

Postgraduate Certificate  
in Antarctic Studies



# Experience.



# Experience living and working in Antarctica

The Postgraduate Certificate in Antarctic Studies (PCAS) is a fifteen-week in-depth, multi-disciplinary programme of study that critically examines contemporary scientific, environmental, social and political debates focussed on Antarctica and the Southern Ocean.

Jointly developed by the University of Canterbury and Antarctica New Zealand, this unique summer programme is the only programme in the world to take students to experience life in the Antarctic – at Scott Base, New Zealand's station on Ross Island and at a field campsite on the Ross Ice Shelf.

## Programme components

Over thirty New Zealand and international Antarctic experts teach into this programme. Interactive, multi-disciplinary lectures, workshops and student-led mini-symposia form the heart of the Christchurch-based component of PCAS, which is complemented by fieldtrips to Antarctic venues in Christchurch. In preparation for the Antarctic fieldtrip, a first-aid course is incorporated into the programme as well as a two-day excursion to the Canterbury high country. Students are asked to undertake a critical literature review and syndicate group work on major scientific, environmental, socio-cultural, political or legal challenges facing Antarctica and the Southern Ocean.

## Antarctic fieldwork

The students will spend approximately ten days in Antarctica, undertaking a mix of analytical and interpretive field projects and environmental monitoring in the vicinity of Scott Base. Antarctic field training and the experience of living and working in a polar environment are integral components of PCAS.

## Supervised Antarctic research project

A major individual research project will be undertaken by each student on an area of interest to the student related to Antarctica and the Southern Ocean. Topics can range from current issues in the natural sciences to social science topics, historical analyses or an engagement with Antarctic literature or arts.

## Entry requirements and fees

Participants will be selected from a range of backgrounds, including science, arts, humanities, law, policy, commerce, engineering, social sciences and technology. To be eligible participants need an approved degree and need to be found fit to visit Antarctica based on the medical examination prescribed by Antarctica New Zealand.

### Key Dates (approximate)

|           |                                  |
|-----------|----------------------------------|
| 1 Aug     | Applications close               |
| 31 Aug    | Candidates advised               |
| Mid-Sep   | Deadline for paying deposit      |
| Early Oct | Application to enrol begins      |
| Mid-Nov   | Course commences in Christchurch |
| Dec-Jan   | Antarctic fieldtrip (dates vary) |
| Late Jan  | Lectures end                     |
| Mid-Feb   | Final reports submitted          |
| 1 Apr     | Results available                |

Understanding Antarctica has never been more important than now. The effects of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean on global sea level, changing weather patterns and carbon drawdown are now recognised as crucial to all our futures, whilst its system of international governance and its unearthly beauty are of importance in their own right. PCAS is unique in providing expert introductions

to a complex range of Antarctic science, politics and humanities through lectures and projects. Underpinning this is the actual experience of living and working on the ice sheet itself, a never to be forgotten adventure. As a primer for those interested in the seventh continent it is without parallel.

**Prof David Walton, British Antarctic Survey**



# Testaments from Antarctic experts

The PCAS programme provides a fantastic opportunity to experience hands-on fieldwork in Antarctica, including glaciology, geology and biology, together with visits to historic polar huts. This is an amazing combination for any first-time student in Antarctica.

## **Prof Julian Dowdeswell**

PCAS is unique in providing such a broad introduction to Antarctic science and politics, and in the way it allows students to experience the reality of conducting science on the continent.

## **Prof Mike Bentley, Durham University**

Gateway Antarctica's PCAS delivers an intimate, intellectually rewarding and exciting experience to graduates who choose to indulge their Antarctic passions. Travelling to the Ross Ice Shelf and camping under volcanic Mt Erebus – gently venting into an endless blue sky – will change you forever!

## **Dr Julia Jabour, University of Tasmania**

Attending high level political and policy conferences on the Antarctic and Arctic, I have been struck by how many PCAS graduates I now encounter at these, as participants, journalists or organisers. The early hope that PCAS would also equip its students to go on into rewarding careers in governance, management, journalism and commerce in the polar regions, as well as into scientific research and teaching, seems to have been realised.

## **Dr Alan D. Hemmings, Adjunct Associate Professor at Gateway Antarctica**

Since its establishment in 1873 the University of Canterbury has forged an international reputation for the quality of its teaching and research. In 1999, the University established "Gateway Antarctica" a research centre focussing the efforts of over 25 University staff members that contribute to Antarctic-related teaching and research. Gateway Antarctica has developed a unique portfolio of Antarctic courses that includes the Postgraduate Certificate in Antarctic Studies and has become one of the leading providers of Antarctic education in the world.

The University of Canterbury has had a long and distinguished involvement in Antarctic research and scholarship, leading the way in developing both interdisciplinary and disciplinary approaches to teaching. This programme makes a significant contribution to the future of our thinking about the contemporary issues facing Antarctica and the Southern Ocean.

## **Dr Rod Carr, Vice Chancellor, University of Canterbury**

### **For further information:**

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**More details on programme dates and fees are available on the programme website:**

[www.anta.canterbury.ac.nz/courses/gcas/index.shtml](http://www.anta.canterbury.ac.nz/courses/gcas/index.shtml)