

NOTICE: Summary and results of the city campus survey for students of the Faculty of Information Technology and Electrical Engineering

In January 2022, the University of Oulu Faculty of Information Technology and Electrical Engineering's student guilds Blanko ry, Oulun Tietoteekkarit ry and Sähköinsinöörikilta ry prepared a questionnaire to survey students' opinions and positions on the Oulu city campus project and its planning. The survey was based on the survey prepared by the Humanities Guild of the University of Oulu and the humanities subject associations in autumn 2021, with a few exceptions in order to highlight the specific needs of the Faculty of Information Technology and Electrical Engineering. The survey did not ask the respondents' student guild.

The questionnaire was designed to be neutral and all the questions were voluntary and anonymous. No identifying information was collected. The questionnaire was open from 21.1.2022 to 30.1.2022. 381 responses were received. There were 13 questions in total, two of which were free-form. Nine of the questions were multiple-choice, allowing participants to select one option. Two questions had multiple choice options and an "other"- field, which allowed adding an option of the participants' own choosing.

A total of 153 responses were received in the two free-form fields of the survey. We also compiled a list of the most frequent topics and themes that emerged from the free-form responses. We illustrated the content of these responses with direct quotes from written comments on the topic under discussion. The question formatting in both open response fields was simply "Free word". A summary of the free-form responses is also included at the end of this summary.

The response rate to the **multiple-choice questions was** very good across the whole survey, with a minimum of 368 responses. The first question asked how well students

felt they had received information from the university about the ongoing Oulu city campus project. 73.4% of respondents feel they have received information about the project either very poorly or poorly. Only 1.8% feel that they have been very well informed about the project.

Students' questions were ignored in the briefing sessions and the October survey on the city campus was a farce. In the latest twist, the minutes of the university board's December meeting have hidden any dissenting opinions and other appendices. Need I say more? Transparency on this project is a long way off.

As many as 68.4% of respondents felt that the university's communication was not transparent and clear enough during the project planning process. Only 8.8% of respondents indicated agreement with the university's communication and 22.8% of respondents did not have an opinion.

The most annoying thing about this whole thing is the secrecy. The smart people in the top positions are on the side of the city campus and then when you ask for justification you get answers like "I can't tell you anything more because of confidentiality, but believe me, this is a really good thing". With Jouko's current outlook, I lean against the city campus, but I might change my mind if I knew the facts. What is annoying is that students are not even appreciated enough to tell us the really valid reasons to support the city campus.

As many as 83.9% of respondents felt that they had not had the opportunity to influence the city campus project. The number of respondents who didn't have an opinion on the matter was more than twice as high as the number of respondents who felt they did have an opportunity to influence the project.

The "participation surveys" sent to students and staff have been a complete joke. Neither gave a real opportunity to express critical views and, for example, not to support the whole project.

The city campus seems to be a personal project of the university's rector, pushed through by force. The involvement of others is mostly illusory.

Surveys in which the university has asked students for their views on the city campus have been very poor. Not once have there been any response options that were against the central campus. This is the first survey where one can actually express one's opinion on the subject.

The opinion of students, the most important aspect of the project, has not been taken into account.

In the fourth question, it was possible to choose between several answer options and to write your own option in the open field. The question was formatted in the following manner: 'What should the university take into account when planning the Oulu City Campus?' Lecture/teaching facilities and independent study facilities emerged in over 300 responses. Students also identified guild and student organization facilities as important with 293 responses and restaurants with 290 responses. The specific needs of the Faculty of Information Technology and Electrical Engineering in terms of facilities were also highlighted, with 271 responses concerning special facilities such as laboratories. Library facilities were also considered important with 226 responses. In addition, under the open "other" option, parking spaces, parking and bicycle parking were highlighted by 15 replies.

Guild rooms are particularly important for students and their lack is a concern in project planning.

The facilities of the subject associations are absolutely essential for grouping and the social aspect of studies, which contributes to coping and studying together. Without independent and e.g. library facilities, self-study becomes impossible when you can't concentrate at home. Although large lecture halls may not be

needed as much as they once were, there are still about 100 students starting in information processing science every year, so we do need some big halls [Author's note: 190 bachelors' and masters' students start every year in the Information Processing Science degree programme].

Students should be offered quiet, enclosed spaces for independent study (not with dozens of other people in the same room). At the very least, there should be facilities for guilds and student organizations similar to those currently available on the Linnanmaa campus.

The preservation of the university's legal deposit library and equal accessibility were overwhelmingly perceived as either very important or somewhat important. Only 7.2% of respondents did not consider the legal deposit library to be important and a significantly higher proportion of respondents could not say.

The university's overly vague "explanations" of what the campus would become have been really confusing and really important things (like the library) have not been addressed at all. I myself had huge concerns as to whether the university management understood at all what they were doing when they started talking about a "library for all the people" in relation to the city campus, for example.

The science and technology faculties that remain in Linnanmaa also need a library!

The large science library in Linnanmaa is not only a cultural center, but also an excellent place for group and independent work. In today's digital world, it is increasingly important to be able to read physical materials, which research has shown are better for learning.

Students feel that the research needs of the Faculty of Information Technology and Electrical Engineering have largely been taken into account either poorly or very poorly in the design of the city campus. Only 3% of the respondents consider that the research

needs of the faculty are very well taken into account, while 28.8% consider that the needs are very poorly taken into account.

It makes no sense to move the existing research staff and equipment (especially in the fields of engineering and science) in Linnanmaa to Raksila, far away from the technology village.

In terms of research and teaching, it is important to maintain a sense of community. I have been able to experience interdisciplinarity under one roof, both as a student and as a researcher, and this is the main asset in Linnanmaa.

I feel that without it, research and teaching would suffer greatly.

The organization of research and teaching activities of ITEE on the same campus was clearly an important issue for respondents, with 65.6% considering it very important, 21.4% considering it somewhat important and a clear minority of respondents either not knowing or not considering it very or not at all important.

UBICOMP and other research departments are important to keep close to students, offering courses and materials.

In my opinion, Linnanmaa is the only sensible location for the ITEE, given its proximity to the Technology Village and the location of the research units.

The interdisciplinary nature of the university and its campuses was also clearly relevant to respondents. 56.9% felt that interdisciplinarity was very important and 32.3% somewhat important. The remaining options were in a clear minority, accounting for only 11% of the total, of which 4% did not know.

For several years now, the University of Oulu has been marketing itself as a joint campus with a special interdisciplinary character, which is precisely due to the joint campus. We currently have a huge number of experts from different fields

under one roof, and this serves the University of Oulu well, both in terms of marketing and in the everyday lives of students and staff. I am not prepared to let go of this asset just for the sake of a city center location.

IF there was room for all other faculties in Raksila, i.e. interdisciplinarity would be ensured.

Being able to live close to campus was not very important for only 15.3% of respondents, but living close to campus was considered very important or somewhat important by 80.7% of respondents.

The organization of housing near the new Raksila campus is a completely open question. While there is plenty of affordable and comfortable accommodation for students in and around Linnanmaa, rents are higher in the city center and there are for example fewer PSOAS properties. This drives students straight into the arms of more expensive private landlords.

Moving to Raksila would either increase the cost of living or make it more difficult to get to the university. There are many affordable student apartments in the Linnanmaa area, which PSOAS has renovated in recent years. The closer you are to the city center, the more expensive it is to live there - especially if all students move there in addition to all those who want to live near the city center otherwise.

Question eleven asked respondents to identify the best locations for a future campus. In this question, respondents had the option of choosing between several options as well as suggesting their own. Linnanmaa has by far the highest number of choices, 325, and Raksila is the second choice, but with only 75 choices. Kontinkangas is third with 40 choices. In addition to these, the city center has received four suggestions in the open 'other' option. There were also several individual nominations for the best location,

including Ratapiha, Heinäpää, Vihreäsaari, Kaukovainio, Helsinki City Center and Toppilansalmi.

A central campus would make it difficult to combine studying and working, as most of the jobs in my field are located in the Technology Village, Linnanmaa. So if I lived in the city center near the university for my studies, I would have to commute to work in Linnanmaa anyway.

The central campus is not even in the city center. Besides, almost all the tech companies are in Linnanmaa, so what's the point of moving the campus away from there?

I also feel it's more important to be close to the technology village than the cemetery.

The last multiple-choice question was whether the respondent would be willing to move to the city center, to Raksila. Almost 60% of respondents would not be willing to move to Raksila and 16.6% did not know. Under a quarter of respondents say they would be prepared to move to Raksila.

I am very ready for the city center, Raksila!

I'm going to graduate out of the way. I'm even considering changing universities, because Oulu's reputation will be ruined by the new campus. High level telecommunications research will turn into mere memory when the facilities are taken away and staff+students are forced to telecommute/school.

Can someone put a stop to this charade? Not that I am against the city campus, but the Raksila area simply does not meet the needs of the ITEE. And why should interdisciplinarity be broken up when our university is unique nationally in this interdisciplinary issue?

I don't understand what the city campus idea is, because I've always thought that the role of a university is to educate and do research. The city campus plan has given me the impression that the university's main task is to revitalize the city center and its other activities come after that.

There were two **free-form** fields in the survey and a total of 153 responses. The open feedback from students on the project highlighted concerns about the decentralization of the joint campus, the perception of the Raksila campus as a futile project and a bad idea, and questioned the rationale behind the campus project. As many as 72 out of 153 responses questioned the purpose, necessity or usefulness of the project as well as whose interests the campus project serves and for whom it is being promoted.

Only six of the responses felt that the project was a good idea, but that its implementation was lacking. Only two responses were unreservedly positive about the project.

In the open feedback, students were also concerned about the inadequate facilities in Raksila, traffic arrangements, the higher rent level in the Raksila area, and the possible unwanted commutes between the two campuses during the study day.

Many respondents also highlighted the project's lack of communication and transparency, as well as a lack of trust in the Rector and the University's Board of Directors. Additionally, the involvement of students and staff was perceived to be very inadequate. A few responses were also specific about the questionnaire received from the university in October 2021 regarding the city campus, which was perceived as non-neutral and leading, and according to the open feedback, did not give the respondent the opportunity to express a negative opinion.

Several responses also expressed concern about the negative changes in student well-being caused by the city campus. These included the increase in distance learning and the loss of community spirit, and the resulting problems of burnout, isolation and mental health.

As the survey was aimed at students of Information Technology and Electrical Engineering, the open responses also highlighted concerns about meeting the specific needs of the faculty and the impact of the move on cooperation with the Technology Village in terms of faculty and research as well as personal life and work. 15.0% of the open responses expressed concerns about the arrangement of laboratories and other specific facilities in Raksila, for example, and stated that Linnanmaa is a better location for ITEE than Raksila because of the proximity to the Technology Village and its companies. There were also concerns about research in the faculty being negatively influenced by the move in several responses.