Welcome to 2016

Welcome to the latest edition of the USC Gympie Student newsletter, Quest, which will bring you up to date with all the news and services available for students in Semester one, 2016.

And what an eventful year 2015 has been here at USC Gympie.

2015 has seen the introduction of a suite of new courses as well as an increase in student numbers by more than 60 percent compared to 2014 enrolment figures.

We are pleased to now offer first year courses for degrees in Civil and Mechanical Engineering as well as Science and a full Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood) degree program.

In regional news, late last year USC announced it would be acquiring the University of Southern Queensland’s Fraser Coast Campus, located in Hervey Bay.

This is great news for our regional and rural students who would like an alternative location to pursue their studies.

It also further strengthens USC’s presence and breadth of offering in the Fraser Coast and Gympie regions.

On top of this, USC was also selected to establish a university campus in Petrie, Brisbane, which is expected to grow to become as big as the Sippy Downs campus within the next ten years.

On another happy note, we will be hosting our very first graduation recognition ceremony this year for our first wave of graduates.

I’d like to personally congratulate these students, their graduation represents a major milestone for USC Gympie.

I’m very proud to be introducing such a high calibre group of graduates to the local community.

USC Gympie is here to serve the regional community, so please help spread the word that all are welcome and our friendly reception staff are always happy to discuss information about our wide range of study options.

Thank you for your support of USC in 2015, and I look forward to another exciting year in 2016.

Welcome back everyone and from myself and the USC Gympie team we hope you have a great semester.

Graham Young (Director, Northern Campuses)

Introducing USC Gympie’s Student IT Support Officer

If it’s an IT woe you have, than look no further than the newly appointed USC Gympie Student IT Support Officer, Gareth Francis.

The Bachelor of Business student, first started at USC Gympie as a Tertiary Preparation Pathway (TPP) student.

The Gympie resident said he decided to try TPP initially because he wanted to have a formal qualification in order to secure a stable career to support his family.

“At first it was daunting. I finished high school at James Nash State High School 12 years ago,” he said.

“I was worried I would not be able to keep up with the workload and I wouldn’t be able to provide the quality and style of material needed for university standard assessments.

“However TPP provided that and more, it really prepared me for university and gave me the confidence and support to fulfil my potential.”

This confidence and experience now means Gareth can assist other students who are starting studies for the first time and are unsure how to navigate and overcome IT hurdles.

“It has always been an interest of mine and prior to this role, I worked with the IT department at the Sippy Downs Campus to help install IT equipment in the new Engineering Building,” Gareth said.

“When the idea of a Gympie IT support person was raised, I jumped at the chance to expand my skills and work closer to home.

“What I enjoy about working at USC Gympie is that they listen to their student feedback.

“I know what a frustrating experience it can be to be bogged down in IT issues and sometimes a bit of friendly face to face tech support can be all that’s needed to fix any issues and overcome future problems.”

Gareth can be found at the IT helpdesk located near the student kitchen during semester.

If he is not around, don’t worry you can also use the virtual IT Helpdesk or ask our Reception staff for assistance.
Raise your voice

When it comes to having a voice, the USC Gympie Student Liaison Group can be likened to a portable microphone, allowing students to be heard on a range of issues.

The group, which consists of a range of USC Gympie students from varying disciplines focuses on improving the student experience. Kym McManus, who is studying a Bachelor of Nursing Science, is one of several students who are part of the group and said it’s been a rewarding responsibility to be able to provide a voice for other students.

“The SLG has introduced some very positive changes to student life at USC Gympie in the time it has been running, a highlight of which includes the installation of outside shade sails on campus,” she said.

Kym said that being part of the SLG had in turn generated positive benefits for herself as well.

“I’m now a lot more aware of what is going on at USC Gympie and also what can be done to help other students and ensure their opinions are put forward,” Kym said.

“There is no such thing as a stupid question and I’d encourage all students to approach someone to share feedback, whether it is positive or negative.

“All feedback is welcome and at the end of the day helps us work with the administration to ensure the student experience continues to improve at USC Gympie.”

Lauren Kaloczy, who is currently studying a Bachelor of Business Management at USC Gympie said some of the highlights of 2016 has been the popularity of the student lunches and social opportunities.

“The opportunity to meet other students in a relaxed setting with a feast of gourmet food, activities and live music has been very popular,” she said.

“The student lunches have also been a great setting to receive feedback on services and facilities for students.

“I’m also proud to have seen the introduction of water coolers and outdoor tables at USC Gympie.”

The current SLG members are Anita Dakin, Kym McManus, Lauren Kaloczy, Michelle Walker and Roger Marington. Keep an eye out for them around campus during the semester.

Steps to a dream career

Stepping into the world of tertiary education can be daunting for some but for Bachelor of Education USC Gympie student Matilda Radford, it’s the ticket to a dream career.

Matilda, who just completed her first year of studies, said while it can be overwhelming attending university for the first time, there are a few tips which can make the process a positive one.

“Some of the best advice I can offer students who are starting out for the first time is to make sure you have a good support network, be organised and follow a good time management plan,” she said.

“I know it can be scary but just keep everything in perspective and know that this is the first step in a series of many to get you where you want to be.”

Matilda completed her Tertiary Preparation Pathway studies during the summer session prior to starting university and said it helped her prepare for the expectations and workload of university and student life.

“One of the best things about studying at USC Gympie is that it is a smaller campus, there are smaller classes and as a result you get more time with lecturers and tutors, which has been highly beneficial for my learning.

“If you are faced with something you are unsure about, ask yourself if it will affect your university studies and responsibilities and if there is a chance it will, then avoid it.

“Always remember to back yourself, endorse your own abilities and never be afraid to make mistakes or ask questions” she said.
Crossing over to the Uni side

The transition from everyday citizen to superhero student on the path to a brilliant career can often be a daunting one.

Sometimes all you need is a helping hand and the Student Counsellor and Academic Skills Adviser at USC Gympie can offer this and more.

The Director, Northern Campuses Graham Young said Student Wellbeing will be offering a range of study skills workshop courses at USC Gympie throughout the semester including sessions on adjusting to university, time management and staying focused.

“Some of the biggest issues we see students struggling with areas such as time management, task analysis, essay structure and referencing,” he said.

“As students prepare for semester 1 I would suggest that it’s never too early to start working on a task.”

Whether you are looking for careers advice or some coping strategies and just need someone to talk to about life in general our USC Gympie Student Counsellor, Rebekah Fraser is here to help. She is on Gympie Campus each Thursday and appointments can be booked through USC Gympie Reception.

An Academic Skills Advisor will be on campus one day a week, alternatively you can seek email guidance on your assessments any day of the week.

For more information on the support available at USC Gympie please visit: www.usc.edu.au/gympiesupport

Choose your own adventure...

Choosing a career and a matching study path can be a juggling act for many students, but it doesn’t have to be.

USC Gympie campus students now have access to the My Brilliant Career Profiler and Career Directory on the USC website.

The Career Directory helps students to find career opportunities based on their degree program, providing information on how degrees best marry up with various sectors and jobs.

The My Brilliant Career Profile is an interactive, online profile generator which helps students to identify their personality strengths and the best corresponding study tactics and careers.

Both webpages are available on the general USC website, providing ongoing career support for new, existing and prospective USC students.

The Director, Northern Campuses Mr Graham Young said there are a wide range of student support services for students who are unsure about their career path and degree choice.

“The My Brilliant Career Profiler and Career Directory are two very important portals for students looking for answers to their career and study related queries,” Mr Young said.

“The most important thing is to never be afraid to ask questions.

“The staff at USC Gympie are here to help and support students so they experience a positive tertiary education experience.”

Existing and graduating students have provided some tips for students who are having difficulty choosing a matching study and career path:

• Don’t choose a degree or career based on maximum income
• Think about what makes you happy, excited and inspired
• Think how you can turn your passion or what you like into a paid career
• Don’t worry about the big picture too much, focus on what you like and take steps from there
• Think about the career you are studying for during tough times, each week and semester of study brings you a step closer
• Network and talk to people in your chosen field about everything you can think of and try and get work experience early on in studies so you can get a taste of what your career could be like
• Talk to lecturers and tutors in your field of interest, they’ve been where you are and can share a lot of insight for the journey to a successful career.

Embrace student life

A few students who have made it through the other side of their first year at university have provided some tips below to help newcomers make the most of their studies at USC Gympie.

• Go to the student lunches – seriously, it’s a free lunch and you get to talk to others and find out that you are all in the same boat
• Go to as many academic skills and workshop sessions as you can
• Be prepared before each tutorial and class – i.e. do the readings and tutorial prep work
• Keep track of the weekly topics, it will make it easier to keep track of items you don’t understand and allow time to ask for clarification
• Talk to other students, lecturers and tutors – they won’t bite and they are there to help
• Don’t waste time – use it efficiently and don’t fall into the deadline trap of leaving until the last minute. It sucks the joy out of university life, not to mention it’s stressful!
• If you are struggling with assessments don’t be afraid to raise your concerns, ask for an extension or seek support
Start the New Year with new study options

It seems fitting that with the start of a new year, there is a new suite of study offerings at USC Gympie in 2016.

Students will now have the opportunity to study courses from the Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood), Bachelor of Engineering (Mechanical and Civil) and Bachelor of Science degrees.

The Director, Northern Campuses Graham Young said while there are some restrictions with the new offerings, 2016 marks the next step in an era of growth for the campus.

"These new study options cater to a wider range of prospective students who want to begin their journey to a dream career," Mr Young said.

"In 2016 only first year courses will be offered for these programs and are expected to be popular with students.

"For those interested in careers in these sectors, it provides them with the entry to their chosen study direction.

"Every year this campus is continuing to grow and develop.

"Ultimately it will result in more students being able to access high-quality, face-to-face teaching close to home."

2016 also marks the first wave of USC Gympie graduates who started and completed their degrees at the university campus.

Getting IT right

Always seem to start the new semester with new IT hassles? Take a deep breath, slow down and read through some IT insights and tips from the experts at USC Gympie to make sure your start to the year is as smooth as you want it to be.

WIFI Connecting to the USC Gympie Building WiFi can be completed by visiting wireless.usc.edu.au on your device and following the set up instructions. If you require technical assistance with connecting you can get assistance from Gareth or use the virtual IT helpdesk located in student common area on the ground floor.

Student Printing Students have access to an A4 black, white and colour printer, photocopier and scanner in the USC Gympie Building. However, in order to use these you need to add student printing credit to your account using a Master/Visa card. Visit www.usc.edu.au and then go to the log-in section and select online payments. For larger print jobs you can order these online by going to student printing online under the log-in section.

Student IT assistance Gareth Francis will be on campus 3 days a week during Semester to provide Student IT Support, check the sign at the virtual IT helpdesk in the student common area for his availability. If he is not around jump onto the virtual IT helpdesk and speak to someone in IT down at Sippy Downs. You can also use the telephone located amongst the three student PCs in this area to call the Student IT Helpdesk on ext: 4455.

Still stuck? Come and see one of our staff at Reception and we’ll do our best to help.

Book it in

Make 2016 work for you this semester by attending some student support events and workshops designed to help students stay on track and focused in their studies.

Thursday 18 February – Orientation Day
Get acquainted with all the services, facilities, staff and students prior to jumping into study. It's a great way to meet and talk to students and staff in your line of study and to get prepared for the first week of university.

Monday 22 February to Friday 26 February

Orientation Week at Sippy Downs
Studying across both campuses? Or keen to check out what's on? Visit usc.edu.au/orientation for all the info you need on a jam packed week of workshops and fun activities.

Keen to get engaged but want to stick around Gympie? There will be a range of pre-semester workshops happening on campus here as well. Visit usc.edu.au/gympie for full details.

Thursday 10 March Student Workshop
– Adjusting to Uni
Receive some tips and guidance on how best to settle into university studies, especially if this is your first time studying after an extended break.

Wednesday 16 March – Student Lunch (FREE)
Did someone say free lunch? What's not to love? Student lunches are a great opportunity to meet other students, relax and enjoy some good food.

Friday 7 April – Student Workshop
– Time Management
Ever feel like time is slipping away and you never seem to make the most of it when it comes to studies? Minimise your stress by learning how to manage your assessment and exam deadlines effectively.

Wednesday 11 May – Student Lunch (FREE)
Take a break from the study rat race and come along and enjoy a free lunch. It's the ideal setting to swap study and stress management tips with other students and most importantly enjoy some good food.

Thursday 12 May - Student Workshop
– Staying Focused
Having trouble keeping focused on one task at a time and finding yourself feeling stressed and overwhelmed? This workshop will provide some much needed insight and tips on how best to focus on priority tasks in order to get ahead.

For more information on event times and details of other events happening at USC Gympie visit our Website www.usc.edu.au/gympie or Facebook page www.facebook.com/USCGympie for full details.

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