

Stella Lynch

Academic Representative

1st Quarter Report 2025

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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 did not assume the power of the President this quarter.

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.

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.

First meeting of the Academic Committee is on the 25th March. All committee members have been advised of the time and date and student associations have been asked for representatives. There are a number of items ready for the agenda.

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

We have not met yet, however I intend to take direction from this committee.

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

This has been facilitated. A UniQ representative was added last 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.

Yes I am.

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

Tim Cooper and I amended the CALT terms of reference to include a Māori student rep and a Pasifika student rep. The first meeting these students will be present for will be in late March. There will also be Māori and Pasifika student representatives on the Quality Advancement Committee this year.

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.

Not so much formal briefings but more just me sticking my head in Liam's office and asking if he read a news article about something.

I don't sit on local body committees and boards. If the opportunity arose, I'd be keen to do so, however it's more than likely that I will continuously work over 20 hours a week with my current workload, representing UoO students.

I do sit on two national boards/committees representing student's educational interests. These are the Transitional Academic Audit Committee (I am the national student representative) and the ATSA Paid Placement Working Group (I am the OUSA representative). Exciting stuff.

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

This is like half my job at this time of year. So yes.

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

Not this quarter! BUT! You can bet your bottom dollar that I'll have a number of delightful questions to put in the referendum. If we don't get a lecture recording policy passed in Senate this year, I would be very tempted to run a campaign protesting the decision. #giveuslecturerecordings

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.

Donna is a gem – I honestly don't think you'll find a better person than her. I maintain a good working relationship with Association staff. I need to catch up with Leda Norris about class reps again, but we have a good working relationship and she's simply wonderful.

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

Yep.

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

9.13.1. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic);

I meet with Stuart weekly and we have a good working relationship. We are back to working on the Lecture Recording Policy Review.

9.13.2. The Director of Summer School;

See 9.13.6.

9.13.3. The Director of Academic Integrity;

We have a good working relationship.

9.13.4. The Divisional Associate Dean Academics;

I have good working relationships with all the ADA's. They are usually my go-to people to send students to with divisional-specific issues.

9.13.5. The Director of Distance Learning; and;

We have a good working relationship.

9.13.6. Dean of Learning and Teaching.

Tim and I have a good working relationship. We see each other probably weekly on various boards and Tim, Liam and I meet monthly. Tim is a legend and I am very grateful for his guidance on literally anything academic at the University.

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 haven't needed to communicate with these clubs so far this year and so by proxy, haven't needed to liaise with Deborah in her capacity as Clubs & Socs Rep. We do have a good working relationship though.

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

Josh and I have a good working relationship. We sit on Academic Committee together (however we haven't yet had a meeting where we are both there). We liaise when necessary.

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

Yes I am. I have bad work-life balance and so will pick up the phone for a work call at any waking hour. Please don't take that as an invitation.

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 26.65 hours/week this quarter.

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.

Yeah sweet.

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 the treatle fairy at Tent City!

3.2.2. Assisting with elections and referenda where appropriate.

N/A

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

I missed one meeting this quarter but that was because I was at Academic Committee in OUSA capacity.

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.

Was there for nearly all of the training.

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;

Haven't seen the budget yet but I do know it exists.

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 think I will be a life-long learner here. I've done a lot of reading (and then subsequent research) about interviewing marginalised demographic groups in culturally familiar contexts. The specific example that stood out to me was providing appropriate time and space for whakawhanaungatana for Māori focus groups, especially when the aim of the focus group is to hear Māori perspectives. This is something that I'll be sure to incorporate when I run focus groups for the Lecture Recordings Policy later in the year. I am trying to facilitate more student representative positions on University committees for students from these demographic groups. If OUSA is to uphold its Te Tiriti obligations, we should be actively seeking to elevate the voices of marginalised demographics to ensure that they have equitable education outcomes.

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

I always do my best 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 haven't been to any this quarter – I'll do better.

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

With love, I'm an ecologist (if you didn't know) and this is kinda my thing. Also I'm a devoted RNZ reader.

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

I volunteer with Riding for the Disabled Dunedin and it is so FUN and AWESOME! I've done probably 20ish hours with them so far but I'd live in the paddocks with the horses if I could.

3.5.7. Regularly check and respond to all communications.

Yes I do.

Part Three: Attendance and involvement in OUSA and University Committees

1. OUSA Exec
2. OUSA Standing Committee
3. Summer School Working Group
4. Senate
5. Academic Committee
6. Sciences Divisional Academic Board
7. Standing Committee for the Sciences Divisional Academic Board
8. Quality Advancement Committee
9. Digital Learning Environment Project Steering Committee
10. Committee for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching
11. OUSA Academic Committee (Not met this quarter)
12. Advisory Committee on Student Advising
13. Transitional Academic Audit Committee
14. FESC
15. Undergraduate Paper Point Values Working Group
16. Curriculum Management Project
17. LMS Project Change Management Workshops
18. Teaching and Timetabling Committee (stand in for Liam)
19. Teaching Excellence Awards Panel

Part Four: Goals and your Progress

Lecture Recordings Policy

We have a draft policy! Work has restarted on this – the plan is to eventually launch another round of consultation as well as focus groups which is exciting! The timeline keeps extending but I'm confident that we will make it to Senate this year (hopefully in Semester 1).

Paid Placements

I've started having conversations with senior University staff around this – obviously it's a tricky topic to talk about, especially when no one has any money to fund this. Planning to get the ATSA working group going soon so will have more updates when we have met for the first time.

AI Expo

Whoop whoop the University think is this a good idea! I'm going to get a date sorted and hopefully have it in the Link. I plan to have a number of divisional representatives there to chat to students about the current AI policy and hopefully also have some staff and students showing research that they've done using AI. Very exciting stuff!

Part Five: General

Here's a lovely bullet-pointed list of other things I've done for OUSA this quarter:

- Lots of advocacy and emails to the University and course management regarding course approval timelines
- Written a discussion paper for the OUSA Exec on undergraduate paper points
- Lots of confidential chats (sorry Critic)
- Helped out at International Food Festival