

## Student exchange and study abroad opportunities for ACU and Boston College

Australian Catholic University (ACU) and Boston College in the United States have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to support and facilitate collaboration between the two institutions. In addition, the two institutions have signed a Study Abroad and Exchange agreement to allow a semester-long exchange of Bachelor of Nursing students.

Bringing together two of the world's leading Catholic universities, these new agreements were co-signed by ACU's Pro Vice-Chancellor, Global and Education Pathways, Mr Chris Riley and Boston College's Provost and Dean of Faculties Dr David Quigley.

This collaboration, which is due to commence mid-2021, opens new opportunities for students and staff at both institutions both domestically and internationally.

The objectives of the MOU include opening up unilateral or bilateral study abroad programs once COVID restrictions on travel are lifted. These include student exchange agreements for specific courses, disciplines and research; exchange agreements for both academic and administrative staff; and collaborative curriculum development to facilitate the implementation of student mobility programs.

Other forms of academic collaboration include research, development and delivery of joint courses; organisation of and participation in seminars; Catholic Mission and leadership program development; short-term academic programs; exchange of information including library materials and research publications; and joint participation in internationally funded projects.

This collaboration with Boston College is an important addition to ACU's existing partnerships with leading international Jesuit universities including Georgetown, Sophia, Loyola Chicago and Marquette. Boston College will bring to ACU its distinctive expertise in the areas of spirituality and spiritual formation which are based on the Society of Jesus' 500 years of educational and formation experience, founded in the life and teaching of Saint Ignatius of Loyola.

ACU will provide Boston College with enhanced capacity across the full spectrum of educational offerings, an opportunity to engage with a culture of research excellence, an internationally acclaimed faculty and a diverse, multi-campus student body.

Mr Riley said, "This is an exciting development in the relationship between ACU and Boston College and it builds on a history of collaboration between the two universities. Boston College is one of the world's leading Catholic universities and, like ACU, is one of the foundation members of the Strategic Alliance of Catholic Research Universities (SACRU) making this formal recognition of partnership particularly important."

Boston College Provost and Dean of Faculties Dr David Quigley said, "Boston College is pleased to be moving forward with our strategic partnership with Australian Catholic University. Our shared tradition inspires our common commitment to transformative education and research in support of the common good. This MOU will help support and advance a range of existing and developing collaborations that include faculty, staff, and students."

ACU's relationship with Boston College predates these formal agreements by many years. Since 2015, senior ACU staff have participated annually in a leadership development program offered by the Institute for Administrators in Catholic Higher Education (IACHE) at Boston College. ACU's Vice-President Father Anthony Casamento csma was appointed to the Advisory Board of the IACHE in 2017.

ACU and Boston College are recognised among the top 10 Catholic universities in the world\*.

\*International Federation of Catholic Universities members ranked on Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2021.

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