

Thank you for the time to explain my experience at Living Arts College. In September 2021, after a six-year stint in the U.S. Army, I decided to enroll because I was interested in film school and they seemed like a good fit. They advertised that their students landed jobs at major companies like Epic and Disney. At first, things seemed okay. I was one of the older students and mostly kept to myself and focused on my work.

I started to notice things were not going well after talking to students who had been there longer. Classmates told me that the school had not given them enough support and resources. Other students told me that the career services office was not particularly good. While I was there, six different advisors left that office, and we had three different directors of education.

The turnover pointed to a general problem that the school was not stable. The classes were not well planned. We were given little time to prepare for and produce big projects. Because of the lack of preparation and training, many students stopped coming to class. I began hearing through the grapevine that the school was on shaky footing and may be closing soon. Nevertheless, I stuck it out.

In November 2022, the administration called an “all hands on deck” meeting with the entire school. The vibe was that Living Arts was struggling to come up with funds. As soon as winter break started, the students were told that the school was closing.

You might think that once the school closed, the problems would end. But as soon as the school closed, the career office was nowhere to be found, leaving us to find jobs on our own. I now have a job that has nothing to do with what I studied. And because I used veteran benefits to pay for my education, I have to wait through the GI Bill restoration process for closed schools before I can go back to school. I have had to throw the idea of going to school out the window and instead focus on work. I also know that some of my classmates recently went back to the school to pick up artwork they left there. When they tried to take it home, they were told they couldn't. Due to a clause in a contract with the school, Living Arts “reserved the right to retain samples of the students' work for the college's permanent collection.”

There were too many red flags at Living Arts for it to go fully unchecked. I think more should have been done to make sure the school was sound and a good investment for students.

Thank you for your time.