

Universities are failing our society

By Julian Tomlinson, The Cairns Post, 21 June 2018

THE sooner Australia abandons its obsession with university the better.

Universities are screaming about having \$17 billion in federal funding frozen, saying students will suffer because fewer courses will be offered.

But funding should not only be frozen, it should be cut until universities prove they are more than just bastions of oppressive, far-left, cultural Marxist ideology.

Just this week, the Centre for Independent Studies found 63 per cent of uni-educated Millennials (people born between 1980 and 1996) have a favourable view of socialism.

How can anyone have a favourable view of the most murderous and failed political system in history unless lecturers and unis were teaching it to them? The world used to operate quite well without universities.

Now a degree has overtaken all other attributes of what makes an employable person, and this is ludicrous.

Obviously we should require medicos, engineers and scientists to have a piece of paper proving their competence, but accountants, lawyers, journalists, marketers, teachers, farmers, managers and child minders can learn on the job while earning a wage.

It's easy to be cynical when universities cry poor – JCU vice-chancellor Sandra Harding is on nearly a \$1 million a year. Central Queensland University vice-chancellor Scott Bowman is on more than \$500,000 a year.

But what is uni? From what I've seen, you spend three or four years and thousands of dollars reading other people's work and regurgitating it in assignments. No thinking for yourself, only read and reference what the university allows.

Then you emerge into the real world and have to start at the bottom, learning everything you were supposed to have been taught at uni.

Plus, you have years of debt. Sounds like a raw deal.

I don't have a degree and was lucky to get a cadetship straight out of Year 12. Fast forward to today and there would be virtually no chance a school-leaver would get a job with a major news organisation. No degree, no white-collar job, or so it seems.

A friend of mine is one of his national company's top performers in online marketing and doesn't have a degree. He says that in the three years it would take him to earn a degree, his field would have advanced so much that everything he'd learned would be redundant. But still businesses everywhere insist on applicants having that bit of paper. Why?

And are taxpayers getting value for their \$17 billion?

The Institute of Public Affairs has compiled a list of "stupid subjects" your tax dollars pay for, including: France in film; heresy and witchcraft; pirates; urban legends; gender and queer theory; Islamic studies; sex and scandal; and cultural history of Tibet.

A few of JCU's degrees force students to take subjects on Aboriginal social issues in order to pass.

Why does a publicly-funded body force an ideology on students that in no way relates to their desired career?

The IPA also conducted a free speech audit of unis and gave JCU and CQU "red" and "amber" ratings for its intolerance of free speech and ideas. Judging by this and the left-wing bile from students and academics at many major unis, our tax dollars would be far better spent elsewhere. A study by the University of Western Australia has found more than 25 per cent of graduates are over-qualified for the jobs they want. What a waste of time, especially when many graduates say they learned more in their first week on the job than they did in three years at university.

Another consequence of a “compulsory degree” culture is older people with decades of experience aren’t even making the interview stage because they don’t have that darned piece of paper.

With a place firmly on the public funding teat, unis can get away with offering ridiculous courses, they’ve become breeding grounds and creches for misguided social justice warriors, and they’ve hoodwinked the whole country into believing tertiary study is the only way to get ahead.

But judging by the growing belief in toxic ideologies and the cringe-worthy moron-isms on social media, it’s not as though unis are churning out titans of intelligent, rational thought.

If funding was cut, unis would have to offer only practical and relevant degrees that are best for people and society. Let’s stop this obsession.

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