

Funding agreement finalised for new degree

Thirty scholarship students will be the first to undertake the new Bachelor of Arts (Western Civilisation) at Australian Catholic University's (ACU) North Sydney Campus next year under a generous funding partnership with the Ramsay Centre for Western Civilisation.

ACU and the Ramsay Centre have signed an agreement that endorses the new degree, following a Memorandum of Understanding forged in February.

Worth more than \$50 million over eight years, the partnership will fund scholarships for 30 high-achieving students each year over a period of five years. Not only does it promise funding for 150 undergraduate scholarships valued at \$30,000 a year (\$90,000 total), but it will also provide for the hiring of up to 10 exceptional new academic staff who will work with program director to deliver the core content of the degree and provide academic management of the program.

The arrangement includes funding for an optional international study experience, and an early payment to help offset start-up costs such as relocation and accommodation.

Vice-Chancellor and President Professor Greg Craven said the new degree was a perfect fit for a university that had always placed the value of intellectual tradition at the centre of its philosophy and continued to invest in the humanities.

“ACU has never been afraid to champion cultures and tradition, celebrating and learning about Western cultures. This partnership and the new degree underscore a wholesale commitment to the humanities which will always be a key priority for this university.

“Academic excellence is not simply the pursuit of empty knowledge. Now, more than ever before, it's critical that we instil in students a deep appreciation and understanding of the liberal arts tradition which is at the heart of critical thinking.

“We are extremely appreciative of Paul Ramsay's visionary bequest that will benefit a new generation of scholars. Through the generosity of the Ramsay Centre, ACU can offer this exceptional opportunity to more bright young minds as part of this valuable legacy.”

The degree will cover a structured and integrated humanities curriculum from antiquity to the present and include an optional honours year.

The university will maintain autonomy over all key governance arrangements related to the course, and all related activities will be consistent with the university's position on intellectual and academic freedom.

Applications are now open. Further information can be found at acu.edu.au/western-civilisation

Media contact: Jen.Rosenberg@acu.edu.au, 0407 845 634