

Name: Celeste Tehan
Course studied/specialisation: BA with majors in Women's Studies & Politics
Year completed: 2004
Campus: Clayton
Country of origin (if you are an international student):

Personal achievements:

Were there any obstacles that you had to overcome to complete your course?

For me, *completing* my degree was a major achievement. In my final year I was diagnosed with a brain tumour and had to have surgery to remove it. Fortunately I didn't have to have treatment but it was a tough time and I almost gave up my studies.

Like most students I found it a challenge to balance work with my studies. I was paying rent, bills & other expenses. I tried to focus on my studies the whole way through and I would knock back shifts if I had to. I worked as hard as possible between semesters so that I could save money to get me through the year.

What personal goals had you set for yourself in enrolling in your course?

My aim was to get the best possible marks I could so that I kept my options open to further study. I also wanted to try a mixture of different subjects in the first two years to get the best out of my Arts degree and choose my majors carefully.

Study experience:

What was your initial goal when you enrolled in your course?

To further my knowledge and gain more understanding about subjects that I was interested at school. I also wanted to gain a conceptual understanding about profound ideas without necessarily having a vocational focus.

How did you find studying at Monash University?

Overall my experience at Monash University was very positive and valuable. I loved studying and always looked forward to my lectures.

What was the best thing about being a Monash student?

The gum trees, Wholefoods café, the excellent library and of course the passionate and dedicated teachers.

Which aspects of Monash University did you find most useful in terms of helping you to achieve your best?

The dedicated teachers and the library.

Why did you choose to study at Monash University?

It was closer to my home than other universities and it has a great reputation.

Why did you choose the course that you chose?

A BA is invaluable. I believe it is unlike any other courses because it teaches you to think. You come away better-informed and with an ability to think creatively and critically.

Were there any lecturers or tutors that particularly stood out? Why?

Nick Economou because his lectures on Australian politics were hilarious.

Jane-Maree Maher & Maryanne Dever because of their passion and creativity

Richard Devetak because his delivery was impeccable.

...and my Spanish teacher whose name I forget! He was also fantastic.

Were there any other positive experiences that shaped your time at Monash?

Did you choose to study at the campus you were based at for any particular reason?

Its proximity to my home.

Facilities:

How did you find the facilities in general at Monash University?

I joined the gym towards the end of my degree and found the staff really helpful and friendly.

Did you use the library much and did you find it useful? Why?

Yes I found it very useful and I used it regularly.

How did you find the IT facilities at Monash and were they helpful? Why?

N/A

Student life:

Did you get involved in any clubs, groups, associations or sporting activities? If so, how did they impact on your time at Monash?

I joined the gym in the second year of my degree. Otherwise I found it difficult to get involved because I had to spend any spare time I had working & studying. However I strongly recommend students to get involved as much as possible.

Career outcomes:

Where do you work now?

I work in the Office of Maxine Morand MP who is the Victorian Minister for Women's Affairs and the Minister for Children & Early Childhood Development. Maxine was appointed to Cabinet last August, following the resignations of the Premier and Deputy Premier. She holds the seat of Mount Waverly.

Do you like your job?

Yes, I absolutely love my job because I work in an office with hard working, passionate people. My job is busy and enormously challenging. This year has been particularly fantastic because of the centenary of suffrage celebrations, abortion law reform and the family violence reform agenda.

What is your position and what does it involve?

I'm a departmental liaison officer. The core function of my role is to liaise between the Minister's office and the Office of Women's Policy.

How did your Monash course help with your career? Are there any aspects of your course that you draw on in particular?

I think that the fact that I studied Women's Affairs and Politics helped me get my current role.

Has your course changed your life in any way?

Studying is life changing and there's nothing more empowering. It gives you the confidence to move forward in life.

Future goals:

What are your future career goals?

I have a dream to work in a newsroom. I'm working on it! Otherwise I'd like to continue working in policy.

Do you have any plans for further study?

I would love to return to study one day because I think it's so important to keep learning.

And finally:

Do you have any advice for someone about to enrol in your course?

People will tell you to get involved in university life, volunteer and join clubs etc however this isn't always possible, especially for those supporting themselves through paid work.

If you have the time, go for it and get involved as much as possible. For those who don't have the luxury of time, my advice is to be strategic and try and choose a job gives you a good set of skills so that you are well-equipped after finishing studies.

Finally, it's crucial to attend all lectures and tutorials so that you get the most out of the university experience. You should be at university because you want to be there and not because going to university is something to do once you leave school.