Stella Lynch

Academic Representative

3rd Quarter Report 2024

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**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.**

I assumed all the powers & duties of President for a grand total of 56 hours when Keegan & Emily were gone. (Un)fortunately, no important decisions needed making.

**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.**

We’ve had no meetings this quarter – there hasn’t been a need. None of the members had items for the agenda and I am waiting on a drafted lecture recording policy before bringing it to the Academic Committee.

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

We haven’t met this quarter so N/A. When we do meet, I do take direction from them.

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

I have a representative from ODSA! I also included a representative from UniQ in the Terms of Reference this year.

**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’m here for all of these meetings

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

BUGS & BoGS have merged and whilst I don’t believe that the official name has been decided upon, I would like to suggest BoGUS (Board of Graduate and Undergraduate Studies) for the sole reason that calling it “Academic Committee” is boring. Gemella and I fought against the proposed membership for BoGUS where only 1 OUSA representative and 1 Te Rōpū Māori representative would be retained. The membership has since been amended and both the Academic & Postgraduate Reps from OUSA and the Māturanga representative and elected Postgrad student from TRM have retained their seats. I have also ensured that Māori and Pasifika student voices are to be included on a Graduate Attributes Working Group.

**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 & I usually see this sort of thing at the same time, or Keegan will beat me to it.

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.**

I have done very little of this this quarter. It will ramp back up come the end of 2024, when we start planning for the 1st CUAP round in 2025. There’s no academic proforma coming through my inbox at the moment because UoO cannot submit anything more to CUAP, and the offerings for 2025 are for the most part sorted.

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

We did the most amazing campaign for the Lecture Recordings Policy Review. The consultation returned over 2000 responses from students on the benefits of making closed captioned lecture recordings universally accessible. We also had 11,000 interactions from students which was quite frankly insane and amazing. Students now ask about this policy review at drop-in tables and I could not be more proud of the work that Tara, Buki and I put into the campaign. I’m also very grateful for the support from the OUSA Exec and wider OUSA crew.

**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.**

I do maintain a good working relationship with the relevant Association staff. Leda Norris is a wonderful person and I greatly value her insights and support. We communicate when necessary and work very well together. I enjoy working with her.

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

I mentioned in my last quarterly report that new Divisional Class Rep roles have been made. With regard to their promotion, I don’t think this is really a “thing” anymore.

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

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

I meet with the DVC-A weekly and we have a good working relationship. We co-lead the Lecture Recording Policy Review and the consultation for this review was undertaken with the DVC-A’s office. I’ve also spent a considerable amount of time this quarter talking with the DVC-A about how the University can communicate with and support students during management of change processes.

**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 ADA’s and have good working relationships with them all. I see the Sciences ADA and Biomedical Sciences ADA most regularly by virtue of me being a science student. I don’t meet with any of them regularly as I see them all often on committees and ask them questions then if need be.

**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. I believe Ibuki has taken on responsibility for representing distance learning students so I don’t have a huge need to meet with Sarah. She is lovely.

**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 and I have the utmost respect for him. Keegan & I meet with Tim monthly and I see Tim of a number of boards & committees.

**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 communicate with these clubs & societies when necessary for feedback on academic pro forma. I have a good working relationship with Emma and enjoy working with her.

**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 liase when necessary but have not done this so much this quarter as we have both been working on quite different projects.

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

Yes I am. I am reachable at all waking hours via cell phone.

**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 was quite unwell over the mid-year break so reduced my hours to 10 hours a week for 2 weeks. I intended to work 20 hours a week after those 2 weeks were up, but then ended up in hospital and was in absolutely no condition to work. After being discharged, I have worked at least 20 hours every week and am trying to make up for the hours I missed. At the time of writing, my 3rd quarter average is 15.15hrs, however if you only include the weeks that I was paid for 20 hours of work, my average is 17.72hrs and the only reason this is below 20 is for the 2 weeks where I was either unwell, in hospital or recently discharged from hospital and on bed rest.

**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 was in hospital when Re-O week started so was not able to assist at any OUSA events that week. I did attend one of the graduation ceremonies in my capacity as Academic Rep.

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

I put forward a number of questions for the FSO by-election forum.

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

I have missed about 3 exec meetings this quarter but that was due to me being unwell or in hospital.

**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 all strategic planning sessions this quarter. I participated in the UAG meeting with Sir Peter Gluckman, the AQA Cycle 6 Audit and the UAG Phase 2 planning session. I also participated in a budget information system with a member of the Advisory Board.

**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;**

We spent some money on the Lecture Recordings campaign. This was for advertising on social media and for giveaway prizes. There was no Finance and Strategy Officer at the time so I believe Keegan kept track of this spending.

**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;**

As a nearly qualified ecologist, I spend a lot of time researching & reading about kaitiakitanga and where and how colonialism intersects with it. I also have much to learn about Te Mana o te Wai and where the Crown does (and doesn’t) uphold its Te Tiriti Article 2 obligations. I will be consulting with a number of historically marginalised demographic groups on the Lecture Recording Policy review in the next quart

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

I always work to uphold Te Tiriti in my duties as a member of the OUSA Exec.

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

I need to go back to Te Reo lessons at the Te Rōpū Māori whare. I went to Te Rōpū Māori’s fundraiser back in August but I really do need to go back to Te Reo lessons at the TRM whare.

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

As an Ecology major, I am as up-to-date as possible. I also do a paper on the RMA and my lecturer is known to send multiple emails over the weekend to update us on the state of the environment.

#freshwaterecologyforthewin

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

I need to do some more voluntary service, but I help out at a student church with general grunt work (Packing up, music equipment etc) and this has amassed over 10 hours this quarter.

**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. Undergraduate Quantitative Skills Working Group
3. Quality Advancement Committee
4. Board of Undergraduate Studies/Combined BUGS & BoGS
5. Standing Committee for the Sciences Divisional Academic Board
6. Senate
7. Digital Learning Environment Project Steering Committee
8. Committee for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching
9. OUSA Academic Committee
10. Interdivisional Board of Undergraduate Studies
11. Papers and Programmes Charter
12. OUSA Executive
13. OUSA Executive Standing Committee
14. OUSA Constitution Working Group
15. Summer School Working Group (Not met this quarter)
16. Advisory Committee on Student Advising
17. Graduate Attributes Working Group

**Part Four: Goals and your Progress**

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

This has kind of been on hold this quarter. I’ve had all cylinders firing on the Lecture Recordings front but since this has slowed down again, I will start working on the “One-Stop-Shop” stuff again. I have permission from the DVC-A to publish changes, so long as CUAP has approved them all. This should be getting published this month – thank Emily.

**Increasing engagement with the class representative system**

We’ve hit a bit of a barrier with involving the class reps in quality assurance systems due to legal challenges. I believe that the work done on this project is confidential so I am cautious to include it in a quarterly report. What I can say is that I will continue to work on this and look for ways to increase engagement with the class rep system that doesn’t cause legal issues to arise.

**Lecture Recordings Policy**

The consultation for this policy review went amazingly well and that is a testament to the wonderful hard work of the exec, especially Tara & Buki. All the feedback received has been read, and the DVC-A’s office is currently working on a draft of the amended policy. The policy will go through a number of focus groups (both student and staff) before making its way to Senate. The best place to be updated about this is by emailing me at academic@ousa.org.nz

**Part Five: General**

Other things that I have participated in/done in my capacity as Academic Representative:

* Read over 3000 pieces of feedback from Lecture Recordings Consultation and then identified themes in each piece of feedback (this took hours upon hours)
* Currently doing statistics on the fail rates of 100, 200 and 300 level papers with more than 10 enrollments. In my mind, any paper with an average grade that is a FAIL, needs to be reviewed and the teaching reassessed.
* I’ve been involved in the HEDC management of change process with Keegan and Tim Cooper. I attended the most recent meeting that Tim had with the postgraduate cohort and offered further support from OUSA.
* I’ve spent many, many hours at the OUSA drop-in table.
* Compiled data on added, amended and deleted papers and programmes
* Met with a class rep for a humanities paper and consulted on exam arrangements for a classics paper
* Buki & I were interviewed by the ODT about the Lecture Recording Policy review (Tara was away so unfortunately wasn’t there)
* Working with CourseSpy to give students a better option for degree planning
* Fundamentally disagreeing with management of change processes