

MEDIA RELEASE
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ACU to host Fulbright Specialist in philosophy Professor Costica Bradatan

Australian Catholic University will host Fulbright Specialist in philosophy Professor Costica Bradatan for a month-long exploration of the public humanities.

Professor Bradatan will swap his office at Texas Tech University for the Ramsay Lounge at ACU's North Sydney Campus when he visits Australia in October.

The world-renowned philosopher will join academics from ACU's Western Civilisation Program for numerous public engagements exploring how the public humanities can revitalise learning of the 'great books'.

This will include a series of public lectures looking at influential academics and figures who are engaging in the public humanities in response to the field's ongoing crisis.

A Romanian-American scholar, Professor Bradatan's visit to Australia coincides with the United States' 250th anniversary of independence. To mark the milestone, one of his public lectures will focus on intellectual dissent as a central component of American democracy, drawing on famous dissenters such as David Henry Thoreau, George Santayana, and Hannah Arendt.

While on academic exchange in Sydney, Professor Bradatan will also lend his expertise in the classroom, leading masterclasses and seminars for ACU undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Professor Bradatan, who was recently an honorary professor at the University of Queensland, is the author and editor of more than a dozen books including the critically acclaimed 2023 title *In Praise of Failure: Four Lessons in Humility*.

Ahead of his visit to Australia, the highly sought-after philosopher said he was looking forward to joining the ACU community for a few weeks.

"I've worked with Catholic universities before, in the US, France, and Brazil, but this is the first time I get to work with a Catholic institution in Australia – and a very good one at that," Professor Bradatan said.

"I very much look forward to working with Professor Anstey and his team, as well as to getting to know the Western Civilisation Program at ACU."

Professor Peter Anstey, Director of the Western Civilisation Program at ACU, said Professor Bradatan's visit would strengthen awareness amongst students of the impact that Humanities scholars can have on our country's culture and level of public debate.

"The impact of the Humanities on public debate and decision making in our country is minimal," Professor Anstey said.

"In Australia, unlike many other countries, there are virtually no philosophers who are public figures. It's time that we turned this around and Professor Bradatan's work on public-facing Humanities at ACU promises to be a step forward in achieving this."

The Fulbright Program is the largest educational scholarship of its kind, created by US Senator J. William Fulbright and the US Government in 1946.

The Fulbright Specialist Program deploys American academics to share their knowledge and expertise with international institutions.

This is the first time ACU has hosted a US academic from the Fulbright Specialist Program.

In 2020, ACU PhD graduate and director of the Plunkett Centre for Ethics, Dr Xavier Symons, received a Fulbright Scholarship to research the ethics of dementia at the Kennedy Institute for Ethics at Georgetown University in Washington DC.

Professor Costica Bradatan will be in Australia from 8 October and will be available for interviews.

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