

Generous scholarships to study Western Civilisation

A new opportunity to study the greatest books of the western tradition – and be paid for the opportunity – has opened at Australian Catholic University (ACU).

ACU is inviting applications for the inaugural Bachelor of Arts (Western Civilisation) and the Ramsay Centre is offering 30 scholarships, each worth \$30,000 annually for three years.

The course, which will be launched in 2021, will give students the opportunity to study philosophy, literature art and history, including works by Aristotle and Aquinas, Homer and Shakespeare, Hobbes and Woolstencroft, Dickens and Tolstoy and to understand the conversation between these master-thinkers.

The Western Civilisation cohort will be a select, highly-motivated group of committed students who will have access to small classes, a dedicated group of newly-appointed specialist academics, and a new Ramsay Centre on ACU's North Sydney campus.

Scholars will be selected on a combination of academic merit and alignment with the Ramsay Attributes, the ACU Mission and the ACU Strategic Focus areas, through a combination of ATAR, essay and interview.

ACU Executive Dean of the Faculty of Education & Arts Professor Elizabeth Labone said the University was looking for applicants who display leadership qualities, commitment to the enrichment of society, passion for intellectual engagement with ideas and questions that have shaped Western Civilisation.

“These students will have the capacity to be leaders and to use the deep education that they will receive to enrich society and promote the common good. They will be readers and thinkers who have a passion for intellectual engagement with ideas and who want to explore the insights and concepts that have shaped and enhanced our societies over thousands of years,” she said.

“The Bachelor of Arts (Western Civilisation) will hone the critical habit of mind of these students. They will be able to debate and discuss, compare and synthesise ideas, exploring different views with acuity while always maintaining respect for the dignity of the person.”

The Bachelor of Arts (Western Civilisation) will combine a thematic and chronological structure including the study of Greek and Roman thought, art and architecture, the English literary tradition, the medieval synthesis of faith and reason, the rise of Liberalism, Romanticism, and Post-modernism. It will consider the place of science, aesthetics and religion in the way we understand the world and the way the present builds upon the past.

Students will also have the opportunity to major in their choice of drama, English, history, international relations, philosophy, politics, sociology, theological studies, or visual arts while gaining a broad understanding of the intellectual traditions which frame their discipline.

Professor Labone said it should be central to the mission of any university to embrace and strengthen students' understanding of the liberal arts tradition, by opening them up to literature, art, ethics, religion, and philosophy.

She said the current fashion to downgrade the humanities in favour of technical and occupational skills was short-sighted and ignored the powerful transferrable skills that humanities students gained.

“The study of humanities equips students with lifelong skills including the ability to think deeply, communicate clearly, and understand diverse perspectives. These are not only valuable skills to employers, they are also the ingredients for building ethical and engaged members of society,” she said.

More information on the Bachelor of Arts (Western Civilisation) is available [here](#).

Applications for Ramsay Scholarships can be made [here](#).

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