



Professor Greg Craven AO is a lawyer, and academic, and has been Vice-Chancellor and President of Australian Catholic University (ACU) since 2008. He is an expert in public law, and a regular contributor to public debate. Professor Craven formerly was a Reader in Law at the University of Melbourne and served as Crown Counsel

to the Victorian Government from 1992 to 1995. Before joining ACU, he was Foundation Dean and Professor of Law at the University of Notre Dame Australia, and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Strategy and Planning) at Curtin University of Technology in Western Australia. He also served as Executive Director of the John Curtin Institute of Public Policy. Professor Craven has published numerous books and articles, mainly in the field of constitutional law and constitutional history. He is a regular columnist for The Australian newspaper. Professor Craven has served on a wide range of public bodies. He chaired the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group and was Deputy Chair of the COAG Reform Council. He currently is a member of the Commonwealth Higher Education Standards Panel (HESP) and the Lead Vice-Chancellor for Universities Australia on Quality and Regulation. Within the Australian Catholic community, Professor Craven is a member of the National Catholic Education Commission and the Truth Justice and Healing Council. Under Professor Craven's leadership, ACU has grown from 18,000 students to 32,000 students, dramatically increased its research standing and opened a major campus in Rome. It is the largest Catholic university in the English-speaking world. Professor Craven is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Law and was appointed by Pope Francis as a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St Gregory the Great in 2015 and as a Consultor to the Holy See's Congregation for Catholic Education in 2016. In the 2017 Australia Day Honours List Professor Craven was named an Officer in the General Division of the Order of Australia.

## VC'S VIEWPOINT

### THE IMPORTANCE OF ACU'S COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

There are many starting points and emphases for university engagement, all of which are surely valid. However, the Australian Catholic University is one with a distinctive approach and ethos. A faith based university that is open to all faiths and those of no faith can lead to the best of human values of concern for the less well-off, for tolerance, for understanding and the search for truth and justice and respect for the dignity of all human beings. This is not easy in a 'liberalised and marketised' world however it is worth the struggle to make it so as part of University engagement. Under Professor Craven's leadership, ACU has doubled in size from 18,000 students to 36,000 students, dramatically increased its research standing and opened a major campus in Rome. It is recognized as the largest Catholic university in the English-speaking world and it places at its heart engagement with its communities through impact and empathy.

At ACU, community engagement is a core part of our curriculum and puts into practice our Mission of commitment to the pursuit of knowledge, the dignity of the human person and the common good. Community engagement aims to create positive change within our world by working with vulnerable people in our local neighborhoods and internationally.

In 2006 we founded the Institute for Advancing Community Engagement (IACE), based on the vision of advancing

engagement with communities as a fundamental ministry of the Catholic Church and of the mission of ACU as a Catholic University. IACE expresses a vision for Catholic social teaching that encourages students, staff, alumni and the wider community to support the dignity, education, health and wellbeing of all people, particularly the most vulnerable, and to protect our world and its resources. Through IACE, ACU has developed a number of community engagement programs, both in Australia and internationally.

*We must take the time to connect with one another, help one another and offer our support to the most vulnerable amongst us.*

Clemente Australia is a ground-breaking program that provides people experiencing multiple disadvantages, including poverty and homelessness, with the opportunity to undertake tertiary study. Founded on Earl Shorris's Clemente Program in the USA, Clemente Australia is now in its 13th year and aims to reconnect vulnerable people with mainstream society. The program offers university level education in community locations with small class sizes. It is offered in partnership with community agencies, providing participants with social support while they undertake their studies.

Often the opportunity to make a difference is right on our own door step. ACU's Strathfield, Melbourne and Banyo campuses are all located within communities where a large percentage of school students speak a language other than English at home. Through our Homework Support Program ACU students assist primary and secondary school students with homework and learning, while at the same time developing strong friendships. While the primary and high school students receive both academic and social support, our own students benefit by gaining valuable teaching experience working with children from diverse cultural backgrounds.

But we're not just reaching out to the community at home. ACU has a world view and our community engagement work is happening internationally too. Through our Barefoot Nurses program in the districts of Bacau and Ainaro in Timor-Leste, ACU's IACE and Health Sciences staff and students support the development of basic medical skills for health workers in remote villages. The program provides training for wound and injury care within communities that are a long distance from hospitals.

Since 2010 staff and students from the School of Exercise Science have been using football as a way of bringing together disengaged young people from villages in Timor-Leste through the Future in Youth (FIY) program. The community has flourished through participating in FIY. Competitions for both male and female teams under the guidance of Timorese adult coaches have provided valuable professional development and organisational skills to all.

These are just some examples of the wonderful community engagement work we are doing here at ACU. The benefits of such programs are far-reaching for participating staff, students and, of course, those we reach out to. Our community engagement is just another sign of our commitment as a University that, through their teaching, learning and research, all of our students and staff apply their skills and knowledge for the common good.

It is vital that we invest in our communities in order for them to flourish. From the local communities where we live, the communities where we work and the broader Australian community, to the international community we are all a part of. We must take the time to connect with one another, help one another and offer our support to the most vulnerable amongst us.



# THE CORE

## AN ACU EDUCATION IS MORE THAN A DEGREE. IT'S MORE THAN A RITE OF PASSAGE, OR A SET OF PRACTICAL SKILLS.

**An Australian Catholic University (ACU) education is learning to look at the world through a new perspective, with empathy and confidence. It's learning to lead, and to listen. It's challenging stereotypes, and having the courage to make an impact.**

The University's Core Curriculum lies at the heart of this transformation. It's a key part of every ACU student's education – giving them time to reflect on a life well lived, and consider ways we can change the world by applying the principles of Catholic Social Teaching.

These principles are relevant to us all.

They are about the dignity of the human person.

They are about solidarity – belonging to one human family regardless of race or religion.

They are about the common good – everyone should have access to what they need to live a fulfilling life.

They are about participation – we all have the right to take part in decisions that affect our lives.

They are about the vulnerable – caring for the underprivileged is everyone's concern.

And they are about stewardship of the earth – it's our collective responsibility to care for the world and its resources.

Seeing the world through these principles will change the way our students look at those around them, the way they practice their future profession, and the way they make personal and professional decisions throughout their lives.

The Core at ACU is made up of two units, and a community engagement unit.

There's even the chance to complete a unit overseas – in cities such as Rome, London, Beijing, Paris or New York.

The Core is unique to ACU. It gives students an edge with employers, who recognise in our graduates a sense of curiosity, a defined creativity, and an ability to engage with the world in a meaningful way.

[acu.edu.au/thecore](http://acu.edu.au/thecore)