Stella Lynch

Academic Representative

2nd Quarter Report 2024

Submitted 26/06/24 at 1:17pm

2149 words

**Part One: Executive Officer Position Description Duties**

**9.1. Assume all the powers and duties of the President in the absence of the President, the Administrative Vice-President and the Finance and Strategy Officer.**

No I have not, thankfully.

**9.2. Be a member of appropriate internal committees of the OUSA, including, but not limited to:**

**9.2.1. Standing Committee of the Executive; and;**

**9.2.2. Academic Committee.**

Yes to both of these.

**9.3. Chair monthly meetings of the Academic Committee, ensuring that all committee members are advised of meeting times, that the agenda is prepared and circulated beforehand and that the standing orders of the committee are adhered to.**

Admittedly, the organisation from my end has been average. We’ve met twice, both of which were awesome and productive meetings. The administrative part hasn’t been great from my end which will be worked on – I need to set calendar reminders for these things.

**9.4. Take direction from the Academic Committee on all educational matters relevant to the Association and its members.**

Yes I have. It has been great to have a range of representatives from diverse groups and communities. Concerns raised in Academic Committee meetings have been passed on to groups such as CALT, QAC and BUGS/BoGS.

**9.5. Where reasonable, ensure that different representatives of student educational issues are present on the Academic Committee.**

I’m still working on finding a representative from ODSA. We are both keen to have someone on Academic Committee but the ODSA executive have large workloads and adding another committee for them to attend is currently not feasible. I will work with them to find a solution.

**9.6. Be one of the Association’s representatives on;**

**9.6.1. University of Otago Senate;**

**9.6.2. University of Otago Board of Undergraduate Studies; and;**

**9.6.3. Other University committees, boards, advisory groups and working parties as appointed by the Executive.**

I am one of the Association’s representatives on these groups.

**9.7. Where appropriate, facilitate a variety of student representation on academic related University Committees and Divisional Boards.**

Board of Undergraduate Studies & Board of Graduate Studies are merging and a new terms of reference are being drafted. Membership is still to be discussed but it is essential that the current student roles that are members of either BUGS or BoGS are retained.

**9.8. Where appropriate, brief the President on national and local tertiary sector educational issues and represent the educational interests of students on local body committees and boards.**

Keegan often beats me to this as she hears about big issues in Council first. We do regularly discuss national and local tertiary sector educational issues. I do not sit on local body committees and/or boards to represent the educational interests of students. I would be interested in doing so if an opportunity arose, however I would struggle to fit this into my 20 hour work week.

**9.9. Facilitate and provide feedback and consultation for academic proforma.**

Yes I do. Having Divisional Class Reps has been awesome as I was able to include feedback from one of the reps on an academic proposal. The Humanities Divisional Academic Board have been wonderfully proactive at ensuring OUSA has had the opportunity to provide feedback on their academic proposals. As a result, it appears that more class reps are being independently contacted for feedback on relevant proposals which is amazing to see.

**9.10. Actively inform the student body of issues relating to their education, via publications, promotions and campaigns.**

We are about to start a huge campaign for a policy that will provide students with universal access to closed-captioned lecture recordings. An article was published in the last issue of Critic Te Arohi for Semester One, outlining the need for this policy and the work that is currently being undertaken. Beginning in the first week of Semester 2, there will be a big push to inform students of this policy and to seek their feedback on it.

**9.11. Maintain a good working relationship with relevant Association staff, including the Class Representative Coordinator, and liaise with them on relevant educational issues as they arise.**

Yes I do. Leda Norris is a wonderful person to have the opportunity to work with. We liaise as needed about educational issues and her Class Representatives are absolutely outstanding students. This quarter we created the role of Divisional Class Representative.

**9.12. Act as the Executive’s representative to the Class Representative System and assist in their promotion.**

As mentioned above, we have created a new role in the Class Representative System called Divisional Class Representative. These reps are members of the Academic Committee and are an essential link between the students in divisions and myself.

**9.13. Maintain a good working relationship with the University, particularly with:**

**9.13.1. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic);**

The DVC-A and I meet weekly. We are working on a policy to provide students with universal access to closed-captioned lecture recordings. These meetings are also used as a chance to raise concerns and gain insight on some of the more complex processes in the University. We have an excellent working relationship which has allowed for great progress on our lecture recording policy work.

**9.13.2. The Director of Summer School;**

See 9.13.6.

**9.13.3. The Director of Academic Integrity;**

I sit on CALT with the Director of Academic Integrity. We have a good working relationship.

**9.13.4. The Divisional Associate Dean Academics;**

I sit on a number of boards and committees with the ADAs and have good working relationships with them all.

**9.13.5. The Director of Distance Learning; and;**

I sit on a number of boards and committees with Sarah and we have a good working relationship.

**9.13.6. Dean of Learning and Teaching.**

Tim Cooper is the Director of Summer School as well as the Dean of Learning and Teaching. We have a great working relationship. We meet monthly with Keegan and I sit on a number of boards and committees with Tim.

**9.14. Establish a good working relationship and communication with academically orientated clubs or societies, liaising with the Clubs and Societies Representative as and where needed.**

I don’t regularly communicate with academically orientated clubs or societies unless to ask for feedback on academic proforma. I have a good working relationship with Emma. Together with Tara and Ibuki, we are working on putting together a forum for clubs and societies to attend to hear about the policy for universal access to closed-captioned lecture recordings.

**9.15. Maintain a good working relationship with the Postgraduate Representative, to facilitate communication and collaboration as necessary, across undergraduate and postgraduate academic matters.**

Hanna and I have a good working relationship. We meet as necessary and sit on a few boards and committees together. Hanna is a great sounding board for my ideas and brings an insightful perspective from postgraduate students.

**9.16. Be available via cell phone at all practical times.**

Yes I am.

**9.17. Perform the general duties of all Executive Officers.**

I believe I do.

**9.18. Where practical, work not less than twenty hours per week.**

I worked an average of 20.33 hours per week. This is including a number of hours that I worked unpaid during the summer break.

**Part Two: General Duties of All Executive Members**

**3.1. The appointed term for all OUSA Executive Officers shall commence from the 1st of January and will terminate on the 31st of December of that same year.**

Sounds good.

**3.2. Where reasonable, all Executive Officers are expected to assist as volunteers for OUSA events and functions, including, but not limited to:**

**3.2.1. Assisting at the OUSA Tent City and other activities during Summer School, Orientation and Re-Orientation; and;**

I assisted at the OUSA Market Day in April and was at both graduation parades as well as two graduation ceremonies.

**3.2.2. Assisting with elections and referenda where appropriate.**

I put forward 3 questions for the OUSA Referendum. Two of these were accepted and appeared on the referendum.

**3.3. It is expected that Executive Officers attend Executive meetings.**

I have missed only one Executive meeting this quarter (which I sent my apologies for).

**3.4. Where reasonable, all Executive Officers are to be available for national conferences, national and local campaigns, Executive training sessions and Executive planning sessions.**

I have been present for the planning session that happened this quarter. There have been no national conferences, national or local campaigns or training sessions this quarter.

**3.5. All Executive officers shall:**

**3.5.1. Keep up to date with the Finance and Strategy Officer’s Executive budget, bringing to the Finance and Strategy Officer any spending proposals, keeping track of their spending and ensuring they do not exceed budgeted expenditure;**

I believe that we have an Executive budget but I haven’t seen it. I have not needed to spend any money this quarter.

**3.5.2. Educate themselves on needs and experiences relevant to historically marginalised demographic groups including intersectionality and promote and encourage all demographics to participate, where relevant, in clubs, societies, committees and OUSA events;**

I am trying to incorporate more te reo Māori into my everyday vocabularly. I’ve spent time reading and learning about language, particularly language death; which has made me appreciate the immense knowledge held in languages. I am still pushing for better Māori and Pasifika student representation on academic boards and committees. I can still do better.

**3.5.3. Act in accordance with and uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi while exercising their duties;**

I always try to ensure that Te Tiriti o Waitangi is upheld in all aspects of my role, but particularly in the academic realm. It is integral that if we are to be a Te Tiriti led University, we follow through on this commitment in what and how students are taught. I’ve had a number of conversations in places such as the Board of Undergraduate Studies where I have pushed for proper recognition and teaching of te ao Māori in papers and programmes.

**3.5.4. Where reasonable, attend events hosted by clubs related to historically marginalised demographic groups;**

I’ve started going to te reo lessons at the Te Ropu Māori whare. I’ve only been to one, as then they paused for the exam season but I will be going back to them next semester as I really enjoyed the one I attended.

**3.5.5. Prioritise sustainability and minimisation of environmental impacts in all aspects of their role and keep up to date with environmental issues;**

I’m an Ecology major. This is my jam.

**3.5.6. Every quarter undertake five hours of voluntary service which contributes to the local community; and;**

I did! I did some volunteer work with a postgraduate student on Cromwell chafer beetles which was really cool. They’re critically endangered and only found in one place in Central Otago so it was quite special to be a small part of their conservation work. I also attended a working bee at the peace garden.

**3.5.7. Regularly check and respond to all communications.**

Yes I do.

**Part Three: Attendance and involvement in OUSA and University Committees**

1. Sciences Divisional Academic Board
2. Academic Specialist Weekly Meeting (Present)
3. Undergraduate Quantitative Skills Working Group
4. Quality Advancement Committee
5. Board of Undergraduate Studies/Combined BUGS & BoGS
6. Standing Committee for the Sciences Divisional Academic Board
7. Senate
8. Digital Learning Environment Project Steering Committee
9. Committee for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching
10. OUSA Academic Committee
11. Interdivisional Board of Undergraduate Studies
12. Papers and Programmes Charter
13. OUSA Executive
14. OUSA Executive Standing Committee
15. OUSA Policy Committee
16. Summer School Working Group
17. Advisory Group on Student Advising

**Part Four: Goals and your Progress**

**Transparency around course cuts for future and prospective students**

I am working with the academic specialists to find a solution to release changes about papers and programmes as this is much harder than it sounds. I’ve liaised with Jamie Shaw from University Communications as to the best way to present the “One-Stop Shop” to students. We are getting closer to this going live though!

**Increasing engagement with the class representative system**

We have Divisional Class Representatives! They sit on the Academic Committee and I talk to them regularly. All four of them are wonderful people. There is some work being done behind the scenes that is ongoing and not yet public but I want to acknowledge that there is more work to be done to recognise the hard work class reps do.

**Lecture Recordings Policy**

We are starting consultation hopefully this week! Tara and Buki have been incredible and I couldn’t do this work without them. CALT approved our consultation approach back in May – this was a massive achievement and milestone for this project. Consultation will end on the 29th of July and work on the policy will start after that date.

**Part Five: General**

I believe that I have covered everything I done as part of my role in this report. If you have read this far and have questions, please email me at academic@ousa.org.nz