To whom it may concern,

Seriously. What on earth is going on in CASS? The proposal to axe funding for tutorials, let alone set the expected tutorial size at 20 students per tutorial is an abominable decision by the CASS administration. I am speaking specifically here to Toni Makkai, Royston Gustavson and Jeffrey Karp - all of whom I know to be supporters of this proposal. The proposed CASS-wide adoption of the ‘Minn’s’ model for educating students is simply ridiculous. To suggest that this will have no impact on the quality of undergraduate education is a blatant lie.

How does CASS propose to conduct the assessment of students without tutors? Without a sufficient body of tutors to facilitate the marking of written assessment - essays and examinations - who is going to do all the marking of those essays? Are you seriously proposing that lecturers mark 100 essays by themselves, twice per semester? If not, then how is CASS actually planning to assess Students' progress and learning? By multiple choice questionnaires? By short-answer ‘pop-quizzing’? By contracting-out and having graduates or lecturers not involved in the course marking the papers? How would this situation not functionally cripple the quality of undergraduate education in CASS?

And what about student welfare? How does CASS anticipate being able to adequately identify students in need of academic and personal support without tutors in courses being able to have close face-to-face relationships with the students? A lecturer who must deal with anywhere between 50 and 300 students per lecture certainly cannot do this task, so how does CASS anticipate being able to identify and help those students who need personal support from their respective school?

And what about the flexibility of tutorials to cater for students who are required to work in order to study? To date, there have almost always been tutorials slated for the early evenings so that students who need to work in order to study can still remain engaged with their coursework outside of 9-5 working hours. The forum/workshop proposal seems to imply that there will be no contingency in place for students who are unable to attend lectures and/or ‘forums’ due to work commitments. This proposal places part-time working students at a structural educational disadvantage precisely because they are already fiscally disadvantaged! How do you plan to accommodate for this given that student poverty is on the rise and students are working harder than ever to support themselves through their studies?

And what about the Post-Graduate Students and Doctoral Candidates? Where are our future educators to get hands-on experience with actually teaching students face-to-face? Why would any university hire a graduate to teach students when that graduate has never had any experience with actually teaching students? This is not only an issue of damaging the employment potential of Post-Graduate Students and Doctoral Candidates by denying them the opportunity for learning to teach, it will create long-term systemic issues for the ANU and Australia by premise of the fact that the ANU will no longer be graduating Scholars who can research and teach, but by graduating researchers with no teaching experience! Where will our future tertiary education teachers and educators come from if not from Post-Graduate Students? And, please explain to me, what better way there is for Post-Graduates to gain teaching experience than by supervised
tutorial teaching under the guidance of senior academics?

Your proposal strikes to the very heart of education at the ANU - and this is to say nothing of the RSHA proposal and your excuse and pathetic and insulting notion of a 2 week consultation period! You are explicitly trying to avoid the sort of outrage that was seen last year with the School of Music. Not only are you deceiving the students and staff, you are taking a coward's approach to these issues.

I will be personally writing to The Canberra Times and directly agitating against these proposals irrespective of the conclusions of your insulting and derogatory 'consultation' deadline.

As a graduate of the ANU who achieved double first class honours in Philosophy and International Relations - I am appalled by this callous and cowardly proposal and feel ashamed to be associated with a College that intends to undermine the very fabric of the education for future generations of undergraduate students. These proposals are a blight upon the name of the ANU and the very concept of Education.

Jason Andrews.