

Stella Lynch

Academic Representative

1st 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 haven't seen Keegan leave her office unless on OUSA business. I have not had to assume the powers and duties of the President.

9.2. Be a member of the 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 the first one. Academic Committee members will be co-opted/elected at the next OUSA Exec meeting which is very exciting because we will be doing very exciting work. If you are reading this and are interested in this committee, please email me at academic@ousa.org.nz

9.3. Chair monthly meetings of the Academic Committee, ensuring that all the 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.

Academic Committee has no met because there are (currently) no members, including me. We will be meeting monthly from next quarter. The standing orders of the committee are being adhered to because I have three aggressively highlighted print-outs of the terms of reference on my desk. There is also no agenda to be circulated due to a lack of members of the Academic Committee.

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

Academic Committee has no members at the moment. When we have members (T-7 days), I will be doing exactly this.

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

Yes! I will be changing the Academic Committee terms of reference to include membership of a UniQ representative. Te Rōpū Māori, UOPISA, OISA, ODSA and SPS are also all represented as well as student representatives from divisional boards.

9.6. Be one of the Association's representatives on:

9.6.1. University of Otago Senate

Yes.

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

I was at the second meeting and on a research trip for the first one.

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

Yes I am and there are more of them than I have fingers.

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

Right now I'm trying to get a Te Rōpū Māori rep and a UOPISA rep on the Quality Advancement Committee. These two groups (especially UOPISA) are massively underrepresented in these spaces and we should all be pushing for their inclusion.

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.

Most of this is me asking Keegan if she read the latest ODT article on the University, her saying no and then me telling her what the article said. This is my request for the Academic Rep to please have an ODT subscription so I don't have to fund one myself. I also couldn't brief Keegan on the new Vice Chancellor because she knew before me.

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

This is my new hobby which I spend at least 5 hours on a week. I get at least 2 new requests for feedback a day and would genuinely like more please. Of all the academic proposals that I have been sent this year, I have provided feedback on them all.

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

You bet I am. I'm currently in the process of putting together a massive list of every course change since 01/01/2023 to ensure students can map their degrees for the entirety of their degree, with the most up-to-date information.

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

Yes! I haven't met with the Student Support Centre Manager but I have met with the Class Representative Coordinator (Leda Norris). Leda has essentially overhauled the Class Reps system which is amazing so we have been in frequent comms about this and opportunities for me to work with the class reps. I will be meeting with a select group of class reps 4 times a year to hear their feedback and generally get a vibe check for their cohort.

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

Yes! Unsure how/if they get promoted but that is on the to-do list to talk to the Class Reps Coordinator about. I have been doing the representing part – I'm meeting with class reps 4 times a year.

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

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

We have monthly meetings.

9.13.2. The Director of Summer School,

The day after this report is due, I have a Summer School Board meeting, so will meet the Director of Summer School then.

9.13.3. The Director of Academic Integrity

I have not yet met with the Director of Academic Integrity yet.

9.13.4. The divisional Associate Dean Academics; and;

I will be meeting with the Commerce ADA at the end of the month, and will be getting in touch with the other ADA's to do the same.

9.13.5. The Director of Distance Learning

I sit on a number of boards with Sarah and intend on meeting with her next quarter.

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.

Yes I do, I email these quite lovely clubs and socs when I have relevant proposals to them that I'd like their feedback on. COMSA is the absolute best at this.

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

Yes! Hanna and I have a great working relationship. We regularly communicate about academic matters and collaborate when necessary.

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

I have been called (and picked up) exactly once this quarter by someone wanting to get in touch with me on OUSA business. So yes I believe I have done this.

9.17. Perform the general duties of all Executive Officers.

Please see below.

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

I only picked up my key at the start of February – for those reading this unfamiliar with how OUSA Exec gets paid, we need to pick up our key to start getting paid. Since picking up my key, I have worked 20+ hours a week as well as working nearly that much prior to picking up my key.

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.

Yup.

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 did indeed barbeque at Tent City and I handed out ice cream at the Summer in Danners BBQ where lots of people said nice things about my earrings.

3.2.2. Assisting with elections and referenda where appropriate.

N/A

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

I haven't missed a single one since being elected. I even zoomed into the first Exec meeting from a barn in the Wairarapa.

3.4. All Executive officers shall:

3.4.1. 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 don't believe that there is an Executive budget yet. I have not needed to spend any OUSA money this quarter.

3.4.2. 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 Academic Representative, I chair the OUSA Academic Committee. To ensure that all marginalised demographic groups, I am working on including a UniQ representative in the terms of reference. The lack of Māori and Pacific representation on committees and boards that I sit on was startling and something I plan on changing. Currently, I am pushing for a Te Rōpu Māori and a UOPISA representative to sit on the Quality Advancement Committee.

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

I do a BSc majoring in Ecology and minoring in Zoology. I spent a week studying the environmental impacts of tourists on crabs in the Catlins. I'm good.

3.4.4. Every quarter undertake five hours of voluntary service which contributes to the local community.

I didn't get paid until I picked up my key for the OUSA building so I'd like to propose that the hours I didn't get paid for can be my voluntary service to the local community. I did read 500+ pages of academic proposals for free.

If I can't count my unpaid hours as voluntary service, then I have not undertaken 5 hours this quarter & and I promise I will do 10 hours next quarter to make up for it.

3.4.5. Regularly check and respond to all communications.

Yes I do, mostly to email Keegan with mundane questions.

Part Three: Attendance and involvement in OUSA and University Committees

I will list all the committees, boards etc that I am on here:

- University of Otago Senate
- Board of Undergraduate Studies
- Sciences Divisional Academic Board
- Quality Advancement Committee
- Teaching Excellence Awards Panel
- Sophia Charter Implementation Working Group
- Summer School Board
- Committee for Advancement of Teaching and Learning
- Interdivisional Academic Board
- Teaching and Timetabling Committee
- PVC Health Sciences Recruitment Student Focus Group
- Science Divisional Standing Committee
- OUSA Executive

Part Four: Goals and your Progress

Transparency around course cuts for future and prospective students

Current and prospective students are owed transparency around their courses. I'm in the process now of setting up a "one-stop-shop" where students can go and easily see which courses and papers are being cut and when. This will make it far easier for students to create a roadmap of what they can study. This "one-stop-shop" will be on a webpage on the OUSA website. Currently, I am compiling a list of papers, courses and degrees that have been cut since January 2023. The next steps are to discuss the webpage with OUSA marketing and then keep in constant communication with the Admin Vice-President for them to upload the course changes to the webpage.

Increasing engagement with class reps

Leda Norris (Class Reps Coordinator) has done a big overhaul of the system already (which is amazing). I've been a class rep many times before, and my favourite papers to do it in were the ones that emailed our feedback to the lecturers and then sent the feedback, along with lecturer response, to the paper cohort. This is something that is theoretically mandatory, but I want to crack down on it and ensure that it is happening. I will be meeting x4 times a year with class reps to make sure that I can hear their feedback from their papers and elevate their concerns to the committees that I sit on.

Begin drafting a lecture recordings policy

I meet monthly with Stuart Brock and will also do so with the OUSA Academic Committee. These will be my main avenues for drafting a lecture recordings policy. Whilst it would be ideal to have this policy finished and in place for 2025, realistically, we will have a revised draft of the policy for the end of 2024. I would like to see this policy in place for 2026.

Ibuki, Tara and I have met and will continue to meet to work on this, with a specific focus on including closed captioning on these recordings. I intend to also work with VUWSA to understand how they got their Lecture Recordings policy through.

Part Five: General

I haven't done anything else for OUSA that hasn't fallen under one of the previous categories. However, my email is academic@ousa.org.nz and I will absolutely respond to your emails so please get in touch it would be great to hear from you.