

Emilia Flynn's speech at the Vote No Rally on 2 October, 2022

The move to the city that UTAS has proposed and already taken action upon, has already seen negative effects on many areas of a once established and thriving communities. Whilst change is never an easy thing there are times when it needs to be looked into why it is happening, who is supporting the changes, and whether it is truly going to be beneficial. Moving the UTAS campus to the city is one of those changes.

I moved to Tasmania from Victoria in 2021 expecting to be spending the majority of my days on a beautiful university campus overlooking the magical River Derwent on a campus full of student life and in a university encouraging our learning and pushing us to succeed. Yet, upon arrival and continuing into this year, I have spent majority of my hours learning off a computer screen watching lectures that were recorded three years ago. My business unit classes are taking place in a leased out room of the KPMG building in Hobart's CBD which students frequently have to walk to and from the residential college at night because the uni hopper doesn't run late enough.

University is not just for academic learning but is also pivotal in learning lessons about life, independence and your own responsibilities. The move to the city which has been led by UTAS has created a segregated community that puts some of the most vulnerable individuals in our community at risk. If we're not studying on campus, only having classes every fortnight or in no university buildings at all, how is it that the university expects young adults to branch out and collaborate with other faculties and integrate with people of all backgrounds, even though this is a key value they seem to hold?

This proposal has taken away the core reason why so many of us come to study at UTAS, which is to learn. Instead we are watching videos and attending fortnightly tutorials with no information about contact hours being increased in the foreseeable future. There is not one student I have known who is in support of the move to the city and there are many students, myself included who have been incredibly let down by what UTAS is trying but significantly failing to provide us with, which is a quality education and memories with friends we'll remember and reflect upon in later years of life.

I ask UTAS to consider whether they have consulted the current students what they actually want and are they focusing on creating a wonderful learning environment for us to immerse in or one that looks good on a brochure?

Emilia Flynn is a second year student at UTAS, studying Business and Natural Environmental Wilderness Studies and 2022 president of Christ Colleges