

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT FOR 2020 TO THE UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO CHAPLAINCY COMMITTEE AGM MARCH 2021

1. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND FUNCTIONING 2021

Some changes occurred for in the committee membership for 2021. Dr. Paul Flanagan (lecturer in the Education Division) agreed to come onto the committee for 2021 as the new lay Catholic representative to replace Peter Kamp (previous chairperson) in this role. Rev. Stephen Bright continued as chairman for 2021.

As noted in the minutes of the 8 December 2020 meeting, the Diocese of Waikato and Taranaki have agreed to a proposal that the work that has been done by Joan Joyce will be taken over by Jill Schumacher. That office is also taking on this position for the Wintec Ecumenical Chaplaincy Trust Board. Jill has been competent and efficient in the tasks related to this role and that the additional workload of the Diocesan Office has proved to be manageable. My thanks to Jill for her willingness to take up the additional work this role has required.

Please note that COVID meeting restrictions in 2021 resulted in some meetings being convened by Zoom or being postponed to enable FTF meetings to be held. My thanks to committee members for their flexibility in this regard.

A new approach was tried with student representation for the 2021 meetings, with students from different student Christian organisations being invited to each meeting and reporting on their own experience of Christian life on campus as well as offering an overview of what each particular organisation was doing. This was a valuable addition to the meetings and gave the chaplaincy committee a better understanding of 'grass roots' Christian activity on campus and some insights into the pressures on individual Christians in the university environment. We were also able to pray for and encourage these students as a committee.

Action: Continue to arrange student representation on this model for student representation at the meetings of Chaplaincy Committee meetings for 2022

2. REPORTS & 'UNIVERSITY 'STATE OF PLAY'

The reports from the respective chaplains have been distributed and will be discussed as part of this AGM.

The 'state of play' for the university at the end of 2021 is relatively positive. Firstly, the deficit for the university for 2021 was projected at \$7m. This was less than anticipated because of a substantial increase in enrolments by domestic students – a 9.7% increase on March 2020. New to degree student enrolments has grown by 27.4% and there has been a 19.8% increase in students who have transferred from other institutions. The continuing restrictions on enrolling international students are the main factor in the projected deficit. 2022 will allow for limited international student enrolment with 5,000 places allocated to all tertiary institutions across New Zealand. For the University of Waikato, this will mean 159 international students will be able to enrol at Waikato – so not significant in terms of

balancing the budget. Domestic enrolments for some divisions are down on 2021. This will mean further budget squeezes over the 2022 period, although there is no indication at the moment of staff redundancies per se.

Anecdotally, pressure on staff remains high. This is partly because of a cap on appointments in some parts of the university because of the deficit budget for this year 2022. Another factor creating stress at the start of 2022 has been the COVID surge coinciding with the start of Trimester A, giving rise to a host of uncertainties, changes in course delivery modes, changed timetables for FTF classes and setting of online instead of FTF assessments for Trimester A. Currently nearly 1,000 students are isolating either because they are household close contacts or they are COVID positive. This has also mandated the continuing necessity of FLEXI mode courses, where the requirement is for students to be able to access 'live' tutorials or lectures via Zoom and participate in these **at the same time** as the face-to-face class is being facilitated. This is a very demanding teaching mode and not one that most staff have any experience of.

3. FUNDING OF THE ECUMENICAL CHAPLAINCY

As noted in the draft budget for 2022 this is a deficit budget of over \$10,000. This deficit will need to be funded from the DV Bryant Trust grant received in 2019. Concern about this deficit has been referred to this AGM for discussion and will be discussed as part of the finance report.

Action: discuss budget as part of financial report and review an action plan for addressing this shortfall during 2022

4. VOLUNTEER CHAPLAINS

Good progress was made during 2021 on developing the documentation and processes for a Volunteer Chaplains programme. Currently, Waikato is the only university in New Zealand that doesn't have an active volunteer chaplains programme.

Action: approve volunteer chaplain programme as soon as documentation is available

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to give thanks on behalf of the Chaplaincy Committee to Br Andrew McKean and Fr Juan-Pedro for their service and commitment to the University community during the difficult and disruptive past year in their respective roles as Ecumenical Chaplain and Roman Catholic Chaplain.

Finally, I also wish to express my appreciation to all committee members for their contributions and presence and good input during the past year.

Stephen Bright
Chairperson
22 March 2022