

Dear Mr Carter,

Below is my submission to the Senate inquiry into academic bias.

Last year I was studying Arts/Education majoring in history. History has been a big passion of mine for a number of years, as is working with young people. It therefore seemed obvious that I should become a history teacher. Unfortunately I became disillusioned with the whole process after I began my university degree.

In 2007 I began a degree at the University of Sydney in Arts and education majoring in history. Although the degree is a lengthy five years, I thought my passion for history and education would make the time fly. Sadly the content in the education component of the degree was basic to say the least and completely unchallenging. A large part of the degree consisted of studying the history of teaching, which gave us no useful knowledge to help educate students. It is common sense to understand that in the past when some classroom sizes were 1 teacher to 100 students, that effective teaching is impossible. Spending hours studying and analyzing the classrooms of the 18th and 19th centuries doesn't help you learn different ways to communicate knowledge to students. I felt that after a year of studying education, I was no better equipped to teaching children than I was before I undertook the degree. Everything in the degree from child protection to the curriculum was essentially general knowledge.

The arts component of the degree, particularly the modern European and Australian history subjects were riddled with left wing bias. The whole structure of the way the subjects were taught caused me to dislike studying something I had previously loved. The study of 'history from below' as it was called, focused mainly on the impact of significant historical events on the 'masses', rather than what exactly these events were and how they occurred. This Marxist study of history was extremely repetitive, tedious and dull. During the tutorials I felt marginalized because of (what I believe to be) my mainstream views. I was considered a racist because I don't believe in an opener border immigration policy (a Greens policy). In Australian history I was appalled to hear, in my tutorial, that we should not have ANZAC day because it commemorates a national disgrace (going to war). I could not believe that being proud of the sacrifice of Australian troops and remembering this sacrifice made me a war monger.

Left wing bias also found its way into education subjects. I once had a lecturer who clearly stated that sometimes the will of the individual must be compromised for the good of the collective (blatant Marxist ideology).

I couldn't see the benefits of putting up with this uninspiring degree for 5 years. I think this is a real shame because teaching was something I think I would have really enjoyed. However the lackluster material and left wing indoctrination students are subjected to in this degree makes it intolerable. I have since transferred to a bachelor of commerce and I know of others who have also transferred from this degree for the same reasons. The workload in my new commerce degree was exponentially higher than in education, proving to me that the arts/education degree I was studying could be condensed into a much shorter period of time (rather than the 5 years it is suppose to take).

It is vital that students in our society want to study education. To produce quality teachers we need quality teaching degrees. My aim in writing this submission is to highlight the problems I have come across with the education and history curriculums, which are turning students, such as myself, away from such an important occupation.