



## INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES TO-DATE



CAFDP scholar on field research



Accounting software class



SPCE graduation

*A commitment to regional development lies at the heart of the University of Central Asia endeavour. The approach to launching this new university has been strategic: Beginning from bottom-up by meeting educational needs of local populations through delivery of market-relevant training programmes and top-down with the promotion of research initiatives to analyze and address complex problems, rapidly making UCA a regional knowledge hub. These existing programmes help to launch the core business of UCA: internationally recognized undergraduate and graduate degree programmes positioning UCA as a leading comprehensive, high-quality regional university providing the full range of academic, research, and extension products.*

### School of Professional and Continuing Education (SPCE)

Since 2006, SPCE has delivered a broad range of short-cycle non-degree training and certificate programs to improve the skills of the local populations, increasing employability and ensuring a stronger workforce in different sectors. Significant investments in the development of SPCE include construction or renovation of learning centers in the heart of each host city. These “town campuses” have required an average investment of USD 2 million per site, as well as the development of curriculum and learning resources, along the training of certified instructors.

Noteworthy achievements of SPCE include:

- Close relationships built with government, civil society, and local enterprises to keep training programmes responsive to market needs.
- SPCE facilities operate in 7 locations in the three host countries, and a project office in Afghanistan.
- Over 43,500 SPCE learners in professional and vocational programmes since 2006. In 2011, there were 12,495 SPCE learners and cost recovery was up to 51 percent.
- Through SPCE, UCA has developed and published 180 textbooks to-date.
- SPCE is 100-percent staffed and managed by Central Asians.
- SPCE courses span 30 different areas including entrepreneurship, tourism, accounting, English, IT, journalism, local government and five vocational trades.
- Graduates have already established 222 local businesses including 5 construction companies.
- Course graduates demonstrate higher levels of employment than the general local population. For example the employment of Afghan learners increased from 34 to 62 per cent after the completion of SPCE training programmes.
- Village outreach programmes including English, mathematics and IT- in- the-Villages improve competitiveness of rural youth.
- SPCE’s model curriculum in IT has been adopted by schools in three countries.
- In 2011, SPCE trained 300 civil servants and 15 parliamentarians.

### Aga Khan Humanities Project (AKHP)

AKHP was established in 1997 to develop and implement innovative course content for integrated humanities using modern teaching methods for universities and schools across Central Asia. In partnership with local and foreign university instructors, eight thematic courses with supporting textbooks have been developed in Russian and English. The ninth text book is now in production. The curriculum explores issues facing the individual and society, aimed at fostering critical thinking, tolerance, appreciation of cultures and diversity, and understanding of modern market societies. Key achievements include:

- AKHP engages Central Asia’s largest network of university faculty in collaborative curriculum development and student-centered pedagogy
- Regular trainings held since 2006 provide UCA with ready-built network of Central Asian scholars with experience in developing critical thinking skills of undergraduate students.
- AKHP learning materials and instruction methods provide the foundation for UCA’s undergraduate core curriculum.
- Current AKHP partnerships include 38 Central Asian state universities and colleges,
- Over 600 regional faculty have been trained since 2006 including master trainers
- In 2011, 172 faculty were using the curriculum materials reaching 6,000 students in local universities.

### Early Research Initiatives

UCA aims to become the leading research university in the Central Asia region by supporting the social, scientific, and humanistic exploration necessary to ensure findings valuable to regional development. To this end, UCA has already launched two research institutes, the Mountain Societies Research Center (MSRC) and the Institute for Public Policy and Administration (IPPA) growing the necessary research staff and defining an ambitious research agenda. By engaging international and central Asian researchers, university partners, and external funded projects, UCA is building resources to contextualize



Cross Border programme with Afghanistan



Cultural heritage



Vocational education

its undergraduate and graduate curriculum, build future faculty, generate sustainable research activities and promote economic development through applied research. A Knowledge Management Unit at UCA is using cutting-edge and cost-effective technologies to help establish UCA as a knowledge hub on Central Asian research and development

### Mountain Societies Research Centre (MSRC)

The goal of MSRC is to support and enhance the resilience and quality of life of mountain societies through sound research on the sustainable development and management of their physical, social, economic and cultural assets. Thematic areas of research include: environmental change and natural resource management, energy, hazards and risks, mountain economies, health and cultural heritage. Key achievements to-date include:

- In 2011, of a total of 38 publications and 40 presentations from UCA's Research Fellows, almost half were produced under the auspices of MSRC.
- MSRC supports publication of original research on cultural heritage by local scholars. In 2011, publications included a multi-volume study on musical arts of the Pamir region of Tajikistan, a two-volume study of the melodies of the komuz - a Kyrgyz national instrument, and a publication on the archaeological monuments of the Tien Shan mountain range. .
- MSRC hosts the Central Asian Hub of the Mountain Partnership/Mountain Forum, and serves as the regional office of the Swiss-Funded National Centre for Competence in North-South Research in Central Asia.
- MSRC coordinated the compilation of a report on assessing sustainable mountain development in Central Asia in preparation for the Rio Earth Summit in 2012.

### Institute of Public Policy and Administration (IPPA)

As part of the Graduate School of Development, IPPA will function at first as a policy centre and later it will support delivery of UCA's master's programmes. With an initial thematic focus on issues

of regional cooperation, the Institute is engaging stakeholders, partners and experts in a wide-ranging set of initiatives covering policy-oriented research, professional development and dissemination activities. Key indicators include:

- Supported by a C\$2.5 million grant from Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, promote economic cooperation growth in Central Asia and Afghanistan
- Engages researchers from across Central Asia, as well as Russia and China. Some 18 original papers will be written and disseminated to stakeholders in 2012.
- Designing and delivering professional development courses on trade policy and regional trade arrangements for 60 civil servants from Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Afghanistan.

### Central Asian Faculty Development Programme (CAFDP)

The identification and development of talented Central Asian scholars is central to UCA's goal of building a world-class university staffed predominantly by Central Asian faculty. CAFDP recruits students through an open competitive process to pursue doctoral studies at top universities worldwide. Upon completion, fellows will provide several years of service as UCA faculty, conducting research and teaching. CAFDP fellows are fully-funded for their studies and supported in their field research in Central Asia.

- Since 2008, 33 Central Asians have enrolled in pre-doctoral or doctoral studies at 13 different institutions including University of Cambridge, University of Exeter, National University of Singapore - Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, Carleton University, University of Tubingen, Technical University of Freiberg, Humboldt University, University of Bern, Cornell University, and Asian Institute of Technology.
- Graduates will return to Central Asia starting in 2012 and will be engaged in the research activities at UCA or partner institutions and will help to develop UCA's undergraduate course content.

### Partners

Since inception UCA has received a number of grants (over \$9 million) from international donor agencies, such as:

- United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- the World Bank
- Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), Canada
- Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway
- Swiss Agency for Development
- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (UN)
- the Christensen Fund and others.

Its proven track record ensures effective compliance with the requirements of various multi/bi-lateral donors and international donor agencies.