

# Highlights | 2011



University of the  
Sunshine Coast  
Queensland, Australia

The best of both worlds



**VISION:** The University of the Sunshine Coast is regionally relevant and recognised, nationally and internationally, for excellence in teaching, research and engagement.



## Vice-Chancellor's review

2011 was a successful year of continued growth for USC. While it is important to reflect on that success, it is also necessary to be focussed on the future. In my first year as Vice-Chancellor, I believe we have set a strong foundation in 2011 for the next stage of development of this university.

Through a consultative process involving many people within and outside of USC, we developed a new Strategic Plan (2011-2015). New members of the executive team who took up their appointments early in 2011, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Birgit Lohmann and our first Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) Roland De Marco, made strong contributions to this plan.

A revised academic structure, effective January 2012, and appointment of the new two executive deans, Professor Joanne Scott (Faculty of Arts and Business) and Professor John Bartlett (Faculty of Science, Health, Education and Engineering) position us well for future growth and an enhanced national profile.

One of the performance measures in our strategic plan is for the University to have 12,000 students (8,000 EFTSL) by 2015, a significant increase on the 2011 student population of 7,766. Compact discussions indicate the Commonwealth is keen to see Australia's youngest public university reach this critical mass.

An important strategy for growth is the expansion of USC's footprint from the immediate Sunshine Coast to service the coastal region from north of Brisbane to Bundaberg. This strategy is predicated upon closer cooperation with TAFE in training, articulation and resource-sharing, and servicing the needs of the planned Sunshine Coast University Hospital.

Growth requires new buildings and other infrastructure, and I am delighted that our joint application with TAFE to the Structural Adjustment Fund has resulted in significant Commonwealth funding for a \$33 million Sippy Downs Learning Hub on campus, as well as a major higher education development on the TAFE campus at Gympie. Other proposed campus developments are detailed in the Campus Master Plan which was also revised in 2011 (to be approved in 2012).

Building a research profile in a new, small university is challenging, yet research is an important element of a university's credibility. The strides we have taken in 2011 are impressive, including the Collaborative Research Networks initiative (\$5.5 million), several ARC and NHMRC grants, our continuing role in the Seafood CRC, and industry partnerships.

Every year, I am impressed by our student and graduate achievements, from university medallists to sporting achievers to success in business and the professions. We now have more than 9,000 graduates working on the coast, nationally and around the world.

The University's strong national ratings for teaching quality and graduate satisfaction, and our strong performance in national awards for university teaching, reflect the dedication of our teaching staff and the personal attention they afford our students. I thank all staff for their outstanding efforts in 2011.

It is important to acknowledge the role of the University Council in ensuring our future. In particular, it is gratifying that Chancellor John M Dobson OAM accepted re-appointment late in 2011 for a further five-year term.

Professor Greg Hill  
Vice-Chancellor and President

## Student and staff statistics

	2011	2010
Enrolments (total full-time and part-time)	7,766	7,276
Student load (equivalent full-time)	6,430	6,034
Female students (%)	65	65
Postgraduate students	821	795
International students	805	870
Global Opportunities program students (studying part of USC degree overseas)	80	78
Degrees conferred	1,485	1,635
All staff (excluding casuals)	600	561
Academic staff (excluding casuals)	212	210

## LEARNING AND TEACHING

The University earned national recognition for its quality of learning and teaching, and further expanded its program and course offerings:

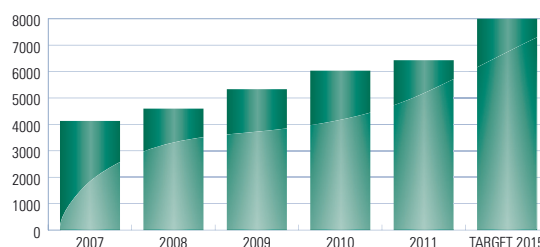
- For the third consecutive year, USC was the only public university in Queensland to gain five stars for teaching quality in the 2012 Good Universities Guide. USC also earned five stars for its graduates' satisfaction with the generic skills they gained while at university, and for Indigenous participation. USC scored four stars for access by equity groups, gender balance, and for graduates' satisfaction with their overall university experience.
- USC won five Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) citations for its outstanding academics and student experience programs, and also gained its first ALTC National Program award.
- A record number of students (1,494, 149 more than in 2010) took on placement opportunities as part of the Work Integrated Learning program in 2011.
- USC offered 171 academic programs in the disciplines of Business and IT; Communication and Design; Education; Health; Humanities and Social Sciences; and Science and Engineering.
- More than 120 Year 11 and 12 students from the Sunshine Coast region participated in the Headstart Program. A further 700 Year 9 and 10 students attended Experience USC day to explore career opportunities.

### The top ten undergraduate programs in 2011

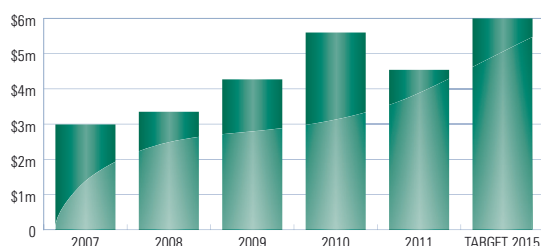
1. Bachelor of Nursing Science
2. Bachelor of Social Science (Psychology)
3. Bachelor of Primary Education
4. Bachelor of Sport and Exercise Science
5. Bachelor of Paramedic Science
6. Bachelor of Arts
7. Bachelor of Biomedical Science
8. Bachelor of Business
9. Bachelor of Business (Tourism, Leisure and Event Management)
10. Bachelor of Occupational Therapy

## STUDENT GROWTH

Student load increased in 2011, to 6,430 EFTSL, an increase of 6.5% on 2010. International students accounted for approximately 12.5% of the student cohort. The University is targeting a student body of 12,000 (8,000 EFTSL) by 2015.

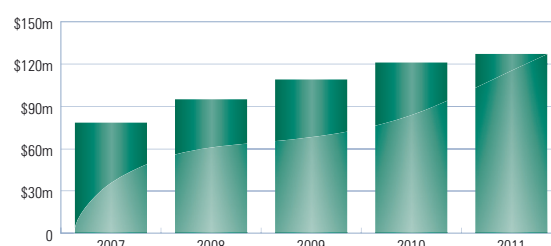


## RESEARCH INCOME



Milestone changes and extended contract negotiations impacted on the 2011 target, particularly in the competitive grant income (a 73.5% decrease). Overall, total research income has increased more than 51% since 2007, to over \$4.5 million in 2011.

## REVENUE



Revenue for 2011 increased 5% on the previous year to \$127.16 million. The stronger financial position was due to increased student load, reductions in expenditure and increased research and consultancy efforts. Results for the year included an operating surplus of \$8.8 million, with an operating margin of 6.9%.

## RESEARCH

The research efforts of academics and students are broad and varied, with sustainability and genecology the core research foci at USC. In 2011:

- Research grant income was \$2.72 million (figure unaudited). Overall, external research grant income increased more than 50% during the period 2007–2011.
- The total number of Higher Degree by Research enrolments was 113 EFTSL. Health science remains the strongest research specialisation in terms of HDR enrolments.
- USC received two prestigious Australian Research Council Discovery grants, worth more than \$1 million. Dr Scott Cummins was awarded a \$656,377 ARC Future Fellowship for his study of primordial germ cell migration in perciform fish, along with a \$145,000 ARC Discovery Project Grant for his research into snail hypometabolism. Professor Roland De Marco, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and joint chief investigator in a project called 'New mesoporous materials for use in high temperature proton exchange fuel cell membranes', gained a three-year ARC Discovery Project grant of \$420,000, with \$40,000 each year to support a PhD student at USC.
- USC was announced as a partner in three successful ARC Linkage Infrastructure Equipment and Facilities grants worth more than \$1 million. These successes will see high-end research tools coming to USC as well as access to sophisticated labs at partner institutions.
- Australia's Chief Scientist, Professor Ian Chubb, visited USC in September to launch the University's \$5.45 million Collaborative Research Network (CRN) project. The three-year Research Futures Project partners USC with Griffith University, the University of Tasmania and the University of Queensland in undertaking nationally significant research involving water, sustainability, forestry and aquaculture. It was one of 12 projects nationally to gain funds under the Collaborative Research Networks program.
- The CRN launch coincided with the closing date for applications for 20 USC Research Fellow positions, linked to the CRN funding, that were advertised nationally and internationally. Approximately 120 applications were received from highly qualified individuals from around the world.

## ACCESS

The University's efforts in social inclusion were recognised with five stars for Indigenous participation and four stars for access by equity groups in the 2012 Good Universities Guide. Throughout 2011 the University continued work to enhance opportunities for participation in higher education:

- Enrolments in the Tertiary Preparation Pathway (TPP) increased further in 2011, surpassing the significant intakes in 2009 and 2010. More than 1,000 students enrolled at USC using the pathway (compared to 867 in 2010). TPP classes were also taught at Caboolture, Gympie, Noosa and Nambour.
- In late December, the Federal Government announced grant allocations for the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program. The Queensland Consortium (led by Queensland University of Technology), of which USC is a member, received \$5.35 million for Indigenous engagement, and \$15.8 million for schools outreach.
- Indigenous enrolments increased to 1.7% of the domestic student body. The proportion of students with a disability also increased, to 5.9%.
- More than 800 undergraduate students at USC received financial support from scholarships, bursaries and prizes worth more than \$1.48 million. Approximately 500 students received support valued at around \$1.2 million in 2010.

## COMMUNITY

Community engagement and awareness continued to grow through 2011, with thousands of visitors attending on-campus events.

- The University hosted a range of community events including Sunshine Coast World Environment Day, Voices on the Coast (a youth literary festival), the Indigenous Education Symposium, and Language Immersion Day. More than 11,500 visitors attended exhibitions at the USC Art Gallery.
- USC's \$2.1 million Olympic-standard swimming pool was officially opened by Queensland Sport Minister Phil Reeves in October. The heated 10-lane, 50-metre pool is used for specialised research and testing of elite athletes, while also being available for general community use.
- The on-campus childcare centre opened in July. Operated by the AEIOU Foundation, the centre provides 66 places for children aged six weeks to five years, including servicing the specific needs of children with autism. USC donated the land for the centre.
- Awareness and reputation of USC continued to grow during 2011. Market research conducted in December showed advertising had a positive impact on parents and school leavers. Among school leavers, awareness of the 2011 campaign remained very strong—85%, while among parents, unprompted awareness of the campaign increased by 22% on 2009 figures.



The University of the Sunshine Coast  
was the first greenfield university to be  
established in Australia since 1975. Founded in  
1994, USC took its first 500 students at the Sippy Downs  
campus in 1996. Enrolments grew to more than 7,700 in 2011,  
with the student population projected to be 12,000 by 2015.

The 100-hectare campus lies 90km north of Brisbane on land that was once a cane  
farm. The University has won many architectural awards and is part of a wildlife reserve.



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Sunshine Coast**  
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The University of the Sunshine Coast's full statutory annual report is available online at [www.usc.edu.au/reports](http://www.usc.edu.au/reports).  
Copies of the 2011 annual report are available from the Administrator, Office of Marketing and Communications,  
University of the Sunshine Coast, by telephoning +61 7 5459 4558 or faxing +617 5430 1187.

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