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UCT students triumph in SAICA Board Exam

96% pass rate for first-time writers surpasses national average

The University of Cape Town pass rate for first-time writers of the 2011 South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) Part 1 Board Exam is 96% compared to a national average of 80%. The pass rate for UCT's African students is 89%, while the national average is 55%.

Professor Mark Graham, the head of the Department of Accounting at UCT, said: "The UCT pass rate for all candidates was 94%, while the national average was 64%. Eighty-one percent of our repeat candidates passed compared with the national average of 35%. These pass rates – both UCT and national – are an improvement on those of previous years. A total of 287 UCT candidates passed this year, up from 249 in 2010. This translates into a year-on-year increase of 15% in the absolute number of successful UCT candidates."

Professor Graham said: "After the 2011 SAICA Part 1 Board Exam results were released on Friday, 27 May, it became clear that the UCT pass rate for first-time writers was 96% – 16 percentage points higher than the national average. UCT had the highest absolute number of passes in the exam of all the residential universities in South Africa."

He added: "A further pleasing aspect of the results was the success of our African, Coloured and Indian students in the exam. UCT's pass rate for African students was 89% (against a national average of 55%), for Coloured students it was 93% (national average 60%) and for Indian students it was 89% (national average 51%). Altogether, 138 African, Coloured and Indian students from UCT passed the exam, up from 115 in 2010. This cohort comprises 48% of successful UCT students."

Two UCT students finished in the Top 10 nationally. Yu-Hsiang Lu came third (with Honours) and Michael Hunt came tenth. Yu-Hsiang Lu said that "there is no real secret to this success – what it comes down to is consistent hard work and a passion for what you do".

During 2010 UCT ran a programme, sponsored by Thuthuka (the transformation programme of SAICA) for 30 students who needed to repeat the qualifying exam. The pass rate for this cohort of students was 70% versus a national average of 35% for repeat students. Of the 20 UCT Thuthuka students who wrote the qualifying exam, 16 were successful.

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