



Dear Students,

As you may have seen in recent communications, the notification of the election of our new Chancellor. I wanted to provide some important information as your Guild President.

Currently, there are no student representatives on the University Council, since July 2024, and the Chancellor election proceeded without elected students on the council.

Many students, along with your Guild Senate, requested that the University postpone the election until there is adequate student representation on the Council. Legal advice was sought by University governance, confirming that there were no obstacles to delaying the election. However, postponing the election required Council approval, and regrettably, the motion was not passed by Council. Delaying the election until the next Council meeting would have ensured not only that student voices were heard but also that Vice Chancellor Designate Clare Pollock could participate in this critical decision-making process.

The Council meeting on August 22, 2024, proceeded with the election despite our concerns. Before this meeting, I submitted a written statement to the Deputy Chancellor, which was read out during the session. In this statement, I highlighted key student concerns:

- **Student Representation:** The student body strongly believes that any election for the Chancellor should only occur when there is adequate student representation on the Council.
- **Postponement Request:** Given the absence of student members, I urged that the Chancellor appointment be delayed until students are appointed, ensuring our perspectives are considered and respected.
- **University Principles:** Universities exist to serve students, and our voices must be central in decisions that impact the entire university community.
- **Equal Responsibility:** Students on the Council hold the same responsibilities as any other members, and their contributions are equally valuable. Ignoring this is both problematic and contrary to our institution's values.
- **Call for Integrity:** The postponement of the Chancellor appointment was not just a request but a necessary step to ensure the integrity and inclusiveness of the decision-making process.

The decision to proceed with the election without student representation is profoundly disappointing and undermines the importance of student input in university governance. I have formally requested the University to clarify the grounds on which the motion to postpone the election was unsuccessful. Disregarding our voices in this decision contradicts the very values our institution stands for. I strongly oppose this decision and the failure to ensure that student perspectives were included in such a significant matter.

I am, however, encouraged that several Council members have resigned in protest of the disregard for student voices. Their actions reflect a commitment to the principles of student representation, even when it was overlooked by others.

As your Guild President, I will continue to advocate for your voice and want to make it clear that I do not support the exclusion of students in this process. If you have any concerns or would like to discuss this further, please don't hesitate to contact me at president@ecuguild.org.au.

Best Regards,

Sarah Rizwan