

Goal: to provide an increasingly comprehensive range of sustainable programs that position students for success in the global economy and which are aligned to the University's priorities

Increase the number of sustainable disciplines available in undergraduate, postgraduate coursework and research programs

Sustainable studies

Program sustainability was a focus in 2008, generating activities such as:

- successfully piloting a template for new program business cases (these are now required for all new programs and considered by Planning and Resources Committee);
- amending existing programs to improve marketability and sustainability (for example, the BBus (Tourism) was renamed to reach a wider audience); and
- discontinuing some programs to clarify and boost sustainability for program offerings.

New programs

Introduction of associate degrees in arts, business and science this year provided another pathway to tertiary study. Completion of a two-year program guarantees entry to a degree program, and eligibility to apply for one of 20 Commonwealth Government-funded scholarships.

New undergraduate and postgraduate programs offered this year included the following:

- Bachelor of Business/Bachelor of Science (Sport Management)
- Bachelor of Design
- Bachelor of Education
- Bachelor of Education/Bachelor of Arts (Special Education and Psychology)
- Bachelor of Engineering (Construction Management)
- Bachelor of Engineering (Water and Sustainable Resource Management)
- Bachelor of Exercise Science
- Bachelor of Nutrition
- Bachelor of Occupational Therapy
- Bachelor of Paramedic Science
- Bachelor of Social Science (Psychology)

- Bachelor of Social Science (Psychology) (Honours)
- Graduate Certificate in Professional Learning (TESOL)
- Graduate Certificate in Special Education
- Graduate Diploma in Special Education
- Master of Climate Change Adaptation by Research
- Master of Environmental Change Management by Research
- Master of Integrated Coastal Zone Management by Research
- Master of Psychology (Clinical)
- Master of Social Work
- Master of Wetlands Management by Research

Of these new degrees, the Bachelor of Social Science (Psychology) and the Bachelor of Paramedic Science proved popular. They ranked among the University's most soughtafter programs for new students in Semester 1, 2008

The mid-year intake reflected high demand for the Bachelor of Social Science (Psychology), which attracted the highest number of new undergraduate enrolments for second semester.

New or significantly revised programs developed in 2008 for delivery in 2009 include:

- Bachelor of Clinical Exercise Science
- Bachelor of Corporate and Public Affairs
- Bachelor of Regional and Urban Planning (4 years)
- Bachelor of Commerce (Accounting)
- Bachelor of Commerce (Financial Planning)
- Bachelor of Business/Bachelor of Commerce (Financial Planning)
- Bachelor of Business/Bachelor of Commerce (Accounting)
- · Master of Management
- · Graduate Certificate in Management
- Postgraduate Certificate in Nursing (Advanced Practice)
- Master of Advanced Nursing Practice (Emergency Care)
- · Master of Sports Nutrition by Research*
- Executive Master of Business Administration**
- · Master of Business Administration
- Graduate Diploma in Business Administration
- Graduate Certificate in Business Administration
- · Graduate Certificate in Sustainability
- Master of Advanced Nursing Practice
- * Subject to final approval

The Bachelor of Business (Property and Asset Management) was endorsed and approved by the Australian Property Institute (API) in December. Undergraduates completing the property major can now apply for associate membership of API, while those completing the property major plus the property valuation minor can apply for full membership. These graduates, if they also complete an appropriate term of professional practice, will also be eligible to apply to the Valuers Registration Board of Queensland for registration as Certified Practicing Valuers (CPVs).

Promote and facilitate multidisciplinary and cross-faculty coursework program structures

The Academic Board and the Learning and Teaching Management Committee (LTMC) required program structures to follow the 16-8 model (unless there were strong grounds for not doing so), whereby programs include two of the three core courses and at least six electives. This enables a student to construct a multidisciplinary program using electives from faculties other than his or her own. The Quality Office conducted an institutional analysis of program structures in February 2008

Complementary combinations

A combined or cross-faculty program blends two degrees in complementary areas and thus expands career opportunities. The program can be studied over four years full-time, less time than if two degrees were studied separately.

Combined program offerings increased in 2008 to include the Bachelor of Business/ Bachelor of Science (Sport Management) and Bachelor of Education/Bachelor of Arts (Special Education and Psychology). USC now teaches a total of 18 combined programs.

Increase and facilitate the direct involvement of the professions and industry in sustainable program and course development and delivery

In 2007, the Australian Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) awarded Collaboration and Structural Reform Fund funding for the following USC projects, to enhance universities' contributions to regional development:

- the Optimisation Project, aimed at strengthening university-community connections in the Sunshine Coast and Wide Bay-Burnett regions (collaboration with the University of Southern Queensland); and
- the Engineering Project, titled Growing Engineering Pathways across the Sunshine Coast. This aims to produce graduates with skills relevant to industry needs and regional economic growth.

These projects began in March 2008 for completion by December 2009. They exploit opportunities identified in a self-evaluation report compiled by USC and USQ in 2005 as part of an international study led by the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD). The self-evaluation identified chances for USC and USQ, both young universities, to develop niche markets while boosting regional development through course selections and professional programs.

Other moves to maintain workplace relevance in USC teaching included:

- industry and professional representation on faculty academic advisory committees, providing input to program development;
- full professional accreditation by the Australian Property Institute for the new Bachelor of Business (Property and Asset Management), which offers a pathway to careers in valuation, development, property management, asset and facilities management, and property sales and leasing.

Professional partnerships

The University's new programs in psychology, paramedic science and engineering were developed cooperatively with relevant industry and professional bodies.

The Bachelor of Social Science (Psychology) was accredited by the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council as a three-year undergraduate program, and the Bachelor of Paramedic Science was developed in partnership with the Queensland Ambulance Service.

The structure and content of the University's new engineering programs in construction and water and sustainable resource management reflect requirements of the peak accrediting body, Engineers Australia.

The Graduate Certificate in Nursing (General Practice) was designed by USC staff in collaboration with the Sunshine Coast Division of General Practice in 2004. It is now offered nationally, and more than 100 practice nurses across Australia studied the program in 2008. In July, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Federal Minister for Health and Ageing, Senator Jan McLucas, visited campus to present certificates to the first USC graduates.

^{**} Open only to students with substantial work experience, delivered as intensive weekend classes once a month for two years

Review of operations

Learning and teaching

Advisory groups

An industry advisory group overseeing strategic direction for the Bachelor of Business (Property and Asset Management) met for the first time in September. It will meet three times each year. The group, chaired by USC's Professor of Property and Development, includes representatives from industry leaders such as Australian Environment International, CSIRO Corporate Property, Herron Todd White, Juniper Development Group, PricewaterhouseCoopers and the Department of Natural Resources and Water. The University's Dean of Business is also a member.

Increase and promote opportunities for work-integrated learning within programs

WIL activities

During 2008, the WIL Reference Group of the Learning and Teaching Management Committee furthered the Work Integrated Learning Policy to articulate the institution's position on work integrated learning (WIL). The Policy will be considered by Academic Board in 2009.

WIL opportunities are available in numerous degree programs in all faculties. A student can enrol in specific WIL or industry project courses as part of a degree program, or access informal work experience arrangements.

Business-related projects introduced students to the practical application of theory while benefiting local industry, including companies based at the University's Innovation Centre. This USC-Innovation Centre engagement supports the objectives of the Uniconnect program.

More than 280 final-year business students worked with industry as part of their degrees. Assignments included:

- an export management project, involving research and analysis to assess export readiness; and
- a market research project resulting in a report to help guide business development.

The Master of Business Administration (MBA) Strategic Management Project provided students with the opportunity to complete an external analysis of a business's competitive position and strategy.

Exploring career options

Numerous on-campus events promoted WIL and other industry opportunities throughout the year. These included the annual Careers Fair and an inaugural presentation by Walt Disney World, outlining the company's International College Program.

Available for the first time this year to Australian students and recent graduates, this work placement scheme runs for 6-12 months at the Disney resort in Florida. Participants develop skills in customer service, communication, teamwork, leadership, responsibility and cultural sensitivity.

USC also delivered work-relevant information to students due for practicum placements throughout the year. From 2009, the WIL Skills Program will expand its workplace-preparation repertoire to include tips on professional skills and behaviours.

Work experience outcomes

The blend of study and workplace experiences resulted in numerous positive outcomes. These included award nominations, a gallery exhibition, positive contributions to communities in Australia and overseas, and student employment opportunities:

- Advanced computer-based design students staged two exhibitions of their professional portfolios of digital design and commercial art at the USC Gallery. These are part of the Gallery's annual program of exhibitions and related events, and attracted more than 3,000 visitors.
- Five public relations students organised and ran a community event at Stockland Park, Kawana, honouring the region's emergency rescue workers. Operation Rescue evolved from a University assignment, and featured interactive displays by the Queensland Police Service, Australian Volunteer Coast Guard, Queensland Ambulance Service, Energex Community Rescue Helicopter, State Emergency Service, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service and Life Saving Queensland. Other attractions included food vendors, children's rides and a live radio broadcast.



Provide and promote a range of transition and enabling programs for prospective and new students

Getting a Headstart

The Headstart program was established in 2003 with 40 participants. Since then, 441 students from 36 regional schools have successfully completed at least one Headstart course each. Of these students, 65 percent were female, 35 percent were male, and 44 percent were the first in their families to undertake university study.

In 2008, 138 students enrolled in the program, collectively completing 165 courses. A total of 23 scholarships eased the way for those with financial needs or disabilities; and orientation programs each semester familiarised students and parents with all aspects of the University.

Headstart students can access more than 90 USC courses, including 10 at the USC Noosa Centre. The most popular relate to psychology, creative writing, communications, languages, science, computer-based art and design, business and health. Students attend lectures, tutorials and laboratory sessions, and undergo assessment. Completion of two Headstart courses and award of a Queensland Certificate of Education from school guarantees entry to most USC degrees—with academic credit for relevant Headstart completions.

On average, 41 percent of Headstart students subsequently enrol in USC degrees. Generally their academic performance is high, with about nine percent achieving High Distinction grades, 20 percent Distinctions, 27 percent Credits, 28 percent Pass grades and 13 percent Fail grades.

Alternative entry: TPP

Enrolments in the University's Tertiary Preparation Pathway (TPP) have increased steadily since the program launched in second semester 2006 as a way to increase access for students to enter USC undergraduate programs.

New enrolments peaked in first semester this year, with 148 new students bringing total enrolments to 158. This figure grew by 10 percent in second semester when 173 new and continuing students were enrolled in TPP.



On course for a new career ... qualified mechanic, sports coach and scuba diving instructor Robert Watts completed TPP in 2007 to enrol this year for a Bachelor of Science (Sport and Exercise Science) degree, having left school in the UK without taking the A-level tests required for university entry.

Of the 158 TPP enrolments in first semester, 63 percent (99 students) became undergraduate students in the first semester (58 students) or continued with TPP (41).

As in previous years, those students entering undergraduate programs were concentrated in the Faculty of Science, Health and Education (34 percent). The most popular program, with 17 percent, was the Bachelor of Social Science (Psychology), offered by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

To cater for TPP's increasing popularity, for the first time TPP courses were delivered during summer semester and a TPP course was taught off-campus for teenage mothers. Eight mothers from Nambour-based group STEMM (Supporting Teenagers with Education, Mothering and Mentoring) signed up for the program, with a USC tutor taking one class each week in Nambour. Two of the women chose to complete all four TPP courses, with the aim of starting degrees in nursing science and paramedic science in 2009.

The success of the STEMM partnership could lead to TPP courses for other community groups; and in October a public information evening was held in Gympie to gauge interest

A new TPP course was developed for delivery from 2009—An Introduction to Working within the Community, aimed at meeting increased demand for undergraduate social welfare pathways.

While TPP helps domestic students gain entry to USC via QTAC, it also caters for international students lacking academic entry criteria. The University offers an additional International Foundation Pathway (IFP) for students who need to meet English language entry requirements. Further information on TPP is available under Strategic Plan Key Performance Indicator 'Uptake of transition programs by students'.

Enabling study: TEP

The Tertiary Enabling Program (TEP)—a range of optional, non-credit courses—attracted increasing numbers of new students in 2008. More than 500 students enrolled in seven enabling courses, upgrading skills in writing, computer literacy, chemistry, general mathematics, mathematics for physics, statistics and biology.

Review of operations

Learning and teaching

Research findings suggest that students who take the courses achieve higher scores than those who do not. Advances planned for 2009 include:

- increased contact hours for Enabling Mathematics for Physics, in response to a recognised need for more tutorial interaction; and
- an extra weekly tutorial in the intensive Enabling Chemistry, to increase pharmacology content for paramedic science students.

International Foundation Pathway, designed for international students unable to meet USC's English language or academic entry requirements, attracted several enrolments in 2008. It was reconfigured during the year and in 2009 will feature more prominently in promotions as a study pathway.

Associate degrees

In second semester, new associate degrees in arts, business and science added to alternative entry options for undergraduate study. Completion of a two-year program guarantees entry to a full degree program, with credit for completed subjects and eligibility to apply for one of 20 Commonwealth-funded scholarships.

Develop and promote pathways for progression from TAFE/ VET to USC programs, and options for dual TAFE/VET and USC award programs

Articulation pathways are under development in the following areas:

- · Property and asset management
- Sport and exercise
- Nursing
- Hospitality/events

In addition, staff members from both Sunshine Coast Institute of TAFE and the University have been reviewing existing dual awards as well as discussing opportunities for joint business development. Provide appropriate professional development programs and technological support for Teaching and Research staff in order to increase and improve flexible curriculum delivery, including e-learning, within programs

Professional development

Technical staff supporting USC's e-learning environment underwent recognised certification training and now are boosting staff skills generally. Flow-on effects have included advanced training workshops, one-on-one sessions and documentation—all available to staff as part of the University's focus on e-learning.

Other initiatives included:

- a Sessional Staff Development Day workshop delivered by the Office of Learning and Teaching, incorporating tips on using the Blackboard Learning Management System; and
- Foundations of University Teaching for USC staff and nursing clinical facilitators, exploring e-learning and flexible delivery and including the Teaching-Research Nexus.

Technological support

Technology initiatives enhanced levels of IT support for academic staff and a new Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Learning Space advanced and supported e-learning professional development.

An enterprise solution for webcasting lectures was installed in three on-campus lecture theatres, with a further mobile unit available in the University's Multimedia Studio. The system caters for the diverse needs of different academic programs, and the flexibility of the mobile unit has facilitated recording of lectures in other lecture theatres. The ability to record and webcast the University's graduation ceremony provided a solution for those unable to attend.

Outcomes

There was a 25 percent increase in active e-learning courses and use of the Learning Management System this year. While this placed additional demands on the system, service availability improved. The positive effects of efforts begun in 2007 to address the scalability and resilience of the University's e-learning environment in particular, and across all IT systems in general, emerged this year, with improved service performance and stability.



Provide professional development support for teaching and research staff to assist them in building the teaching-research nexus in courses and programs

Teaching-Research nexus

Learning and Teaching Management Committee and Research Management Committee provided advice to the Academic Board on the Teaching-Research Nexus Statement in 2008. This will be progressed in 2009.

USC staff attended the national launch of a website funded by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC): *The teaching-research nexus: a guide for academics and policy-makers in higher education.* This provides resources for implementing the Nexus Statement once it is endorsed. Staff can access the site through the USC Portal.

Performance review

The University's Human Resources (HR) section delivered regular Performance Planning and Review training for staff, and directly supported deans as required. Promotion and Professional Development Program policies and procedures were reviewed and amended to align with the University's latest Strategic Plan.

Australian Learning and Teaching Council: promoting excellence

The University received \$220,000 from the ALTC Promoting Excellence Initiative to facilitate staff participation in the programs and resources of the ALTC. The University's Promoting Excellence Project runs until December 2010 and aims to:

- establish supportive institutional systems facilitating staff engagement with ALTC;
- optimise successful outcomes by helping staff prepare and submit ALTC grant applications; and
- engage proactively with ALTC in ways beyond the means of routine budget allocations.

ALTC Grants received in 2008:

In 2008, Professor Mary Katsikitis was a co-investigator in an ALTC Competitive Grant on 'Strengthening the ALTC exchange through evidence based resource development for the teaching of psychology', submitted through Southern Cross University. The grant is for \$212,983, and the aim of the project is to establish disciplinary networks within Australia designed to advance teaching and learning in higher education by ensuring that the ALTC Exchange will be populated with material that is well focused and of immediate practical value to academics.

Also, Emeritus Professor Graham Davidson was a co-investigator in an ALTC Leadership for Excellence in Learning and Teaching Grant on 'Developing cross-disciplinary leadership capacity for enhancing the professional education of multidisciplinary mental health workers', submitted through Griffith University. The grant is for \$218,925, and the primary aim of the project is to increase engagement and empowerment of mental health educators to lead changes in curriculum design and application that are synergistic with the principles, practices and standards of multidisciplinary mental health service delivery.

Honouring top teachers

A new Wall of Fame in the Library recognises staff honoured nationally as teachers. These include six winners (in three years of awards) of the prestigious ALTC (formerly Carrick) Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning. Joint winners of a \$10,000 award this year are Associate Professor Stephen Lamble, Head of the School of Communication, and Associate Lecturer Gillian Cowden. The award is for creating innovative curricula and research-informed teaching resources designed to boost graduate employment opportunities.

Previous Citation winners are Gayle Mayes and Associate Professor Karen Brooks (2007); and Associate Professor Gary Crew and Dr Maria Raciti (2006).

Heads of School Forums

HR coordinated regular Heads of School Forums during the year to foster discussion of various leadership and management issues.

Monitor, analyse and act on findings from program reviews, formal student and employer surveys and other feedback processes, including satisfaction with teaching and courses

The 2009 edition of the Good Universities Guide gave USC maximum five-star ratings in four categories—staff qualifications, teaching quality, and graduate satisfaction with (a) the overall university experience and (b) generic skills gained at university. USC also scored four stars in each of two more categories—access by equity groups and Indigenous enrolments. Ratings are based on data from the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and results of the Australian Graduate Survey.

LTMC members received and discussed aggregated student feedback on courses each semester; and Committee members received annual reports on the three core courses.

Organise teaching and supervision sessions to sustain high levels of interaction between students and their teachers or supervisors

As a smaller institution, USC provides a personalised student experience. The intention is to maintain this human scale as the University grows; and this year an LTMC working party developed a draft Statement on Human Scale for consideration by the Committee in early 2009.

A student:teacher ratio of 19:32 (including casuals) put USC slightly above the national average of 19:2. This is 2006 data—the latest available, drawn from the DEEWR Higher Education Student, and Higher Education Staff, Collections.

Review of operations

Learning and teaching

Key performance indicators

Graduate satisfaction with educational experience as measured through the Australian Graduate Survey (AGS)

The annual AGS uses three core scales to assess 'graduate satisfaction': Generic Skills; Good Teaching; and the Overall Satisfaction Index. Data in the following table shows the percentage agreement for each of the core scales from 2005 to 2007 for each faculty.

The results are based on USC response rates of: 59 percent in 2005; 69 percent in 2006; 76 percent in 2007; and 66 percent in 2008.*

		2005 ¹	2006²	2007³
Generic Skills Scale (GSS)	Arts and Social Sciences	68%	70%	69%
	Business	69%	70%	68%
	Science, Health and Education	71%	70%	62%
	USC Total	69%	70%	67%
	Target achieved?4	✓	✓	×
Good Teaching Scale (GTS)	Arts and Social Sciences	64%	72%	68%
	Business	54%	54%	49%
	Science, Health and Education	58%	61%	59%
	USC Total	69%	70%	67%
	Target achieved? ⁴	✓	✓	×
Overall Satisfaction Index (OSI)	Arts and Social Sciences	70%	78%	77%
	Business	75%	71%	69%
	Science, Health and Education	73%	67%	65%
	USC Total	73%	73%	70%
	Target achieved?4	✓	✓	×

- 1 Data from the AGS 2005 (2004 Graduates).
- 2 Data from the AGS 2006 (2005 Graduates).
- 3 Data from the AGS 2007 (2006 Graduates).
- 4 Assessment for achievement of the KPI target was based on the results for the USC Total.

*AGS results for 2008 are under analysis and will be available in 2009. The University's Strategic Information and Analysis Unit pursues high response rates for the AGS to maximise representation of the student experience.

USC's graduate satisfaction ratings are compared nationally in the Learning and Teaching Performance Fund. USC's performance for graduate satisfaction in the 2008 LTPF was as follows:

- USC ranks first nationally in the Humanities, Arts and Education Group for all three performance indicators for graduate satisfaction.
- USC ranks first nationally in the Business, Law and Economics Group for two of the three performance indicators for graduate satisfaction and fifth nationally for the third.

- USC's ranking is variable in the Science Computing, Engineering, Architecture and Agriculture Group. However, the University exceeded national averages in all instances (except for overall satisfaction in 2008).
- USC was excluded from 2007 and 2008 assessments in the Health Group due to the small number of graduates included in the data for the assessment of that group.

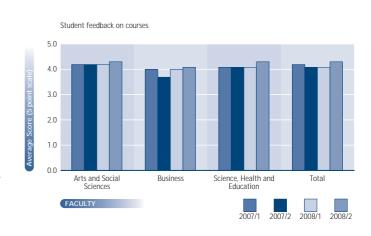
Student feedback on courses (SFC) and teaching (SFT)

The data collection and management of the Student Feedback on Courses (SFC) and the Student Feedback on Teaching (SFT) relocated effective Semester 1, 2008 to the Strategic Information and Analysis Unit (SIAU).

The inaugural SFC exercise was undertaken in second semester 2006 and SFC results were reported from first semester 2007, when a complete dataset was available for each faculty. Since then, targets (of at least an overall average score of four on a five-point scale) have been met.

SFT has been conducted since Semester 1, 2004. Results are reported to individuals, Heads of School and Deans. A method of reporting aggregated SFT results is under consideration.

In 2008, the University commenced investigation into the operations and analysis of student feedback on courses and teaching. The Learning and Teaching Management Committee commissioned a working party to develop a set of recommendations regarding academics' requirements of an SFT/SFC system that may contribute to the future direction of the SFT and SFC instruments. The Strategic Information and Analysis Unit is currently exploring options for the introduction of a new electronic student feedback system and further updating and developing a comprehensive suite of analytical reports.



Number and proportion of students undertaking work-integrated learning (WIL)

This year, 119 regional professions, businesses and industries provided WIL placements. Until now, data has been managed at faculty level and not aggregated University-wide. However, this year a system for managing and recording WIL activities was piloted successfully with the areas of education and nursing and will apply more widely in 2009. A new Career Placement Database will then boost capacity to track placement data and histories across all operational areas.

Uptake of transition programs by students

The Tertiary Preparation Pathway (TPP) was launched in second semester 2006 to provide alternative entry to undergraduate study. Enrolments have increased steadily, in line with general student growth. As might be expected, first semester intakes remain higher than second.



The year 2009

- The Learning and Teaching Management Committee will pursue strategic priorities in embedding the Learning and Teaching Plan.
- Seventeen new academic programs will be delivered and some superseded programs will be discontinued.
- New academic staff will benefit from targeted professional development resources and induction.
- Academic staff will have access to a suite of professional development opportunities devised by the Learning and Teaching Management Committee, including a strong focus on program leadership and curriculum design.
- New postgraduate programs will include the innovative Executive MBA. Delivered as intensive weekend classes once a month for two years, it will be open only to candidates with substantial work experience.
- The Vice-Chancellor's Learning and Teaching Colloquium will again recognise the institutional importance of outstanding learning and teaching practice.
- Two major projects will be completed: the Optimisation Project aimed at strengthening university-community connections in the Sunshine Coast and Wide Bay-Burnett regions (collaboration with USQ); and the Engineering Project, aimed at turning out workplace-ready graduates.
- The University will pursue plans for off-campus TPP courses following a successful 2007 program for teenage mothers in Nambour. Two of eight women enrolled qualified for 2009 entry to degrees in nursing science and paramedic science.
- A new approach to graduate attributes to be implemented, following consultation in 2008.