A UCL-commissioned provisional study by architects Terry Farrell and Partners promises to turn the area around the UCL campus into a culturally vibrant university precinct. Farrell and Partners, one of the world’s leading architectural practices, has drawn up initial plans which have, in turn, provided students from the UCL Bartlett School of Planning with the ideal model for incorporating the latest developments in planning and regeneration.

The Farrell and Partners plan would create a variety of linked places from Fitzrovia in the west to Clerkenwell in the east and from King’s Cross and Euston in the north to St Giles Circus and Covent Garden in the south. As a result the UCL community could navigate easily on foot between UCL sites and enjoy relaxing, landscaped spaces which would include lighting and art by international designers and artists. The scheme emphasises fully pedestrianised areas and new crossings.

Central to the plan is a gateway to UCL and the Wellcome Institute on Gordon Street, giving both institutions a presence on Euston Road. From here, people would be able to walk unimpeded to Covent Garden via Gordon Square, Russell Square and the British Museum, or walk down Malet Street, which would act as a lively central spine to the university quarter, with cafés, markets and festivals.

The UCL Bartlett students devoted much of their 2004/2005 session to specialised masterclasses aimed at producing imaginative and well-grounded proposals for Bloomsbury’s regeneration, to put UCL at the heart of the Bloomsbury quarter.

The UCL Bartlett projects encompassed issues such as urban design, property development, regeneration and transport morphology. Student Carlos Jimenez (Urban Planning, Design & Management) explored the relationship between the UCL campus and its surroundings in his ‘UCL Centrepoint’ study. Carlos proposed using textured paths designed by students of the UCL Slade School of Fine Art and light projections across departmental buildings, as aids to pedestrians navigating their way across the campus.

The ‘Green Spine Project’, undertaken by students Chidi Akiti, Winnie Ip and George Man (Urban Planning, Design & Management) consisted of improvements to three underutilised public spaces in Bloomsbury: the Friends House Garden, Tavistock Square and Torrington Square, which run through the UCL campus from Euston Station to the British Museum. Each space was developed around the concept of a particular user group and atmosphere to provide, respectively, a serene space, a space for all and a students’ square.

Students Nicola Theron, Arabi Iqbal, Saranta Savannananda and Christian Germadnik (MSc Urban Regeneration) tackled the Grade II listed Brunswick Centre, a low-rise high-density housing block built between 1967 and 1972. While the centre is currently the subject of a refurbishment proposal, the students believe a more holistic approach is needed rather than the more overtly commercial direction the developers want to take. So instead of redeveloping just to maximise rental potential, the students have proposed using the Brunswick Centre to enhance the social and economic lives of those that live in and around it by providing a community centre, museum, lifelong learning centre and a health centre.
JUST FOR YOU

Exclusive new alumni benefits

UCL alumni have access to an exclusive set of benefits and services, recently enhanced by a range of new offerings.

Chatham House, home of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, now offers UCL alumni discounted membership. Members will be able to attend events with speakers such as President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan, read about the real issues behind the G8 summit and keep up-to-date with forthcoming members’ events, all while enjoying savings of up to £50 on membership.

The UCL Bloomsbury theatre attracts some of the biggest names in comedy, drama and music. Now you can be the first to see these top shows by becoming a patron member. For a discounted price of £54 per year, UCL alumni will receive numerous benefits, including discounts and priority bookings on shows.

Alumni are eligible for a 35 per cent discount on subscription to a new media service from UCL’s partner Science|Business, delivering exclusive coverage of deals, dealmakers, opportunities and trends in the scientific marketplace. Across disciplines, across borders, Science|Business connects you with the world’s leading scientific institutions and technology businesses. It is produced by some of the top science and business editors in Europe, and will keep you ahead of your competitors in the race to get ideas from the lab to the market.

Online benefits have also been extended and improved, including a relaunched alumni website, an email for life service and regular e-newsletters – to find out more, see page 34.

These new benefits are in addition to existing opportunities, including free access to UCL Union bars, a free reference ticket for the UCL Library, discounted membership of UCL Union Bloomsbury Fitness, discounted courses at the UCL Language Centre, membership of alumni special-interest groups, sports groups and regional groups and, of course, the new-look ‘UCL People’ magazine.

To find out more, visit ‘Benefits & Services’ at your UCL alumni website (www.ucl.ac.uk).

Fill it in!

Be sure to complete and return the UCL Alumni Record Form enclosed with this issue of ‘UCL People’, so that we can keep you up to date with all the latest benefits, services, events and news.

The UCL Alumni Network Membership Card

UCL Library’s new entrance
A team of four UCL academics has been named Higher Education Academy/Times Higher Education Supplement e-Tutors of the Year 2005. The team, from UCL Primary Care & Population Sciences, received the award for their work on UCL’s MSc in International Primary Healthcare, which covers the subject from a range of cultural perspectives and brings together students from across the world.

The judges praised Dr Petra Boynton, Jill Russell, Dr Deborah Swinglehurst and Dr Geoff Wong for how student experience had influenced the rationale and design of the course. Participants on the MSc programme have so far come from 11 countries across the world, and from nine different occupations, including those of doctor, nurse and pharmacist. The e-format of the course has many benefits for the participants, many of whom work in geographical isolation, and who gain the opportunity through the MSc to interact with other healthcare practitioners from across the globe, and learn from their experience.

The team has recently been granted funding from the Association of Commonwealth Universities to provide free scholarship places for selected students from Walter Sisulu University, South Africa.

**ROUND THE WORLD IN 80 WAYS**

Students circumnavigate the world

Two UCL students pedalled Steam Boat Willy – a hovercraft constructed by UCL’s Human Powered Flight Club – out of UCL’s Front Quad in June 2005 as the first mode of transport on their six-week fundraising journey to circumnavigate the world in 80 ways.

Tim Moss (UCL Psychology 3) and Thom Allen (UCL Geology 3) took up the challenge in order to raise money for the TreeHouse Trust, which provides education and resources for children with autism. Tim, the expedition leader and organiser, said: “Having spent the last year working with a boy who has autism, I am acutely aware of how much help he needs. When I saw the amazing work that TreeHouse does for children like him, I knew I had to help them.”

To make matters even more challenging, the duo limited themselves to using each mode of transport once, with the exception of walking. The team received an initial grant of £3,000 from UCL’s Expedition & Travel Committee, which helps UCL students undertake challenging and original independent travel.

At the start of their journey Tim and Thom got half way down Gower Street in the hovercraft before commandeering an electronic shopping buggy. Their journey ultimately took them to Paris, Berlin, Moscow, Ulan Bator, Shanghai, Los Angeles and Montreal by hang-glider, yak, conference bike, and commercial freighter as well as the more conventional forms of transport.

**ONLINE ACCOLADE**

e-Tutors of the year named
Trainee doctors can now get the lowdown on potential medical jobs from the people who really know – the previous postholders – thanks to an innovative online service founded and run by Dr Peter Chapman (UCL MBBS 2000) and his colleague Phineas Head.

Launched on the careers site of the ‘British Medical Journal’, JobScore allows medics of all specialities and grades to submit detailed reports online about the conditions in their current job and hospital, through a simple scoring system. Over a period of several years, these reports have been compiled to create a fully searchable database of more than 3,500 reports on jobs in some 500 hospitals – easily accessible when the time comes for a medical or surgical trainee to move on to a new post.

Dr Chapman explained: “Trainee medical and surgical posts are highly structured, and postholders work in a well defined position for a specific length of time before moving on to their next role, so a system of job ratings is particularly relevant within medicine.

These days, doctors work according to the principles of ‘evidence-based medicine’, which means researching the balance of evidence to find the best possible treatment for a patient. JobScore applies these principles to the task of finding the best new medical post: you can research the evidence rather than just taking a chance on your new job.”

As well as providing an invaluable resource for individual job hunters, JobScore has also been recognised as a complementary resource by the Scottish Intercollegiate Board for Standards and Training in Surgery (SIBSATS). The JobScore site is now an advised route for trainees to report on jobs reviewed by SIBSATS, and JobScore will also appear in the next edition of the ‘Oxford Handbook of Clinical Medicine’, one of the key handbooks for the medical profession.

The UK’s upland lakes and streams are beginning to show signs of significant recovery from the effects of acid rain, claims research led by a team from UCL. The report, published by DEFRA in November 2005, shows that the amount of acidic sulphur in UK waters has generally halved in the last 15 years, resulting in the return of many species of flora and fauna.

The project was commissioned by the Department of Environment in 1987 after the government agreed that sulphur emissions were responsible for ecological damage in the upland regions of the UK. New environmental controls were then introduced and 22 UK lake and stream sites have been monitored ever since for their chemistry and biology. However, it is only since 1998 that the scientists have begun to see a reduction in acidity and the start of an ecological recovery.

Lead scientist Don Monteith (UCL Geography) said: “Our results show a massive reduction in sulphur in the water. The concentrations have more or less halved since we first started monitoring. For the first ten years very little happened, but after 1998 levels started dropping rapidly, which coincided with the introduction of new sulphur scrubbing technology fitted to two major English power stations, so we can safely say that the two are linked.”
ACTION ON HEALTH INEQUALITIES

Global health institute launch

Migration, maternal and child health, ageing and the economics of health inequalities and wellbeing were among the global health topics discussed at a conference in October 2005 to launch the UCL International Institute for Society & Health (UCL IISH).

The launch brought together internationally acclaimed speakers and researchers from UCL, together with representatives from policymaking institutions from the UK and abroad. The breadth of their expertise reflected UCL’s commitment to interdisciplinary work on global health, including maternal and child health, the cultural dimensions of health inequalities and the economics of ageing and health.

The launch was followed by the UCL International Health & Medical Education Centre/Lancet Lecture, given by Professor Daniel Kahneman of Princeton University, who was awarded the Nobel Prize in 2002 for his work in economic sciences. The lecture covered the nature of wellbeing, approaches to its measurement, its relation to health and its distribution across social classes and over the continents.

Professor Sir Michael Marmot, who is Director of the UCL IISH, said: “In order to reduce inequalities in people’s health across the world, there is a need for a third major thrust that is complementary to the development of health systems and relief of poverty: to take action on the social determinants of health. Such action will include relief of poverty but it will have a broader aim of improving the circumstances in which people live and work. There is no longer one set of diseases for rich countries and another for poor, but diseases linked to economic and social conditions that vary within and between countries. The new UCL institute has a scientific agenda and a moral concern to deal with global health problems.”

Professor Marmot also chairs the new Commission on Social Determinants of Health for the World Health Organisation (WHO), tackling social inequality in health and healthcare by compiling evidence on the underlying factors behind it. The commission will then address policies and interventions on a regional, national and global scale.

Publication of the second edition of ‘Social Determinants of Health’, edited by Professor Marmot and Professor Richard Wilkinson (UCL IISH), coincided with the launch. The first edition became the main textbook in its field. The new edition provides the detail behind the WHO booklet ‘The Social Determinants of Health: The Solid Facts’, one of the WHO’s most successful ever publications and translated into more than 20 languages.

The new edition takes account of the latest research and contains new chapters on ethnicity and health, sexual behaviour, the elderly, housing and neighbourhoods. It gives an authoritative overview of the social and economic factors that are known to be the most powerful determinants of population health in modern societies.

The UCL IISH exemplifies the vision for UCL set out in 2004 by its President and Provost, Professor Malcolm Grant, to become London’s global university, resolving problems of global significance through its teaching and research.
DIALOGUE WITH ALUMNI

Communication steps up a gear

Your alumni website (www.ucl.ac.uk/alumni) has been relaunched in the new UCL corporate identity, incorporating a host of new services, including an up-to-the-minute online events calendar. The site is now easier to navigate and to find more ways of being involved in the UCL Alumni Network.

The online class notes and email directory section can be used to add or update your personal news and contact details, or to search for friends by their name, department or year of graduation. 'UCL People' is also online for those alumni who find it more convenient.

The new website has been integrated with other electronic communications, such as the relaunched quarterly e-newsletter, which is segmented by region in order to ensure that individual alumni are informed of news and events relevant to their location.

A free email for life service specifically designed for UCL alumni was launched in 2005. Thousands of alumni have already signed up for a your.name@uclmail.net address to keep in contact with UCL friends.

Emails sent to this address are forwarded to your usual email address. You can also upgrade to a full email account and get advanced spam filters, a fast and easy-to-use interface and the very best technical support for just £5 a year. To find out more, visit UCLmail (www.uclmail.net).

UCL regularly conducts surveys of alumni usage of its exclusive set of benefits and services. One UCLmail user, Rhys Blake (Mathematics 2005), said: "I applied for the uclmail.net address because it was quite professional-looking compared to the more usual Hotmail or Yahoo addresses. It's also easy for others to remember, especially those who went to or know of UCL. I like the fact that I get no junk mail as you would with another email provider. The service is good, easy to use and navigate and always operational."

James Davis, Head of UCL Alumni Relations, said: "These developments are just the tip of the iceberg in alumni services. We are working to build an online community and will keep alumni informed of all new services as they come online. Please make sure that you use the UCL Alumni Record Form – the address carrier sheet that came with this issue of 'UCL People' – to ensure we have your up-to-date email address, email us at alumni@ucl.ac.uk or update your details online (www.ucl.ac.uk/alumni)."

STIMULATING ACTIVITY

Paraplegic sports centre in the pipeline

Plans are underway to create the first-ever sports centre dedicated to Functional Electrical Stimulation (FES) technology. The centre will be based at UCL, and is a continuation of the success achieved by the Implanted Devices Group, led by Nick Donaldson, UCL Professor of Neuroprosthetic Engineering.

FES enables people with spinal cord injuries to regain movement in the limbs by the artificial stimulation of paralysed muscle groups through electrodes attached to the skin. The device has been applied to recumbent tricycles with great success, allowing paraplegics to exercise for durations of more than an hour at a time.

Encouraged by the success of the first FES sports day, held at UCL in September 2005, Professor Donaldson envisages the centre as a support service and a catalyst to encourage new users to take up sports utilising FES. He said: "We could assess people's suitability, give advice on re-training paralysed muscles and help people buy the right equipment."

The benefits of exercise for paraplegics are far-reaching, as lack of movement can lead to wasted muscles, weak bones, pressure sores, depression and heart disease. Professor Donaldson said: "FES exercise is not just about improving health, but enabling paralysed people to enjoy activities most people take for granted."
The 2005 Murie Robertson Award for Outstanding Contribution to Alumni Activity was presented to Ewan MacLeod (UCL SLAIS 1999) in November. In addition to the award, six inaugural Murie Robertson Certificates were awarded to alumni by the President and Provost of UCL, Professor Malcolm Grant.

Ewan has been a key supporter of UCL’s move into electronic communication with alumni. His contribution over the last six years has included advice on the alumni website and email communication, careers talks with current students, and speaking at the Edinburgh alumni dinner and at a panel discussion at the 2004 UCL Alumni Open Day. Ewan exemplifies the enthusiasm and dedication of alumni volunteers.

Certificates were awarded to Helen Matthews (UCL History 1989; MA 1996), Christine Eaton (UCL German 1958), Dr Mark Osmond (UCL Anatomy 1988; Medical School 2000), Charinee Senanarong (UCL Economics 2000), Leonard Teng-Seck Teo (Mechanical Engineering 1999) and the UCL Hong Kong Club.

Helen plays a key role in running the UCL History Alumni Association, is its honorary treasurer and has been joint editor of its annual newsletter. Christine was instrumental in establishing the UCL Women’s Dining Club Scholarship for UK Undergraduates and in increasing the number of scholarships awarded each year. Mark has been involved with the UCL Bentham Boat Club for alumni rowers since 1988, and has taken on a number of key roles in the running of the club.

Charinee has volunteered as a UCL International Ambassador and International Recruitment Representative in Thailand for five years, assisting the UCL International Office at recruitment fairs and pre-departure briefings for new students, as well as organising alumni dinners in Bangkok. Leonard has supported UCL International Office activity in Singapore since 2001, has been Secretary of UCL Alumni Singapore and was a driving force behind the organisation of recent alumni events in Singapore including the ‘Pagoda Street’ reception in 2005 (see page 36). The UCL Hong Kong Club was formed in the 1970s and is one of UCL’s most active and prestigious international alumni groups. Hong Kong holds the largest number of UCL alumni in Asia, and the club provides vital links between UCL and alumni in the region, in part through organising two to three alumni events a year.

Ewan and Mark are also two of the nine UCL Alumni Association Advisory Board Members, drawn from the most active and prominent UCL alumni.

A growing number of alumni continue to demonstrate their personal commitment to UCL. Initiatives include an international network of alumni volunteers, with international country representatives facilitating alumni gatherings, recruitment representatives assisting with education fairs and alumni who give careers advice.

The awards are a lasting tribute to Murie Robertson (UCL Geography 1953), who was a keen and active volunteer, working closely with the UCL Alumni Relations Team, especially to establish links with alumni in Australia. Following his death in 2000, the award was established in his memory.

Play your part
Find out more about alumni clubs and societies from your UCL Alumni Relations Team

See ‘Get More Involved’ at www.ucl.ac.uk/alumni
Recent alumni events around the globe, from Dubai to New York and Singapore to Paris, offered UCL friends the chance to network.

In June 2005 Philippe Sands, UCL Professor of Law, visited alumni in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, as part of the world tour for his acclaimed book, ‘Lawless World: America and the Making & Breaking of Global Rules’. Mark Trayling (Economics 2002), UCL Alumni Relations International Ambassador in Dubai, said: “Professor Sands honoured us by coming to our first-ever UCL alumni gathering in Dubai, held at the Dubai Creek Club. A great evening was had by all, complemented by a view of the golf course – thank you, UCL Alumni Association! We are looking forward to our next event, to be held at the One & Only Royal Mirage, with lunch on the beach, surrounded by palm trees and the sound of the waves lapping at the sand.”

An ongoing programme organised by and for alumni members of the UCL Alumni London Group included visits to Weald & Downland Open Air Museum and the Globe Theatre to see ‘The Tempest’. Seventy-four former students and guests attended the meal at UCL. Following a four-course meal, the group listened to the guest speaker, Nica Burns (Laws 1976), a leading West End theatre producer.

In April 2005, members of the UCL Alumni France Group were joined by members of the UCL London Group for dinner in Paris, attended by Professor Michael Worton, UCL’s Vice-Provost (Academic & International), Dr Jim Parkin (UCL Chemistry 1959; PhD 1962), Vice-Chair of the UCL Alumni London Group, said: “It was a fantastic few days, enjoyed by all. The company was good, the visits were well-chosen and the wine tasting was particularly enjoyable. We are now looking forward to the UCL Alumni London Group trip to Brussels in May 2006.”

Three events in the US brought alumni together in 2005. In May more than 80 UCL alumni gathered at a Manhattan bar, to see old friends and meet new contacts. A private view of the UCL Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology’s touring exhibition was held for alumni in September at Emory University, in Atlanta, Georgia, preceded by a reception for 30 alumni and guests hosted by John Hancock (UCL Ancient History 1971), a Vice-President of the Campaign for UCL. In November Semir Zeki, UCL Professor of Neurobiology, gave a lecture in Washington DC attended by 40 alumni and guests.

A gala performance of the musical ‘Pagoda Street’ was held at the Esplanade theatre, Singapore, in August 2005. ‘Pagoda Street’ was first staged in 2004 in UCL’s Garage Theatre, where it brought a little slice of Singapore to London. UCL Alumni Singapore supported the event by organising a buffet reception, which brought together alumni from across Singapore. The reception was hosted by UCL’s Dean of Students, Professor John Foreman (UCL Medical School 1976).

Among the many events held by alumni sports groups was the third annual Academicals Hockey Summer Ball in July 2005, held in the opulent and trendy Adam Street private members’ club.

Reunions were also held for alumni who graduated 25 and 50 years ago – to see photos from those events, turn to page 18.
**TWISTER WORLD RECORD**

24-hour game merits entry in Guinness Book of Records

UCL students have entered the record book by playing Twister for 24 hours – the longest game ever played.

Two teams of four – from the UCL Union Bongos Society and Ultimate Frisbee Society – played all day and throughout the night in October 2005 in the South Cloisters. Each game lasted for an average of 30 minutes, ending only when a student fell over. Participants were only able to leave the board for 15 minutes every eight hours and food was brought to them during the games.

Ben Williamson, Services & Events Officer of UCL Union, commented during the day: “The teams are working really hard. They’re all shattered, but so keen to break the record.”

Representatives of the Guinness Book of Records were present to begin the record attempt and the UCL students’ union employed three student invigilators to log the number of games. Two paramedics were on hand for the players’ safety and to provide ice packs.

![Twisting through the night](image1.jpg)

**WIDENING INFLUENCE**

Development Planning Unit assists UN

The considerable influence of the UCL Development Planning Unit (UCL DPU) on urban development was prominent at the United Nations World Summit in September 2005. The UCL DPU – which is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year – is renowned for challenging governmental policy and influencing decision-making in all aspects of urban development.

The summit brought together the world’s leaders to discuss progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were agreed at the United Nations Millennium Summit in September 2000. The UCL DPU is working closely with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and other UN agencies, governments and non-governmental organisations on strategic approaches to achieving the MDGs, particularly Target 11: ‘To have achieved significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020’.

The UCL DPU is an international centre specialising in teaching, practical training, research and consultancy in the field of urban and regional development, planning and management. It is concerned with promoting sustainable forms of development, understanding rapid urbanisation and encouraging innovation in the policy, planning and management responses to the economic, social and environmental development of cities and regions.
BUILDING TIES

New homes for UCL research and teaching

His Excellency Václav Klaus, President of the Czech Republic, delivered the keynote address of his visit to the UK at a ceremony to open the new building of the UCL School of Slavonic & East European Studies (UCL SSEES) in October 2005, one of many impressive new buildings to have opened recently at UCL.

Following President Klaus’ address, Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal, Chancellor of the University of London, unveiled the stone to mark the formal opening of the new building.

The new building – the front gates of which are pictured on page 46 – brings the 80 staff and students of UCL SSEES together in a single purpose-built location. It is set on the last significant open plot in the Bloomsbury district of London. It has been designed and built to a unique ‘green’ specification, and is intended as a model of environmentally friendly construction, with its use of ecologically friendly cooling and heating systems.

Professor George Kolankiewicz, Director of UCL SSEES, said: “The presence of President Klaus is symbolic of the close ties that we have developed and maintained over the years, not only with the Czech Republic but with other countries of the region. It emphasises the reciprocal importance of UCL SSEES to the countries which it studies as well as the value that we place on the interest and support which we derive from those countries.”

Other new facilities include UCL’s new Engineering Sciences Building, opened by the Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal in October 2005. The ceremony also included the unveiling of a plaque by Lord and Lady Wolfson, to mark the opening of the building’s Wolfson Laboratories for Medical Physics & Bioengineering. Lord Wolfson described the laboratories’ research as “vital work”.

UCL’s Andrew Huxley Building, which was opened in April 2005, received a commendation from Camden Council in its 2005 Building Quality Awards. The building, which houses researchers from UCL Pharmacology and UCL Physiology, was singled out for its careful use of landscaping in a difficult and enclosed space. Other buildings commended in the ‘Large Commercial’ section of the competition include the Wellcome Trust’s new premises and an extension to Great Ormond Street Hospital – one of UCL’s associated teaching hospitals.

The UCL Ear Institute came into life in January 2005, in a state-of-the-art building funded by the Wellcome Trust. It houses a new, cross-faculty grouping of UCL scientists with a shared interest in understanding the mechanisms of hearing and balance and their disorders, and in developing diagnostic tools and treatments. The institute is situated within and adjacent to the UCL Institute of Laryngology & Otology and its School of Audiology.
The Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC) has agreed to fund the UCL Centre for the Evolution of Cultural Diversity for another five years with a £1.25 million grant, one of the largest it has ever awarded.

Set up in 2001 and formerly known as the UCL Centre for the Evolutionary Analysis of Cultural Behaviour, the centre carries out research on the evolutionary underpinnings of human culture.

The centre is the first in the world to be dedicated to applying an evolutionary perspective to culture, explained Professor Stephen Shennan, UCL Professor of Theoretical Archaeology: “There are clear analogies between culture and genes, in the way that both are passed from generation to generation. Biologists have developed sophisticated theories of how genes are transmitted through populations, and methods to analyse gene transmission. We’ve imported these ideas into cultural studies.”

Academics working at the centre come from a variety of disciplines, including anthropology, archaeology, biology and mathematics. Over the next five years, the centre will embark on a number of exciting new research areas, and will also use the AHRC funding for outreach work, disseminating their evolutionary perspective on culture to academics in other disciplines and to the public at large.

UCL has created two new Pro-Provost positions – one for North America and one for South Asia & the Middle East – to represent the university’s interests across distinct geographical regions.

UCL now has five Pro-Provosts for international regions, working with the Vice-Provost (Academic & International), Professor Michael Worton, to develop and coordinate the university’s strategy for expanding academic cooperation and research links across the world.

The Pro-Provost for North America is Janette Atkinson, UCL Professor of Psychology. She said: “Since my postdoctoral work at Johns Hopkins University, I have had many links with American universities and research institutes. UCL already has more students from the USA than from any other overseas country. I believe that we can do even more to let Americans and Canadians know what UCL has to offer both in excellent research and teaching opportunities across a wide range of disciplines, and encouraging them to join our global community.”

Vince Emery, UCL Professor of Virology, is the Pro-Provost for South Asia & the Middle East. He said: “I aim to enhance the profile of UCL in India and the Middle East so that UCL becomes the university of choice for students at undergraduate and postgraduate levels – and a preferred partner for research collaborations. Working with a number of individuals and organisations I aim to facilitate opportunities for students to study at UCL, and hence benefit from its global vision – and use this global citizenship to enhance education, business, health and society within their country of origin.”

UCL’s other international Pro-Provosts focus on Europe (Professor Wendy Davies), China, Hong Kong & Macau (Professor David Norse) and East & South East Asia (Professor Phillip Treleaven).
100
number of moral or philosophical problems in Julian Baggini’s new book – see page 45

twenty four
number of hours spent by students playing Twister in order to set a world record – see page 37

TWELVE
number of wars from which Jeremy Bowen has reported – see page 22

2,618
number of toilets at the new Wembley Stadium – see page 2
2,000,000,000
number of people who watched the Live 8 concert – see page 16

eighty
number of different means of transport two UCL students used to travel around the world – see page 31

27,000
number of UCL Alumni Network cardholders

160,000+
number of pounds sterling contributed to UCL by alumni through the UCL Futures 2004/2005 telephone campaigns – see page 49
Some 200 years after his contemporaries gossiped that the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley was having an affair with the pretty stepsister of his wife, Mary Shelley, the rumours have come back to haunt him from beyond the grave.

Scholars have striven repeatedly to understand the bizarre relationship between the Shelleys and Claire Clairmont, who lived with them through most of their marriage. A leading Shelley scholar has discovered a previously unrecorded manuscript of 1820 – the ‘Ode to Naples’ – in the beautiful handwriting of Clairmont. … The manuscript, which was found in UCL Library, bears Shelley’s amendments. Its significance lies in that most of the fair copies of Shelley’s poems that were written out for publication were either in the hand of Shelley or Mary. …

The rivalry between the two women became overwhelming at times, as they recorded in their respective journals. By the summer of 1820, when Shelley composed the ode … tensions became so acute that they decided Clairmont should spend some time away. The poem could have been copied when Shelley accompanied Clairmont to Livorno. …

UCL acquired the manuscript before 1953 as part of an archive owned by the linguist and bibliophile Charles Kay Ogden. UCL is now in the throes of a fundraising campaign to create a new museum in Bloomsbury, Central London.

British scientists did not feature in this year’s Nobel Prize for Physics, but groundbreaking work in the UK was honoured by the Institute of Physics today. ... UCL claimed two of the three awards. …

The 2006 Dirac medal, for theoretical physics, has been awarded to Professor Mike Gillan (UCL Physics & Astronomy) for his work in developing computer simulations. Professor Gillan’s findings have … helped scientists work out the exact conditions inside the Earth’s core – essential for understanding how the surface of the Earth has evolved over time, and how the magnetic field, which shields us from the solar wind, is generated by the outer core. …

The 2006 Guthrie medal has been awarded to Professor Marshall Stoneham (UCL Physics & Astronomy), who believes he can build a viable desktop quantum computer by 2010. Quantum computers have extraordinary potential, promising to crack complex codes and solve age-old mathematical puzzles, but prototype quantum computers fill entire rooms and have to be cooled to near absolute zero before they can be used. Professor Stoneham’s work … has allowed him to design a novel quantum computer which can be built with the tools currently available and should be powerful enough to do useful calculations, perhaps even at room temperature.
Sir: It is with a sense of injustice that I note UCL’s position among those universities once again under the spotlight for failing to attract more state school pupils … given that we continue to invest a great deal of time and money into our widening participation activities. …

I have two particular misgivings about the figures published by HESA. First, the benchmark that universities are measured against is, I believe, flawed. Whereas previously the potential pool for universities such as ours included only those who met our entrance criteria (generally three good A-levels), the goalposts have now been shifted. [By the new method of] calculation, top universities should consider eligible any pupil who secures a set number of [UCAS] points, regardless of whether these were achieved through the vocational or academic route. A university like UCL inevitably loses out as a consequence. …

Second, we cannot ignore the fact that, with the best will in the world, many of the courses that we teach face real difficulties in raising state sector participation. To use just one example; we were the first university to offer degrees in modern European languages. …

A good card trickster can blind you to what is happening before your eyes. Now a study of how the brain detects changes to visual images has located exactly which area of the brain is responsible.

Past studies … have shown that the parietal cortex is active during visual changes. To find out if this is the part of the brain that actually detects the change, Professor Nilli Lavie (UCL Psychology) and colleagues disrupted the parietal cortices of volunteers while changing the images they were being shown. The volunteers were shown two images containing four faces and asked to say whether there were any differences between them. When a technique called transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) was applied to the right parietal cortex, they failed to notice even a major change such as swapping one of the faces for a different one. TMS induces small currents in specific parts of the brain, temporarily stopping them from operating. …

The findings may help explain how magic tricks work. If the parietal cortex is concentrating on what the magician’s left hand is doing, it is not available to notice sleight of hand by the right, Professor Lavie suggests.

A UK epidemiologist aims to forge new links with China and Vietnam to fight emerging infectious diseases.

Ann Johnson (UCL Primary Care & Population Sciences) will travel to China and Vietnam this week as part of a Medical Research Council delegation studying emerging and infectious diseases – in particular avian influenza.

Professor Johnson, an expert in infectious disease epidemiology, wants to establish new collaborations with Chinese and Vietnamese scientists to help fight potential future epidemics. …

“We recognise the excellence of Chinese and Vietnamese science and the way they’re investing in it,” said Professor Johnson. …

Most of Professor Johnson’s experience is in behavioural epidemiology, focusing on HIV and sexually transmitted diseases. …

She said that there were important areas of investigation that applied to avian flu and to STDs. “Flu raises a lot of basic epidemiological questions about transmission. The crucial thing is good information. You need to be able to recognise the symptoms early and map out patterns of disease.”
The third novel by Joanna Briscoe (UCL English Language & Literature 1985) expands on her speciality of dark secrets and infidelity. A psychological thriller set in the Bloomsbury literary world, ‘Sleep with Me’ explores Richard and Lelia’s complex relationship as they prepare for the birth of their first child. Initially appearing to be the perfect London couple, their complacency is shattered by their introduction to Sylvie, an enigmatic seductress. Slowly Richard finds himself gripped by Sylvie’s subtle, almost imperceptible charm. As he grows more ambivalent about the approaching birth of his child, Lelia finds herself haunted by painful secrets from her past.

The international bestseller ‘Eats, Shoots & Leaves’, by Lynne Truss (UCL English Language & Literature 1979; Fellow 2004), has sold more than three million copies and was 2004 British Book of the Year. In ‘Talk to the Hand: The Utter Bloody Rudeness of Everyday Life’ she asks what went wrong with people’s behaviour. She examines the bizarre state of affairs where customers must help themselves, where people say “the beer went mad” when they really mean “I drank too much and became violent”. ‘Talk to the Hand’ is not a book on manners or etiquette. It is a rallying cry for courtesy. Funny, angry, original and full of common sense, here is a timely plea for a more civilised world.
Thought experiments are short scenarios that pose a moral or philosophical problem in a vivid and concrete way. In ‘The Pig that Wants to be Eaten and Ninety-Nine Other Thought Experiments’, Julian Baggini (UCL Philosophy 1996) presents 100 of the most intriguing thought experiments from the history of philosophy and ideas – not so much logical puzzles as invitations to think hard about challenging questions. From Zeno’s paradox to Plato’s cave, the author asks if it is right to punish people for what they haven’t yet done and how we can tell whether we are awake or dreaming, drawing on colourful examples from film, television, literature and philosophical classics.

Lynne Truss’s classmate and author of ‘You Look Awfully Like the Queen’, Thomas Blaikie (UCL English Language & Literature 1979) has published ‘Blaikie’s Guide to Modern Manners: From Eating to Greeting, via Texts, Sex and do I Bring a Bottle?’, a wity yet practical short guide to modern manners. It takes a subject often treated in a stuffy, high-handed way and deals with it lightly and humorously. Scarcely a trace remains now of this bizarre labyrinthine world of ‘manners’. “Come as you are,” we say, “Be yourself”. But the age of emails and metrosexuality has thrown up a whole new set of social dilemmas. We don’t know what to do. Our free-and-easy ways have left us in a vacuum of uncertainty and embarrassment.

Louise Candlish (UCL English Language & Literature 1989) describes her writing as being “on the literary side of chick-lit” and her debut novel ‘Prickly Heat’ was one of 2004’s bestsellers. Now Louise returns with ‘Sisters Avenue’, the tale of close sisters on very different paths. Haunted by the death of the man she loved, Juliet neglects her career, her new relationship and herself. Her increasingly wild nights out are an attempt to obliterate her memories. Her sister Hannah, it seems, is simply too busy to notice. Settled and pregnant, she has her sights fixed firmly on a dream house on London’s idyllic Nappy Valley. However, the honeymoon is soon over and Juliet may be the only one to save Hannah from her new nightmare of lies and suspicion.

‘Ken Adam: The Art of Production Design’, by Sir Christopher Frayling, profiles pioneering set designer Ken Adam (UCL Bartlett School 1938). All the memorable hideouts in the early James Bond films were created by Adam. Sir Christopher’s illustrated biography details how it was the surreal decadence of his sets that made Adam such a hit with audiences and critics: “The work looks real, but there’s always something magnified about it that creates an effect in the mind of the audience.”

‘Stephen Spender: A Literary Life’, by John Sutherland, former UCL Lord Northcliffe Professor of Modern English Literature, is now available in paperback. ‘The Independent’ called his biography of the poet “exhaustive, thoughtful, sympathetic, knowledgeable and thoroughly engaged.” ‘The Observer’ wrote: “As well as being a colleague of Spender at UCL in the early 1970s, Sutherland himself is a notably versatile writer whose many and considerable talents help to illuminate those of his subject.”

‘The People’s State: East German Society from Hitler to Honecker’, by Mary Fulbrook, UCL Professor of German History, reveals what life was really like for post-war East Germans. Professor Fulbrook examines changing conceptions of normality within an authoritarian political system, and provides insight into the ways in which individuals perceived their rights and actively sought to shape their own lives. Replacing the simplistic black-and-white concept of “totalitarianism” by the notion of a “participatory dictatorship”, this book seeks to reinstate the East German people as actors in their own history.
UCL VIEWS: OPEN SESAME

The new headquarters for the UCL School of Slavonic & East European Studies was opened in October 2005. Designed by renowned ‘green’ architects, Short and Associates, the building features intricate metalwork above the entrances. To find out more about the building, and other new facilities at UCL, see page 38.