

INTRODUCING THE NEW BACHELOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING

Kelly Fisher*

January 1st 2009 will mark the beginning of Lincoln University's new planning degree. Currently Lincoln University offers a Bachelor of Environmental Management (BEM), which will eventually be completely replaced by the new Bachelor of Environmental Management and Planning (BEMP). The new degree which will comprise of 14 core courses, will allow students the flexibility of selecting the remaining 10 courses needed to complete their degree. Policy and planning, which had previously been an optional major with the BEM, will evolve to become an ingrained component of the new BEMP.

Students who are currently enrolled for a BEM are in the fortunate position of being able to decide whether to complete their original degree or transfer to the new degree. Changes to the structure of the degree will see some subjects deleted and others replaced, aimed to meet the ever changing demands of the profession. Compulsory majors have been removed from the new degree, and an increased emphasis on planning has been applied to the core courses.

The BEMP allows a great deal of academic flexibility. Students are able to complete a double degree, a double major or attach a variety of minors to their degree. This is accomplished while also ensuring that the planning core of the discipline is sufficiently catered for. The BEMP allows students to study the integrated field of environmental management and planning, and also provides a sound basis for postgraduate research degrees in the same area. For students who wish to become professional planning accredited, Lincoln University's BEMP offers one of the best pathways in the country. The BEMP allows students to pursue the opportunity to become eligible for full New Zealand Planning Institute (NZPI) membership.

This accreditation process can be completed in seven years from enrolment. Lincoln University students who wish to become fully accredited NZPI members need to complete the three year BEMP with a minor in professional planning, as well as at least



one year of post graduate study including prescribed papers. The professional planning minor is made up of five courses. It is important to note that Lincoln University also requires students to pass at least two second year science courses such as geomorphology or ecology. It is believed that this science competence is essential for resource and environmental planning. Once the four years of study has been successfully completed, students are required to undertake three years work experience before becoming eligible for full membership.

Students who choose to remain enrolled in the original BEM will need to complete a major in policy and planning as well as an additional year of postgraduate study with prescribed papers to gain accreditation.

Lincoln University is located in semi-rural Canterbury and the new planning degree will have a strong emphasis on integrated environmental management and sustainable development. The new degree is built on a range of disciplines, and aims to produce graduates who can think critically, research, analyse and report within each particular disciplinary context. Lincoln University has recognised an opportunity for change and is leading the way to ensure those graduating do so with a relevant and desirable qualification.

*Kelly Fisher completed the first year of a Bachelor in Environmental Management at Lincoln University in 2008