
Looking Back at 2012

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What were the biggest events in 2012? Students throwing watermelons from the windows of the Law Faculty in protest against the planned changes in higher education was an unusual way to start of the year. What happened next? read on to find out...

January

60th anniversary of the foundation of the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics

The Faculty of Mathematics and Physics, one of the youngest, but scientifically strongest, faculties at Charles University, celebrated the 60th anniversary of its establishment. The faculty was founded by government decree on 1 September 1952.

Charles University multimedia project commemorates Jan Palach's legacy

Jan Palach, Ryszard Siwiec and Sándor Bauer are just a few of those who gave their lives for their country or convictions. Their stories and those of other 'human torches' are presented in a Charles University multimedia project. The website www.janpalach.eu was launched on 16 January 2012, the 43rd anniversary of Jan Palach's self-immolation.



Students and academics criticise the Higher Education

Act

The proposed Higher Education Act provokes protests by students and teachers from Charles University, which fears that planned changes in legislation will restrict academic freedom and favour business. Hundreds of Charles University academics met in the Grand Hall of the Law Faculty to discuss reforms.

Rectorial Awards presented at the Karolinum

Seven students from the Faculties of Medicine, Humanities and Social Sciences, Science, Theology and Pedagogy received the annual Charles University Rectorial Awards.

February



Students start protests against fees and reform

Thousands of students protested during February against reforms proposed by Minister for Education Josef Dobeš. The academic senate of Charles University released a statement expressing its disagreement with the reforms. Lectures about the reforms were held in the faculties of the university and other towns in the Czech Republic. 10,000 students took part in a protest march on 28 February.

Charles University celebrates recipients of Bolzano Awards



The annual Bolzano Awards ceremony took place on 1 March, during the meeting of the Charles University Research Committee in the Lesser Hall of the Karolinum. Three students received awards for outstanding theses written during their studies at Charles University. Amongst the criteria for the awards are a creative approach and the interdisciplinary nature of work carried out. Awards were given in the following categories:

Theology (Jindřiška Bláhová – A Tough Job for Donald Duck: Hollywood, Czechoslovakia, and Selling Films behind the Iron Curtain, 1944–1951)

Science (Roman Fiala – Investigation of New Anode Materials for Methanol Polymer Fuel Cells)

Medicine (Lenka Nosková - Mutations in DNAJC5, Encoding of Cysteine-String Protein Alpha, Cause of Autosomal-Dominant Adult-Onset Neuronal Ceroid Lipofuscinosis)

March

Battle on the ice at Charles University

The final saw the ice hockey teams of Charles University and the University of Economics face off for the Cup. Everyone at the game expected a tough battle, with the CU team winning through at the end and lifting the Mayor's Cup. And so it happened.

Discoveries by Czech physicists on Nature Physics website

The transmission of angular momentum from a circular-polarised light to an electron spin makes it possible to stir a magnet from a state of equilibrium in timescales of less than a picosecond. This effect, which makes it possible to manipulate spins within a magnet with the aid of brief laser pulses, was presented by scientists from the Joint Laboratory of Optospintronics of the Institute of Physics of the Czech Academy of Sciences and the Faculty of Mathematics and physics of Charles University.

April

Merkel and Nečas discuss the future of Europe with students

On Tuesday, 3 April the German Chancellor, Dr. Angela Merkel, paid a brief visit to the Czech Republic. Despite her packed schedule, with everything planned precisely to the minute, she found time for an hour-long debate with students of Charles University, in which she was joined by Czech Prime Minister, Petr Nečas in a discussion on the future of the European Union.

[Charles University celebrates its 664th anniversary](#)

The first university in Central Europe was founded on 7 April 1378 by Charles IV. This major date in the history of Czech scholarship was celebrated in advance by the academic community at a gala event on Wednesday, 4 April in the Great Ceremonial Hall of the Karolinum. The celebrations also saw honorary doctorates awarded to Prof. Dr. Beloslav Riečan and Prof. Kumbakonam R. Rajagopal. The Charles University Awards for Creative Performance and Presentation Awards were also presented.

Charles University awards two honorary doctorates

The leading European specialist in nephrology, Prof. Christoph Wanner, head of the Department of Nephrology and scientific director of the Department of Clinical Studies of the Würzburg University Hospital, and the prominent biochemist Prof. Hans-Joachim Gabius, head of the Faculty of Physiological Chemistry at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich received honorary *doctora honoris causa* degrees in the medical sciences in the Great Ceremonial Hall of the Karolinum of Charles University.

June

The Faculty of Mathematics and Physics film festival

As part of the celebrations of its 60th anniversary, the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics organised the first edition of a competitive film festival for young filmmakers. The winning films were announced during a two-day festival in mid-June 2012 in Prague-Troja. The aim of the festival was to motivate primary-school pupils and secondary-school students and encourage interest in mathematics, physics and computer science (computer animation and graphics).

September

Inauguration of Dean Aleksí Šedo

The inauguration of the Dean Aleksí Šedo took place in the Great Ceremonial Hall in the Karolinum in the presence of a number of prominent guests from Charles University, other universities, colleges of medical faculties in the Czech Republic and representatives of the Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic, as well as other educational and health care institutions.

Inauguration of new dean of the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics

The inauguration of new dean of the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics, Prof. RNDr. Jan Kratochvíl, CSc., took place on Friday, 14 September 2012 in the refectory on Malostranské náměstí. The formal installation of the Dean in his post formed part of the autumn meeting with employees of the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics and the announcement of the top-rated pedagogues based on student surveys run by the faculty in the summer semester of the 2011/12 academic year.

[Charles University awards honorary doctorate to Prof. Braunwald](#)

Prof. Eugene Braunwald, a major personality in world medicine and the most prominent living cardiologist, accepted an honorary *doctora honoris causa* degree in the Great Ceremonial Hall of the Karolinum. Prof. Eugene Braunwald, M.D., a professor of cardiovascular medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital, Harvard Medical School in Boston, USA, is, thanks to his exceptional publishing activities and the results of the TIMI Study Group, which he founded, recognised as the most important living cardiologist in the world today.

[Charles University awards honorary doctorates to Professors Alexy and Badinter](#)

Charles University has awarded honorary doctorates to two world-class lawyers. As of Wednesday 17 October, German law philosopher and constitutionalist Prof. Robert Alexy and the highly regarded French lawyer, university professor and politician, Prof. Robert Badinter.

[CU Rector: Renovation of laboratories is an example of the effective use of European funds](#)

November

[Candidates for the Czech presidency debate at Charles University](#)

Six candidates for the post of Czech president accepted the invitation of the Rector of Charles University, the Department of International Relations, Institute of Political Studies (IPS), Faculty of Social Science and Prague Security Studies Institute and came on 28th November 2012 to the university to discuss issues of the security and international politics.

[CU now offers Computer Science programs in English](#)

Starting from the 2013/14 winter semester, Charles University will offer three-year bachelor's and two-year master's programmes in Computer Science. The annual tuition fee will be 3,000 EUR (around 3,900 USD) for students from the EU and 5,000 EUR (around 6,500 EUR) for students from outside the EU.

December

[Antonín Dvořák's Mass in D major was performed in Karolinum to celebrate the Student Day](#)

Charles University organized a festive concert in the Great Aula of Karolinum on 15th November at the occasion of the International Student Day and the Day of Fight for the Freedom and Democracy. The rector of Charles University Václav Hampl and a postdoctoral student Alla Tymofeyeva spoke prior to the resounding of Dvořák's Mass in D Major and other small compositions.