOUNG PEOPLE’S MENTAL HEALTH WITH THEIR RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, AND THOSE OF THEIR MOTHERS.

Moving away from traditional religious beliefs to trendy, self-focused religions and spirituality is not making young adults happier, according to new research.

A UQ study found that young adults with a belief in a spiritual or higher power other than God were at greater risk of poorer mental health and antisocial behaviour than those who rejected this belief.

Young men and women who held non-traditional beliefs were up to twice as likely to feel anxious and depressed than those who rejected this belief.

Young adults who believed in a spiritual or higher power other than God also had higher rates of disturbed and suspicious thoughts and paranormal beliefs, than those who rejected this non-traditional belief.

The study was based on surveys of 3705 21-year-olds born in Brisbane from the Mater-UQ Study of Pregnancy.

These young adults were asked questions such as: did they believe in God, or in a spiritual or higher power other than God, how often they went to church, and how often they took part in other religious activities.

Their religious background was also assessed from questions answered by their mothers when the study began in the early 1980s.

Study author, UQ School of Population Health PhD graduate Dr Rosemary Aird, said her research was the first in Australia to examine young adults’ mental health and social behaviour in regard to their religious and spiritual beliefs, involvement in church services and religious background.

Dr Aird found only eight percent of young adults attended church regularly (once a week) which appeared to reduce the likelihood of antisocial behaviour in young adulthood among males, but not females.

Young adults with traditional religious beliefs (belief in God) and those whose mother believed in God, attended church, or were affiliated with a religion in their early years, appeared to enjoy no major benefits in regard to their mental health and social behaviour as they reached adulthood.

Dr Aird said that most non-religious forms of spirituality were too individualistic.

“They focus on self-fulfilment and self-improvement and the lack of emphasis on others’ wellbeing appears to have the potential to undermine a person’s mental health and social relationships,” Dr Aird said.

“This focus may lead people to feel more isolated from others and to concentrate unduly on themselves and their own problems.

“Religious forms of spirituality among past generations tended to be more about social responsibility and obligation and collective interests.

“Today, new forms of spirituality seem to have shifted away from a social-focus to a me-focus.

“The new spirituality promotes the idea that self-transformation will lead to a positive and constructive change in self and society.

“But there is a contradiction — how can one change society in a positive way if one is primarily focused on oneself?”

She said people were mixing and borrowing practices from many different old and new religions and that television and popular culture are also influencing young people’s religious beliefs and practices.

Dr Aird now lectures in the School of Public Health at the Queensland University of Technology.

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Eyes open

UQ research has found the “missing link” in the evolution of the eye.

Professor Shaun Collin, from UQ’s School of Biomedical Sciences, together with colleagues from the Australian National University in Canberra and the University of Pennsylvania in the US, have identified animals with eyes bridging the evolutionary link between those designed to differentiate light from dark to those that possess a camera-like eye.

Professor Collin said his research gathered evidence from multiple branches of biology in support of a gradual evolution of the eye and proposed an explicit scenario to explain how the human eye emerged.

“Charles Darwin wasn’t able to reconcile the evolution of the eye given its complexities and diversity of eye designs,” Professor Collin said.

“So it was a major surprise for us that we have found what appears to be a clear progression from a simple eye to a complex eye, which occurred over a relatively short period (30 million years) in evolutionary history.”

Professor Collin said the researchers studied a primitive fish, the hagfish, to discover the missing link.

“This animal diverged from our own line somewhere around 530 million years ago,” he said.

“Hagfish are simple, eel-shaped and jawless animals that inhabit the oceans at great depth and are renowned for the revolting ‘slime’ they exude when disturbed.

“They behave as if blind, though they have a primitive eye-like structure beneath an opaque eye-patch on either side of the head. Previously it had widely been thought that the hagfish eye had degenerated from a lamprey-like precursor.

“But our research suggests hagfish did not degenerate from lamprey-like ancestors, but are instead the remnants of an earlier sister group.”

Professor Collin’s research with Professor Trevor Lamb from the Australian National University and Professor Ed Pugh from the University of Pennsylvania, was last year published in Nature Reviews Neuroscience.
The University will come back to life this month as students return for the commencement of the academic year after the long summer break.

New UQ students are encouraged to attend Orientation Week (OWeek), which this year runs from February 18-22, in order to familiarise themselves with their new surroundings, attend relevant information sessions and enjoy the social activities on offer.

Orientation Coordinator, Jenny Knowles, said the 2008 five-day event was not to be missed. “During OWeek the atmosphere is always relaxed and social which really eases that daunting transition into university life,” Ms Knowles said.

Typically, the highlight of the Orientation festivities is the Wednesday Market Day held at UQ St Lucia, and 2008 will not disappoint. “Market Day, February 20, will be the biggest day of the week and a great opportunity for new students to get a feel for the ‘whole’ UQ experience,” she said. “It’s a chance to learn about all the academic and non-academic facilities and services on offer to you as a UQ student.”

Ms Knowles said the Great Court would be filled with stalls, some occupied by the UQ Union, some by UQ Sport and some by organisations such as Translink, RACQ and Centrelink. UQ Sport is offering giveaways such as complimentary passes and backpacks, and entertainment including DJ Seany B, African drumming, Japanese sword and stick art, as well as various sporting demonstrations.

The UQ Union will be giving away student diaries and entertainment will include a DJ, street theatre performers and a Latin band, in line with its Fiesta theme.

“Over 80 clubs and societies will be vying for student membership,” Ms Knowles said. “It’s about promoting social life on campus, be it through cultural or sporting activities.”

While OWeek will be packed full of social events, there are also a number of scholarly activities which students are encouraged to attend.

The University’s faculties and schools will hold information and introductory sessions for their various programs, and libraries on each campus will offer useful courses and tours.

Session times and further information can be found in the 2008 Orientation Guide, which is available online at www.uq.edu.au/orientation.
UQ adds defence to research armoury

UQ is at the forefront of a new $80 million centre aimed at giving Australian industry a leading edge in winning major national and international defence contracts.

The Defence Materials Technology Centre (DMTC) was announced on December 20 by the Minister for Defence Science and Personnel, Warren Snowdon, and the Minister for Innovation, Industry, Research and Science, Senator Kim Carr.

The DMTC is a partnership between industry, universities, government research agencies and Federal and State Governments.

Mr Snowdon said the DMTC would receive $30 million in Federal Government funding over the next seven years with the remaining funding coming from collaborative partners.

“Significant outcomes to be delivered include improved armour protection for military personnel carriers and new high-tech materials for use in major defence acquisitions such as the Joint Strike Fighter,” he said.

The new centre will be run from nodes in Victoria and Queensland, with the Queensland node based at UQ.

The interim Chief Executive Officer of the DMTC is Professor David StJohn of The University’s CAST Cooperative Research Centre (CAST CRC), which conducts industry-driven research in metals technology.

Also involved will be UQ’s HyShot program leader Professor Michael Smart and CAST’s UQ-based Aerospace and industry technology transfer programs leader Dr Matthew Dargusch.

Professor StJohn said the DMTC’s focus was on assisting local small to medium manufacturers develop capability to supply components and equipment to the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and to play an expanded role in protecting its peacekeeping forces.

The DMTC will also provide Australian manufacturers with cutting-edge research and development to enhance competitiveness in winning major overseas defence contracts.

Other priorities include educating engineers and scientists in skills attractive to the defence industry and transferring technology to non-defence applications such as civilian aerospace, power generation and biomedical manufacturing.

“The program brings together materials science and engineering expertise from industry, government laboratories and academia to help maintain the ADF’s edge across military platforms in all environments,” Professor StJohn said.

a new centre will ensure the wellbeing of people with an intellectual disability through focused research and increasing the skills of health professionals.

Better support for people with intellectual disabilities will be an outcome of a unique new research and teaching centre based at UQ.

An Australian-first initiated by the Queensland Government, The Centre of Excellence for Behaviour Support will expand national and international knowledge of intellectual disabilities and severely challenging behaviours, and improve the skills of people working in the field.

The Queensland Disability Services Minister Lindy Nelson-Carr last month announced UQ Ipswich as the home of the centre, which has secured $10.5 million in government funding over four years.

With a focus on research, policy, evaluation and training, it is expected to begin operating in the first half of this year.

“UQ’s track record in research leadership and its international reputation will ensure Queensland leads the way in developing the world’s best practice in services and support for some of our most vulnerable citizens – people with an intellectual disability and challenging behaviours,” Ms Nelson-Carr said.

“UQ’s research and teaching will build on research at UQ’s new Institute for Social Science Research, and in the Schools of Education, Psychology, Social Work and Applied Human Sciences, Medicine, and Health and Rehabilitation Sciences. “The research to be undertaken will then provide the bases for innovative approaches to training for those who are in the critical front line of providing support for those with intellectual disabilities.

“Australian and international postgraduate students will have new opportunities to conduct research that aims to address disadvantages experienced by people with intellectual disabilities and challenging behaviours throughout the world.”

Tailored postgraduate study and internship opportunities will also improve workforce skills and expertise.

A global campaign is underway to recruit key personnel including the centre director (who will be a joint UQ-government professorial appointment), director of policy research, director of research in behaviour support and director of learning and development.

Ms Nelson-Carr said the UQ partnership was the centrepiece of the $113 million Carter reforms, which were formulated after retired judge Bill Carter QC explored better ways of supporting people with intellectual disabilities and challenging behaviours.

UQ Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Professor David Siddle, congratulated Ms Nelson-Carr and the Queensland Government on recognising the value of a research-based approach to improving the wellbeing of people with intellectual disabilities.

“The centre will translate UQ’s world-class social science research and teaching into benefits for people with disabilities, their families and communities,” Professor Siddle said.

“It will build on research at UQ’s new Institute for Social Science Research, and in the Schools of Education, Psychology, Social Work and Applied Human Sciences, Medicine, and Health and Rehabilitation Sciences. “The research to be undertaken will then provide the bases for innovative approaches to training for those who are in the critical front line of providing support for those with intellectual disabilities.

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After two gruelling rounds of interviews, Robert Mullins is off to Oxford on a prestigious Australia-at-Large Rhodes Scholarship.

Mr Mullins, who completed an Honours degree in English Literature in 2006 and will graduate with a Bachelor of Laws in June, is the second UQ applicant to be named a 2008 Rhodes Scholar.

In September, Mr Mullins will join fellow UQ Arts/Law graduate Anna Kloeden at Oxford University, and will undertake a Master of Studies in English Literature.

"I’m excited about the opportunity, but also a bit nervous," Mr Mullins said.

"The reality of leaving family and friends is quite daunting."

Mr Mullins said while he always intended to submit a Rhodes Scholarship application at some stage, he hadn’t planned on applying in 2008 until noticing advertisements around the St Lucia campus.

Despite having to impress a tough selection panel – twice – it was a “spur of the moment” decision which has well and truly paid off for Mr Mullins.

"The interview was tough; they drill you in the nicest possible way," he said.

"You can’t just go in there with your own pitch. You have to be able to respond on a range of topics, from politics to individual aspirations to sporting achievements.

"In my interview they asked a bit about my volunteer work – I was Regional Youth Coordinator with St Vincent de Paul during 2004-2005 and helped to start a large refugee tutoring program for university students."

Candidates for the Rhodes Scholarship must apply in their home state in the first instance.

If the selection panel, having chosen the state winner, feels a runner-up is of sufficient merit, they will be nominated to go to Canberra for an interview with the Australia-at-Large Committee.

With Ms Kloeden named Queensland Rhodes Scholar in September, Mr Mullins had to impress the Canberra judges in order to secure his Oxford enrolment.

Mr Mullins said he hoped to pursue a career in academia, and was particularly interested in teaching and promoting Australian literature.

"I think the next year or so will provide an opportunity to see if I’m suited to an academic career within the Australian literary community," he said.

Mr Mullins is the second UQ Rhodes Scholar in recent years to have studied within the University’s School of English, Media Studies and Art History.

The other was 2006 Queensland Rhodes Scholarship recipient Nicholas Luke, who is also studying literature at Oxford.
Fears of litigation because of birth defects or disfigurements have led to the pharmaceutical industry imposing a 25-year “drug drought” on pregnant women, according to a leading maternal-fetal medicine researcher now based at UQ.

A policy paper by Professor Nicholas Fisk, now Head of UQ’s $66 million Centre for Clinical Research, and Professor Rifat Atun, of Imperial College London, published last month in *PLoS Medicine*, said the pharmaceutical industry had failed pregnant women.

Professors Fisk and Atun studied the existing research and development and business model of the industry and concluded there had been a virtual “pharma-free zone”.

Their analysis of an industry database tracking drugs under development since 1981 showed that only 17 products were under active development for maternal health indications and that only one new class of drug had been licensed in the last 20 years.

“The study demonstrates a ‘drug drought’ in maternal health,” Professor Fisk said.

“One of the reasons that pharmaceutical companies are reluctant to test and develop drugs in pregnancy is to avoid the litigation costs that come with the risk of birth defects and disfigurements.

“This is despite the fact that these risks are of little relevance to drug development for conditions in later pregnancy.”

The report says other factors behind the failure to develop drugs included the small size of the market, the fact that maternal health drugs had more potential for revenue shocks and a regulatory system allowing endemic off-label use of drugs in pregnancy, discouraging long-term pharmaceutical investment.

The report also outlines how the pharmaceutical market’s “push” mechanisms (funding to encourage investment from universities and companies) and “pull” mechanisms (funding to purchase drugs once they are on the market), relevant to the United Nations Millennium Development Goal of providing affordable essential drugs in developing countries, have been ineffective in the area of maternal health.

Professors Fisk and Atun suggest alternative models such as the Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative as an example of a successful “push mechanism” that encourages investment and propose that not-for profit options – which do not rely on profit for innovation – should be considered.

“Between the pull and the push, the international donor agencies have also forgotten these women. Given the unacceptably high number of maternal and perinatal deaths each year, it is high time to address this failure,” Professor Fisk said.

Workforce growth target

UQ and the University of Melbourne have combined to address the drastic shortage of health workers with the launch in December of the Australian Health Workforce Institute (AHWI).

AHWI’s Interim Director and Executive Dean of UQ’s Faculty of Health Sciences, Professor Peter Brooks, said Australia needed to engage in comprehensive and honest debate about health workforce issues.

“This Institute will promote health workforce research and work closely with Commonwealth and State jurisdictions to ensure a sustainable health workforce in Australia,” Professor Brooks said. “Our aim is to deliver Australian health workforce sustainability by 2020.”

Professor Brooks said hospitals and the acute care sector currently consumed more than 90 percent of the health budget, with less than 10 percent going to health promotion and disease prevention.

“We need to ‘turn off the tap’ and be more proactive about health education and disease prevention,” he said. “A ratio of 80:20 for health expenditure would be a much more sustainable approach in the long term.”

Professor Brooks said the Institute’s goals were to ensure the availability and maintenance of health workforce data and statistics; map future health systems; develop innovative and flexible education models for the future health workforce; and develop and implement workforce policy.

It has launched a website, www.ahwi.edu.au. Meanwhile, more than 900 new health professionals graduated from UQ in December.

The total number of health graduates, including postgraduate coursework and higher degree students across a range of disciplines, including mental health, ergonomics and e-healthcare, was more than 1100.

*MORE GRADUATION NEWS, PAGES 12-14.*
Cancer cell conquest

Prostate cancer is being investigated at the cellular level by a team of UQ researchers working on ways to develop a tailored attack on the disease.

Scientists are researching a possible way of making aggressive prostate cancer cells less invasive after discovering a protein essential to normal cell functioning.

Professor Robert Parton led a team of scientists from UQ’s Institute for Molecular Bioscience, which discovered that the protein PTRF-cavin is required for caveola formation.

Caveolae are pits on the surface of cells, which are involved in many processes essential for the healthy functioning of the body, including tumour suppression.

Scientists had already identified one protein involved in caveola formation, called caveolin, however they were unaware that it functions in conjunction with PTRF-cavin.

“Caveola formation is a fundamental process that affects every cell in the body, and importantly, has implications for prostate cancer diagnosis and therapy,” Professor Parton said.

“In most cancers, the cells stop expressing caveolin, and the caveolae don’t form. But some aggressive prostate cancer cells actually show much higher levels of caveolin than normal.

“We found that although caveolin levels were high, caveolae still weren’t forming, and further research found this was because PTRF-cavin was missing.”

The team made this discovery by adding PTRF-cavin to a prostate cancer cell line, which prompted the formation of caveolae.

They are currently studying if this change could alter the invasive properties of the cancer cells.

“It will take several years, but we’re hopeful that we can develop this process for use in diagnosing, and eventually treating, prostate cancer,” Dr Michelle Hill, a senior investigator on the team, said.

“Rather than current cancer treatments, which kill any cells that are growing quickly, this would be a more targeted, tailored treatment that should result in less side effects and a more effective therapy overall.”

Dr Hill said the fact that the same protein was associated with promoting cancer in one case and preventing it in another highlighted the need for different avenues of treatment for different cancers.

“The role of caveolin differs between cancers because it is in a different form at the cell surface, which highlights the importance of not only the protein, but also its interaction with other proteins and its location on the cell surface.”

The team’s research was published in the highly-regarded international journal Cell.

Health fears

Health loss caused by type 2 diabetes will more than double in Australia by 2023, as health loss from most other major causes falls, according to new research by UQ’s School of Population Health.

The research, published last month in the Medical Journal of Australia assesses and predicts the burden of disease and injury in Australia from 1993 to 2023, measuring the health loss from diseases, injuries and risk factors.

Health loss is measured by the “disability adjusted life year” (DALY), with one DALY equalling one lost year of healthy life. The DALY represents the gap between current health status and an ideal situation of the whole population living into old age.

The paper by Stephen Begg, Dr Theo Vos, Bridget Barker, Lucy Stanley and Professor Alan Lopez, reports that 75 percent of health loss is caused by cancer, cardiovascular disease, neurological and sense disorders, chronic respiratory disease and injuries.

While cardiovascular disease is the overall biggest cause of health loss in Australia, anxiety/depression is the biggest cause for women. Injuries, especially in men, and mental disorders, account for most DALYs in early adulthood.

Mr Begg said DALY rates also differed among various “subpopulations” of Australia, with higher health loss in disadvantaged communities.

“Health loss was 31.7 percent higher in the lower socio-economic quintile than in the highest and 26.5 percent higher in remote areas than in major cities,” Mr Begg said.

The study’s authors predicted that, while many causes of health loss, including cancer and cardiovascular disease would fall by 2023, others such as mental, neurological and musculoskeletal disorders, and type 2 diabetes, would rise.

The researchers studied 14 key risk factors for these conditions, including tobacco use, high blood pressure, high body mass, physical inactivity and alcohol consumption.

Dr Vos said there had been a steady improvement in Australia’s health in the past decade, but further research needed to be done.

“All of the health risks are open to modification through intervention,” he said.

“For example, the predicted strong growth in health loss associated with diabetes is notable as it is mostly due to increased body mass.

“If new approaches to encourage Australians to maintain a healthy body weight could be as successful as anti-smoking campaigns, we may be able to reduce increasing diabetes rates.”
Sound of success

Bill Raymond is the first cochlear implant recipient to become an audiologist in Australia after graduating on December 14.

The 24-year-old was born with a severe hearing disability and received the implant when he was 13 after his hearing deteriorated and he was no longer assisted by hearing aids.

A cochlear implant is a surgically implanted device that transforms sound into electrical impulses which are then transmitted to the brain for decoding.

“I was extremely unhappy. I felt very isolated. I had been doing quite well at school, but now the teachers didn’t bother talking to me,” Mr Raymond said.

Mr Raymond’s initial reticence about implants disappeared after he met 11-year-old recipient Julia Keger and watched as she spoke with several people and on the phone.

Out of pocket expenses of $5000 for receiving the implant were donated by his local Rotary Club in the Darling Downs town of Pittsworth.

Mr Raymond’s 1996 implant involved numerous interviews with health professionals, a two-hour operation (now performed via keyhole surgery), sickness from anaesthetic and the first overwhelming attempts to turn on the implant.

“The first time the implant was turned on, Mum spoke to me. Her voice should have been the most natural sound in the world, but it sounded like breaking glass and I cried, and they stopped to let me recover my composure,” Mr Raymond recalled.

But very quickly, the implant enabled his brain to make sense of the sounds.

Mr Raymond became Boy School Captain of Pittsworth State High School and also received a Young Citizen of the Year Award from the local shire.

He finished school with excellent results, including an Overall Position of 3 and an “A” in the Queensland Core Skills Test.

Mr Raymond started work last month as an audiologist at the Brisbane Hear and Say Centre, where he is assisting fellow young cochlear implant recipients.

US leader promotes IT

A 1970s Arts graduate who is President of one of America’s top universities was honoured by UQ on December 3.

Professor Michael McRobbie, who leads Indiana University, an eight-campus institution with 100,000 students and more than half a million alumni, received a Doctor of Science honoris causa at a Faculty of Engineering, Physical Sciences and Architecture graduation ceremony.

With the rapid evolution of the higher education sector, Professor McRobbie said the world’s top universities would increasingly be defined by their IT infrastructure.

“A university’s core technological systems allow its faculty to make important and far-reaching discoveries in the sciences, in the arts and humanities, and in nearly every other area of research and scholarship,” he said.

A STUDENT WITH A NOTABLE SURNAME HAS LANDED ON HER FEET.

Ms von Zeppelin
FUTURE ASSURED

Handling venomous snakes may not be everyone’s idea of a day at the office, but for UQ Gatton graduate Andrew Howe it’s his dream job.

Mr Howe graduated with a Bachelor of Applied Science with majors in Wildlife Biology and Conservation and Park Management on December 7.

“My experience over the past three years and my preference to work outdoors were the reasons I accepted a wildlife rescue position at Australia Zoo,” Mr Howe said.

“I will be taught correct handling and rescue techniques in an area I am truly interested and passionate about. I will learn how to handle venomous snakes through training provided by experienced handlers.”

While studying, Mr Howe worked as a volunteer with the Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital, and last January was recruited as part of a fire rescue mission to relocate hundreds of koalas.

“I was lucky enough to be sent to Victoria for more than two weeks to rescue hundreds of koalas suffering the effects of summer bushfires,” he said.

Mr Howe said his degree had been rewarding and had enabled him to apply his theoretical knowledge to practical situations.

“The degree opened my mind to think from a different perspective and understand that no one opinion is correct,” he said.

No limits for Sheree

Sheree Dyson thought she would never attend a normal school, much less university.

Despite this, Ms Dyson, who was diagnosed with autism as a child, graduated at the University’s Ipswich campus on December 10 with a Bachelor of Contemporary Studies through the UQ Arts faculty.

“I attended a school for children with autism but after two years they told my parents that there wasn’t anything left they could teach me,” Ms Dyson said.

“So my parents sent me to a regular preschool, then primary school and I ended up graduating from Ipswich State High.”

Ms Dyson was completing a qualification at TAFE when one of her lecturers told her she had the ability to succeed at university study. She enrolled in the Bachelor of Contemporary Studies at UQ Ipswich in 2005.

“My disorder meant that I did have difficulties with things like prioritising, focusing and expressing ideas verbally but I worked hard and enjoyed my program, particularly my courses in philosophy and music cultures,” she said.

Ms Dyson actively participated in student life at Ipswich, getting involved with UQ Union activities, performing with her guitar during UQ Diversity Week and participating in the campus race known as the “Challinor Chase”.

“During my time at UQ Ipswich, I found that I was more willing to try things and to put myself out there,” she said.

“I would like to say to people that you shouldn’t let anything hold you back. Whether you have a disability or not, you can find the confidence and courage to pursue your dreams, whether it’s university or something else.”

It was a landmark year for the Ipswich University’s Ipswich campus on December 10, as a volunteer with the Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital, and last January was recruited as part of a fire rescue mission to relocate hundreds of koalas.

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Head start in beef industry

Four young graduates from UQ Gatton have started exciting careers with Australia’s largest cattle company.

The graduates received the inaugural Australian Agricultural Company (AAco) scholarships, which provide substantial financial assistance to students during their final year of study and a job for a year after graduating.

Steven Pocock, Tracy Muller, Thomas Perkins and Jeremy Millar graduated on December 7 at a ceremony for UQ’s Faculty of Natural Resources, Agriculture and Veterinary Science (NRAS).

The scholarships will enable them to spend time at various locations within AAco, gaining experience in beef cattle production, management and marketing, with the ultimate aim of moving into senior roles.

Professor Michael D’Occhio, Head of UQ’s School of Animal Studies, said the scholarships offered great opportunities for the four graduates and for future students coming through beef and business-related programs.

“The Australian Agricultural Company and UQ share a long history in the beef cattle industry,” Professor D’Occhio said.

“The support of students during their last year of study not only provides financial assistance but also gives students the opportunity to develop their experience and networks within industry while completing their degree through vocational placement and holiday work.”

Mr Pocock, an Agricultural Science graduate, joined the company in December and is spending time at the company’s Brisbane Head Office. “Wylarah” Station, the Goonoo backgrounding property in Central Queensland, and with the beef team at the Grantham Processing Plant.

“I have always had a keen interest in the Australian beef industry and have gained experience on different properties during my degree,” Mr Pocock said.

“Working with AAco will give me a great range of experience throughout the company’s different operations and will give me a great insight into where my future career path lies.”
A Ukrainian student who held three jobs while completing her Economics degree was awarded first-class honours on December 5.

Daria Svetchnikova had an amazing Grade Point Average of almost pure 7s (the highest potential mark) throughout her Bachelor of Economics and continued the same high performance in her Honours degree.

Ms Svetchnikova was valedictorian at her Faculty of Business, Economics and Law graduation ceremony.

She worked at two nightclub jobs and one at a hotel while completing her undergraduate degree, and tutored three courses and kept up part-time work while completing her honours year.

He introduced French cattle breeds to Australia and was awarded the Agence Pour Cooperation Technique Industrielle Et Economique medal by the government.

Early in his career, Dr Baker investigated the causes of low productivity, low calving percentages and poor calf viability, particularly in the harsher sub-tropical regions of Queensland.

He was an early advocate of the advantages of Bos indicus (zebu) cattle over the Bos taurus in the regions. Having established basic research, Dr Baker said more experimental work was needed.

No facilities were available at UQ at the time, so he struck a deal with the QAC and spent four years teaching Diploma students and studying zebu cattle.

Dr Baker has also worked for aid agencies in Vanuatu, Nepal, Fiji, Samoa, Bangladesh and Indonesia.

In 2005, the Australian College of Veterinary Science and the Australian Veterinary Association awarded Dr Baker the Kesteven Medal for his outstanding contributions to the field.

A veterinarian and dedicated teacher who has made a significant contribution to the Australian and worldwide development of the profession for more than 40 years was honoured at a UQ Gatton ceremony on December 7.

Dr Allan Baker, who last year led the Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries response to the equine influenza outbreak, was awarded the prestigious UQ Gatton Gold Medal.

Dr Baker, whose UQ teaching roles started in the 1960s, graduated from the then Queensland Agricultural College (QAC), now the UQ Gatton Campus, in 1956, with a Diploma in Animal Husbandry. He completed his Bachelor of Veterinary Science in 1961 and his PhD in 1968, both at UQ.

Dr Baker was a Postdoctoral Fellow at Cambridge University from 1969 to 1970 and in 1975, where he studied livestock embryo transfer.

Also in 1975, he was awarded a French Government Scholarship to study agricultural and veterinary collaborations with Australia.

WORK PAYS

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“Being an undergraduate international student took out all my finances so I wouldn’t have been able to do honours without help from the University,” she said.

“There are people who show genuine interest in what you do and in my case, went out of their way to help. There was no official scholarship for a person in my situation, but a way was found.”

Ms Svetchnikova, who attended international schools in Singapore, looked for an English-speaking country to do her university study, as she had forgotten much of her native language.

UQ graduates under the age of 25 and available for full-time work have again achieved outstanding employment rates and high graduate salaries.

Graduate Careers Australia’s Australian Graduate Survey 2007 released on December 11 revealed that UQ graduates continue to be highly sought by employers.

In the national performance figures compiled by the Federal Government, the University achieved a full-time employment rate for bachelor degree graduates for 2006 of 85.7 percent.

This compared to a national full-time employment figure of 84.5 percent.

Over an extended period, the survey has shown that only five percent of the University’s graduates have been recorded as unemployed and seeking full-time employment.

UQ graduates reported high full-time employment rates in fields such as civil engineering (100 percent); medicine (100 percent); mining engineering (100 percent); pharmacy (100 percent); urban/regional planning (100 percent); veterinary science (100 percent); rehabilitation (97.6 percent); and dentistry (96 percent).

The figures for UQ bachelor degree graduates in further full-time study represented 23.7 percent against a national figure of 20 percent.

UQ bachelor degree graduates in their first full-time employment (and under 25 years of age) reported median starting salaries of $43,000 for men and $41,000 for women.

Of those in their first full-time employment, the higher end salaries included geology, dentistry, mining engineering, medicine, physical sciences, chemical engineering and aeronautical engineering.

Jobs for graduates

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Researchers from UQ's Earth Systems Science Computational Centre (ESSCC) who last September predicted three large Sumatran earthquakes presented their groundbreaking research at a meeting of the American Geophysical Union (AGU) in December.

Research team leader Dr Huilin Xing said the AGU had recognised the significance of the UQ research by adding a special session entitled “The 2007 Sumatra Seismic Sequence”.

The team's predictions were made using advanced computer simulation software developed as part of a research program under Dr Xing. Researchers utilised the ESSCC's Altix supercomputer, one of Australia’s fastest, to model scenarios and determine the highest risk areas.

Dr Xing and his colleagues identified the part of the subduction zone where the Eurasian and Indian/Australian tectonic plates meet between latitude S1° and S5.5° as having the highest earthquake risk, exactly the zone in which the series of quakes occurred.

Dr Xing said that in the wake of the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami, the Sumatra region was one of the first areas of application for the modelling software.

“Not too long after we developed the software the tsunami occurred and as a result, we began a project specially focused on the tsunami generation process induced by earthquakes and from there, we really began the research for the Sumatra area,” he said.

“The region had a lot of data and papers related to it as a very hot topic, and all that information was ideal for helping us conduct the simulations.

“We presented our results as early as last April in Hawaii, highlighting the high earthquake risk in this very specific area.

“Now already the event has happened with the three earthquakes occurring in exactly the place we had predicted. This is why we’re very excited, but in some ways quite shocked.

“It is very rare in earthquake history to have three very large earthquakes occur so close together but also in a very narrow area.”

The three quakes, which occurred in two days, were measured on the Richter scale at magnitudes of 8.4 and 7.9 (September 12), and 7.0 (September 13) respectively.

“The area was one of few in the wider Sumatran region that had not experienced earthquake activity for some time.

“It was very strange that even in this region of high earthquake activity and in which the tsunami-inducing earthquake occurred, that this particular area seemed to be locked,” he said.

“But while on the one side this could have meant that perhaps this area was very safe because there was no slip, on the other side the lack of any slip meant a significant build-up of energy to release.

“When we looked at the earthquake history around this area we found that about 170 years ago there were two very large earthquakes, so we began to think there might be potential for a large, destructive earthquake.”

“Despite the accuracy of the UQ forecast, Dr Xing said predicting earthquakes was not an exact science.

“From research we know we can expect that if an earthquake is larger than magnitude 6.5 there may be a tsunami. While this is not directly or linearly related to size, it is very important,” he said.

“But in this case the first earthquake was of magnitude 8.4, and there was almost no tsunami. We really need to keep looking deeper to work out what kinds of earthquakes can generate tsunamis and how big the tsunami might be.”

UQ BUSINESS SCHOOL'S NEW 12-MONTH MBA FEATURING A UNIQUE LEADERSHIP ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (LEP) HAS WELcomed its first students.

MBA Director Dr Polly Parker said the LEP would run alongside academic content and would build on students’ existing skills.

“Students entering the UQ MBA program already have a level of leadership capability and the LEP is designed to help them improve over the course of their time with us,” she said.

Dr Parker said graduates would also be able to use the tool to help them continue to develop their leadership skills after completing their MBAs.

The Honourable James Jacob Spigelman AC, Chief Justice of NSW will present three lectures in the 2008 McPherson Lecture Series hosted by UQ's TC Beirne School of Law.

Justice Spigelman's lectures will be on the topic Statutory Interpretation and Human Rights and will be held between 6pm-8pm on March 10-12 at the Banco Court, Supreme Court Building, 304 George Street, Brisbane.

Refreshments will be available at the end of each lecture. Attendance is free, however registration is essential. Continuing Professional Development points are available for legal professionals.

Visit www.law.uq.edu.au/ mcpherson to register online, or email research@law.uq.edu.au or phone (07) 3365 2206.

PROFITABLE VENTURE
Uniseed investee companies Fultec Semiconductor, Xerocoat and Hydrexia have raised more than $20 million from venture capitalists.

Hydrexia has closed a second round $4.8 million investment led by Conduit Ventures and GBS Ventures. Uniseed also participated in this round.

Fultec Semiconductor Inc has raised a further US$10 million in an investment round led by Allen & Buckeridge, and US funds Mayfield Fund, ComVentures and Crescendo Ventures. Uniseed and Westscheme also contributed.

Xerocoat Inc, also a UQ spin out, has secured a Series B funding round led by US-based Nth Power and Southern Cross Venture Partners, with Uniseed and Westscheme also participating.

LIQUID PRACTICE PROGRAM WELCOME
UQ Business School's new 12-month MBA featuring a unique Leadership Enhancement Program (LEP) has welcomed its first students.

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A worldwide network of the next generation of coral reef scientists and managers met for the first time at UQ from December 10-14.

Sponsored by the Coral Reef Targeted Research and Capacity Building for Management Program (CRTR), the Leadership Forum attracted postgraduate and postdoctoral students in coral reef studies from 20 countries.

The students were joined by internationally renowned coral reef scientists and managers who built the students’ understanding of a wide range of issues surrounding reef ecosystems.  

“One of the major goals of the CRTR Program is to build the scientific capacity and knowledge necessary to give coastal managers and policy-makers the information they need to sustain the world’s coral reefs,” UQ Vice-Chancellor Professor Greenfield said.

“The future leaders in coral reef science honed their leadership skills and learned how to increase their influence among networks that manage and set policy for coral reefs worldwide.”

The University is a key partner in the CRTR Program, which sponsors and associates with more than 55 students in coral reef studies worldwide.

Scholars from Mexico, The Philippines, Cuba, Tanzania, Kenya, USA, Australia, United Kingdom, Colombia, Venezuela, Palau, Thailand, Canada, Costa Rica, Belize and Guatemala attended the event.

Not every student sells off most of their possessions to finance an unpredictable research project on the other side of the world.

But Andrea Marshall is not an average student. The 28-year-old Californian has spent the past five years researching manta rays – the world’s largest rays – for her UQ PhD.

Ms Marshall is now regarded as one of the world’s leading experts after conducting the first detailed study of manta rays and building her own shark and ray research centre from scratch in Mozambique, Africa.

She initially moved to Australia because of UQ’s academic flexibility and creativity.

“At UQ I saw that they were more willing to take a chance on creative or groundbreaking projects. In America you just do what your supervisor tells you to,” Ms Marshall said.

She had been volunteering for research into Great White sharks in South Africa when her life took a sudden turn.

Her interest in manta rays was tweaked when local divers recommended she explore a coastal spot known for its abundance of rays.

After seeing the research potential, Ms Marshall abandoned her life in Brisbane, which included a comfortable riverfront apartment, to live on the remote east coast of Mozambique.

It took a lot longer to convince her UQ supervisor that it was safe to work in Africa as the remote and male-dominated world of Mozambique was confronting for a young, single American woman.

Ms Marshall arrived in Mozambique in 2003 and lived on the outskirts of Inhambane, which lacked electricity and running water.

“It was hard to get used to at first. It really makes you stop and appreciate all of the details you take for granted,” she said.

“The place I was living at was ridiculously remote, and that’s what made me a bit nervous.

“I had to learn how to fix my truck when it broke down in the middle of nowhere. It was a steep learning curve.”

But to do her research she needed a more permanent base, so, without any building experience, Ms Marshall built two homes in Mozambique using her own money and own two hands.

The first, a double-storey house of local clay brick and reeds, took her $15,000 and a year to build on leased land.

The house was abandoned when she discovered her landholder was more interested in making money from rays than in conserving them.

“It was heartbreaking. I almost quit that day because I couldn’t bear the thought of having to do it again,” Ms Marshall said.

But she went on to build another home and research space with more conservation-minded locals in Tofo Beach.

It is now the base of the Manta and Whale Shark Research Centre which consists of several huts, a laboratory and research facilities with a growing bank of scientific equipment.

The research base, developed with fellow UQ researcher and whale shark expert Simon Pierce, has its own 6.5 metre research boat, a dissection area and lecture room.
Italian and Queensland scientists are putting military and industrial technology underwater to improve coral reef research and revolutionise marine data collection.

They are building plug-and-play electronic sensor pods – energy efficient scientific monitors about the size of two matchboxes that can receive directions and transmit environmental data from the seabed via radio signals.

Most underwater sensors are hardwired to research boats or buoys to transfer data because radio transfer has traditionally been expensive, inefficient and geographically restrictive.

Associate Professor Ron Johnstone, Coordinator of the Coastal Resource Management Unit within UQ’s Centre for Marine Studies, said the new pods would measure light, temperature, water turbidity and flow, coral pigmentation and potentially other processes such as biofilm growth.

“These sensor pods will sit on coral, in seagrass, wherever you want them,” Dr Johnstone said.

“We can not only get data from them but we’ll be able to talk to them and tell them when to switch on and off, to increase their sampling rate or to switch from oxygen to light.

“We’ll be able to sit and look at a coral and see when the pigmentation has reached a certain level, hence warn us that coral bleaching is occurring or imminent.”

“This technology has applications well beyond marine monitoring and has already been requested by our industry partners.”

UQ is leading the three-year pod project called Smart Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Technologies (SEMAT).

It is a collaborative project for Milan Polytechnic University, Torino Wireless Foundation, James Cook University, the Danish Hydraulics Group and the Queensland Cyber Infrastructure Foundation.

Italian engineers from Milan and Turin are building the sensor systems while Queenslanders are providing the scientific and application know-how.

Thirty-two representatives from science, business groups and venture capital organisations in Italy, attended a demonstration of the prototypes at the UQ Moreton Bay Research Station on North Stradbroke Island late last year.

Dr Johnstone said traditional underwater monitoring had limited the accuracy of environmental predictions for iconic ecosystems such as the Great Barrier Reef and Moreton Bay.

“We’re trying to take these new and emergent technologies that industry and the military have been applying, such as the gastric camera, and package them into a smart system for underwater use,” he said.

“It will fundamentally alter how we assess the environment and, critically, how we can then seek to manage our activities that affect it.”

So far, the project has been funded by $850,000 from the Italian collaborators.

Dr Johnstone said sensor prototypes had worked well in tests but the group has applied for a $1.3 million Queensland Government Smart State grant to build and test a range of sensor configurations.

**Coral crisis deepens**

A report by eminent coral scientists warns coral reefs will disappear within decades if atmospheric CO₂ levels continue to rise.

The report, published in *Science* in December, is the most compelling scientific case yet that unchecked global warming will be a disaster for coral reefs and the 100 million people and one million species depending on them.

The report’s authors are all members of the Coral Reef Targeted Research and Capacity Building for Management Program, CRTR.

Based at UQ, the CRTR is a leading international research initiative that provides a coordinated approach to credible and scientifically proven knowledge for improved coral reef management.

CO₂ concentration in the earth’s atmosphere is currently 380 parts per million (ppm). The report’s authors say if future emissions exceed 450ppm, reefs could be lost.

Reducing CO₂ emissions must also be accompanied by reducing reef risks such as overfishing, pollution and unsustainable coastal developments, the report said.

Tools to reduce stress on coral reefs already exist, and include: increased protection of river catchment and coastal areas; co-management arrangements between governments and local communities; improved catchment, water quality and environmental flow measures; fishing regulation enforcement; restoration of reefs and coastal vegetation; and sustainable tourism.

The study has found serious consequences arise from even small increases in CO₂.

“The warmer and more acidic oceans caused by the rise of CO₂ from the burning of fossil fuels threaten to destroy coral-dominated reef ecosystems, exposing people to flooding, coastal erosion and the loss of food and income from reef-based fisheries and tourism,” lead author and UQ Professor Ove Hoegh-Guldberg said.

“This is happening just when many nations are hoping that growing industries like tourism and fisheries will allow them to develop beyond their often impoverished state.

“Increased CO₂ not only warms the climate but also dissolves in sea water making it more acidic. This, in turn, decreases the ability of corals to produce calcium carbonate, which is what the all-important framework of coral reefs is made of.”

The study used information built up over the past decade to project how reefs will look if emissions are or are not controlled.
LAPTOP SALE

In February GraysOnline is auctioning $1.5 million worth of ex-lease Dell Latitude D610 notebook computers

– some starting at $9
– each unit fully equipped to support wireless and Microsoft’s Windows XP operating system
– all with up to 12 months manufacturer’s warranty.

• Intel, P-M, 1.86GHz • Wifi wireless network access to wireless routers and hotspots
• 1024MB RAM • 60GB HDD • DVD-ROM/CD-RW Combo Drive
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graysonline.com.au
or call 1300 36 25 36 for more info
Fowl play in triumph
WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT ANIMAL NUTRITION STUDIES WOULD LEAD TO AN INTENSE INTERSTATE RIVALRY?

Students from the School of Animal Studies at UQ’s Gatton Campus in December defended Queensland pride as overall winner of the second annual State of Origin Chicken Challenge.

Held between teams from UQ and the University of New England (UNE) at Armidale, the competition puts the students’ animal nutrition knowledge to the test.

Team Queensland captain Dr Gordon Dryden, a senior lecturer with the School, said the students had to devise a range of feeding rations designed to maximise the growth and efficiency of food use of broiler chickens.

“According to the rules of the competition, the students at each university have to feed a total of seven diets, including three designed by the UNE team, one commercial diet and three diets designed by the UQ students,” Dr Dryden said.

“The winners of the competition were awarded based on overall weight gain and efficiency of food use.”

The Chicken Challenge has become part of the animal nutrition course at the UQ Gatton Campus and the students have keenly followed the progress of their feathered friends, incorporating learning about an important topic with friendly interstate rivalry.

The victorious UQ team consisted of 20 students and Dr Dryden. Students travelled to Armidale for the announcement of the winners and a day of information-sharing between the institutions.

“The chicken industry in Australia is worth more than one billion dollars a year to the Australian economy – these Gatton students are working on developing their understanding of one of the basic principles governing the industry, standing them in good stead to be future industry participants and leaders,” Dr Dryden said.

The winning UQ School of Animal Studies team proudly displays its winning trophy

Agricultural achievers
Two UQ Faculty of Natural Resources, Agriculture and Veterinary Science students have been recognised for academic excellence by the Australian Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology.

Robyn Cave was awarded the Bryan Memorial Medal and Lee Hickey the Bell Medal.

The Bell and Bryan Memorial Medals are open to honours degree students from the St Lucia and Gatton campuses meeting the eligibility criteria.

The awards are administered and judged by member scientists of the AIAST (Queensland Division) and are based on the quality of written theses and a verbal presentation.

Ms Cave completed a Bachelor of Applied Science specialising in horticulture before completing a research project examining the time taken to get a plant to flower and enhancing flowering using temperature, vernalisation (promoting flowering by exposure to cold), plant age, and day length.

Supervised by Dr Margaret Johnston, from UQ’s Centre for Native Floriculture at Gatton, Ms Cave’s research has potential commercial application in allowing producers to shorten the time from seedling to flowering.

It would also enable producers to control flowering in the Brunonia and Calandrinia species – both potential new native cut-flower species and the focus of Ms Cave’s studies.

Judges also highly commended Ian McDonald, who investigated the management of Eastern Grey Kangaroo populations.

Mr Hickey was awarded the Bell Medal for his fourth-year Bachelor of Agricultural Science honours project entitled Rapid Screening for Pre-Harvest Sprouting Resistance in Wheat.

Judges were also impressed by finalist Emily Litzow, who researched the use of leucaena as high-protein forage in dry production periods.

Established by the Queensland Division of the AIAST in 1976, the Bryan Medal honours Dr Wilf Bryan, who retired from the CSIRO Division of Tropical Agronomy in 1972 after a prestigious career in plant breeding and pasture agronomy.

He is also remembered for breeding hybrid maize varieties at the Queensland Agricultural College, predecessor to the UQ Gatton Campus.

The Bell Medal is named in honour of the late Arthur F. Bell, the first qualified scientist to hold the position of Under-Secretary of the then State Department of Agriculture and Stock.

LAW MENTORS NEEDED
The UQ Law Graduates Association and the TC Beirne School of Law is seeking volunteers for a mentoring program for law students to help ease the transition into the profession.

Launched last year, the program matched over 80 students with experienced mentors.

The program provides students with connections to the legal profession, insight into the realities of legal practice and guidance on study techniques, career paths and job opportunities.

Mentors and students are given some assistance by the Law School in determining the type of guidance to be provided, but are otherwise left to negotiate the details of the mentoring relationship.

For further information visit www.law.uq.edu.au/mentor
SPINNING history

A RECORD LABEL HAS INSPIRED MORE THAN POP MUSIC.

The rise and fall of the independent Australian record label that sent the Bee Gees spinning into the international pop orbit is the subject of a new book by a UQ academic, musician and author.

The history and complete discography of Spin Records from 1966 – 1974 is the result of five years of extensive research by Bill Casey, a lecturer in Australian Studies at UQ’s Centre of Marine Science, and a semi-professional musician.

Among Spin’s founders and shareholders were the late Clyde Packer, brother of the late Australian media baron Kerry Packer, and celebrity agent and manager Harry M. Miller, whose Australian cast recording of the musical Hair was a big-seller for the label.

The Bee Gees are Spin’s major lasting legacy, with their 1968 LP Rare, Precious and Beautiful the first Australian-recorded album to make the American Cashbox charts, and their hits such as Spicks and Specks and I Started a Joke still radio favourites.

“What a lot of people don’t remember is that the Bee Gees had a run of 13 singles that flopped in Australia. Hardly anyone thought they’d succeed overseas. They owe a lot to Nat Kipner, Spin’s first producer, and to Ossie Byrne, owner of the St Clair studio, who recorded them on ‘mates rates’,” Mr Casey said.

Other big name Australian artists for the label included Ronnie Burns, Jeff St John, the Dave Miller Set and Marty Rhone.

There were also bands like Geoff “Tangletongue” Mack and his Mack-anicks and Steve and The Board, whose 1966 release I Call My Woman Hinges ... Cause She’s Something to Adore is memorable for its title alone.

“Only one in every 10 songs recorded by Spin was a commercial success,” Mr Casey said. “Spin might have made wrong choices about what to record but the biggest hurdle was publicity. Most of the promo work was left to Festival Records and their publicity budget was very limited.”

Mr Casey said the idea for the book came while researching a project for Hurstville Council in Sydney in 2002.

He discovered that during 1966, Ossie Byrne operated the St Clair Recording Studio in a renovated butcher’s storeroom two blocks down the road from the site of the current Hurstville Library.

“It started off as an oral history project, then there was so much interest that we built a website for it, and eventually that became so popular that I decided to do further research and write the book,” Mr Casey said.

Mr Casey moved to Brisbane in mid 2003. Four years and hundreds of interviews later he put the finishing touches on Spin Dried: a complete and annotated discography of Australia’s SPIN Record label 1966–1974.

He said surprisingly few people involved with Spin or the record industry had known of the label’s connection to the Packer empire, owners of Channel 9 and numerous other television stations and magazine giant Australian Consolidated Press (ACP).

“Clyde Packer didn’t trumpet the fact that he was a Spin shareholder and director, and it was one area where his father didn’t interfere. Sir Frank simply wasn’t interested in pop music, he didn’t think it was profitable,” Mr Casey said.

“But it all came to a stop when Clyde had a big blow up with his father in 1972 and was disinherited. Clyde quit Channel 9 and ACP and resigned as a director of Spin.”

The remaining directors decided to wind up the company. Recording contracts were not renewed. Some artists signed with Festival Records while others continued musical careers without ever recording again.

“It got to the stage where the only Spin contract left was with the Bee Gees, and then that ran out,” Mr Casey said.

While the Bee Gees current manager provided photographs and information for Mr Casey, he didn’t speak directly to either of the brothers Gibb. But he did record hundreds of hours of interviews with other artists.

“There are only a handful of the Spin artists that I couldn’t find. Perhaps now the book is so popular that they’ll make themselves known,” Mr Casey said.

“The Spin archive has some of the best Australian pop music of its era, and Spin fostered many careers in an ultra competitive business without making enemies along the way.

“While Spin was spinning, the word was that Spin employees were ‘good guys’. No shallow phonies, no gangsters with guns, no crooks with knuckle-dusters,” he said.

“That’s not a bad legacy.”


A limited deluxe edition with colour illustrations is also available.

For further information about the book, email moonlight@impulse.net.au, visit www.ozmusicbooks.com, or contact the author at billcasey27@yahoo.com
Wings flies in US deal

University of Queensland Press (UQP) author Karen Foxlee has secured a six-figure US rights deal for her debut novel after a bidding war between top American publishers.

Foxlee’s The Anatomy of Wings has been picked up by publishers Knopf, who count Anne Rice, Bill Clinton and Nobel Literature Prize winners Toni Morrison and V. S. Naipaul among their authors.

A registered nurse from Gympie, Ms Foxlee’s story is set in an Australian mining town and narrated by a 10-year-old girl who tries to solve the mystery surrounding her sister’s death.

The novel won the Best Emerging Author section of the 2006 Queensland Premier’s Literary Awards and was published by UQP in September as part of the prize.

The latest coup comes after the US rights to another UQP title – Rebecca Sparrow’s The Year Nick McGowan Came to Stay – were secured in 2006.

UQP publisher Madonna Duffy said foreign rights sales of over six figures only happened a handful of times each year for Australian authors.

“We’re just delighted that on this occasion it was a UQP author whose talent has been recognised and rewarded,” she said.

“Even though the book is set in a small Queensland town, its themes – the grief of loss, family relationships and growing up – have struck a chord with international readers.”

CD wins plaudits for TEDI

A successful collaboration between UQ staff has been recognised with two major awards at the 2007 Australasian Society for Computers in Learning in Tertiary Education (ascilite) conference in Singapore.

The team received the awards for the development of an interactive CD-ROM which instructs students on the physiology of bovine reproduction.

“The ascilite awards are designed to reward leaders in the use of electronic technologies in teaching and learning in tertiary education,” TEDI project manager Wendy Chalmers said.

“Winning recognition for two consecutive years demonstrates the consistent high quality of TEDI’s work when compared with our peers,” Dr Scott Norman and Dr Steve Johnston from the Faculty of Natural Resources, Agriculture and Veterinary Science (NRAVS) provided the content expertise while the design and development was provided by a multidisciplinary team within TEDI.

Ms Foxlee is no stranger to winning prizes with her work picked from thousands of entries twice for the One Book Many Brains short story anthology – one of only two authors to do so.

General Manager Greg Bain said the expanding reach of UQP titles was pleasing considering the Press celebrates its 60-year anniversary in 2008.

“We have been working hard over the past four years to increase our presence in international markets, through rights sales and distribution,” he said.

“This latest success shows that the books we are publishing resonate not only with Australian readers, but to readers all around the world.”

The Anatomy of Wings will be published in the US in early 2009. The American rights to Ms Foxlee’s second book have also been acquired by Knopf.

CD provides a range of textual and visual representations including 3D animations, video, photographs and ultrasound footage to enhance student learning and overcome practical problems associated with fieldwork.

“Working in close collaboration with our client in the key role of content expert, our aim is to design and develop pedagogically sound, high quality educational resources,” Ms Chalmers said.

“This method of working produces higher quality results than if the client had to learn all the necessary skills required for quality multimedia development or attempted to do it all themselves.”

It was the second consecutive year that such a collaboration has received double ascilite awards, with Dr Vic Galea from NRAVS and TEDI developing an award-winning Virtual Plant Pathology CD-ROM in 2006.

In announcing the winners, Society President Dr Cathy Gunn paid tribute to the work of TEDI and UQ as winners of the awards for two years running.

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**SPORT**

“Super Sloggers” from all over Brisbane visited the University on January 11 to test their ability to swing a cricket bat under the eye of Australian Test opener Matthew Hayden.

The elimination round of a Fosters-sponsored “Suburban Super Slogger” competition was aimed at discovering just how far someone could smash a cricket ball, with Mr Hayden judging.

Out of the 38 sloggers to compete, Graeme Skenner topped the day with a massive hit of 129.2 metres.

Each participant had four attempts to slog a practice ball bowled from a machine as far as they could, as long as it landed in a designated v-shaped area.

Catherine Michael from Fosters Group said UQ was the perfect location for the competition, and that the day was a great success.

“UQ is a great central location with excellent facilities that the general public can access,” she said.

“It’s not often you get pointers from Matt Hayden and can win a chance to have a hit at the Gabba.”

Mr Skenner and the next three longest hitters will now move on to the state final, which will be held during the innings break at an upcoming One Day International between Australia and India.

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**Last-gasp goal thrills**

A last-minute goal by 2007 UQ SPORT sporting scholarship holder Suzie Frazer saw Australia clinch a dramatic 6-all draw against women’s world water polo champions the US in Sydney on January 14.

Ms Frazer, a Beijing Olympic Squad member, scored the equalising shot with 49 seconds remaining after an exhilarating second half comeback from the Australians.

After two wins from three games, the crucial draw ensured Australia victory in the five game series.

The US dominated for the majority of the game, holding a 5-3 lead at half time. Australia lifted its defensive efforts after the break and after some great saves at both ends delivered a quick goal to pull within one point in the third quarter.

An equalising goal from Australia in the last quarter was short lived as the US followed with another goal to lead again.

Australian coach Greg McFadden was happy to win the series and is now looking at preparing for Beijing.

“You don’t win an Olympic Gold medal in January, but it gives us a boost in confidence,” Mr McFadden said.

Last August, Ms Frazer was selected to be part of the 22 member Beijing Olympic Women’s Water Polo Squad.

She has been living in Canberra and training at the Australian Institute of Sport in preparation for the games, as well as continuing her external studies towards a Bachelor of Laws.

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**TRIPLE FOR CRICKETERS**

The University team completed a clean sweep of Brisbane titles with a slashing opening stand setting up a 20-20 win.

After a spectacular win in last month’s Twenty20 final, the top of the table champions University now hold all three major Queensland grade cricket titles.

University came home with a 37-run win against Gold Coast at the Allan Border Field, finishing with an impressive 5-215.

The Twenty20 win completed the “triple crown” for University after winning the Grade premiership and the one-day titles last year.

UQ took to the crease in the first innings, with opening partners Nathan Reardon and Steve Farrell scoring an imposing 0-78 off the first six overs.

The team never looked backwards from then, continuing to dominate throughout the game, with the Dolphins finishing their innings on 8-178.

University coach Mark Ellison said the team was thrilled with the win.

“They were obviously very happy with the win and extremely proud to take home the three titles,” Mr Ellison said.

“It was a great game, everyone chipped in with a decent number of runs and almost every bowler got at least two wickets.”

“We are now concentrating on finishing 2008 still holding the three titles,” he said.

The team is currently focused on defending its one-day title in the last few rounds of the competition and is hoping to take out the semi-final on February 10.
SCHOLARSHIPS

- Clem Jones Sporting Scholarships
- Queensland Freemasons' Scholarships
- George Essex Evans Scholarship
- EOH Handy Memorial Scholarship 2008
- WH & HW Harris Bursary 2008
- WH & HW Harris Bursary 2008
- Alfred & Olivea Wynne Memorial Scholarships
- Physiotherapy PhD scholarship

Library hours are available at www.library.uq.edu.au
Research Commercialisation Workshops

Postgraduate Students’ Workshop: 17 - 18 April 2008

Discover how your inventions, ideas and expertise could achieve real impact on a global level through commercialisation.

Learn how the parallel pathways of Intellectual Property protection and dissemination can advance your profile and objectives in both research commercialisation and publishing.

- Expand your knowledge and networks
- Challenge your thinking about commercialisation opportunities
- Develop your comprehension of IP management
- Connect with some of Australia’s leading commercial research funding experts
- Enhance your understanding of commercialisation options – consulting, strategic industry partnerships, licensing and start-up companies
- Stimulate new ideas about career opportunities
- Enrich the value of your university experience

Postgraduate Students’ Workshop: 17 - 18 April 2008
Includes a special session on career development.
All UQ postgraduate students from all faculties are welcome to apply.
Applications close Friday 21 March 2008.

All UQ academic staff active in research are invited to apply.
Applications close Friday 4 April 2008.

Workshop details
(for both workshops)

Venue:
Novotel Twin Waters Resort, Sunshine Coast.

Cost:
Workshop fees and materials, accommodation, meals, transport to and from the St Lucia campus are provided by UniQuest.

Application/Registration:

Further information:
Leanne Wyvill
ph: 3365 4037
email: l.wyvill@uniquest.com.au

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