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Sciences Divisional Representative  
1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Report 2010 (1<sup>st</sup> January – 25<sup>th</sup> March)  
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## **PART ONE: CONSTITUTIONAL DUTIES**

The OUSA constitution states that "the Divisional Representatives are responsible for the representation of the students from that division, within the University, the Association and the community". In the case of the Sciences Divisional representative this is taken to mean the students from the Division of Sciences within the University of Otago.

To the best of my abilities I have endeavoured to represent students from the Division of Sciences through the assumption of my executive officer position description duties and general duties outlined in the OUSA Executive Officer Position Description Policy. Applicable duties and their fulfilment are shown below.

## **PART TWO: EXECUTIVE OFFICER POSITION DESCRIPTION DUTIES**

### **Applicable General Duties**

2.1.1 Over the course of Orientation I spent a number of afternoons working at the OUSA help desk, where I offered direction to students around University as well as handing out information and collecting signatures for the Voluntary Student Membership (VSM) petition.

Other activities included spending most/all of my days during Orientation working at the OUSA caravan and associated marquee; this involved further direction to students around University, giving out Orientation bags filled with goodies, handing out information and taking students' photos to be made into key chains – including a key chain for National MPs: Michael Woodhouse and Simon Bridges. I also lent a hand on the BBQ at Clubs Day over at the Clubs and Socs Centre.

2.1.2 In the evenings during Orientation I served as a harassment contact as part of the 'Are You OK?' initiative, this involved spending time at the Orientation gigs. I worked at three gigs; these were the nights of the Toga Party, the Datsuns and the Mint Chicks. I found this aspect of my job one of the most rewarding as it involved applying aspects of my liquor licence training with recent student support harassment training to ensure our members were in a safe environment.

2.2 I have attended all but one of the executive meetings held at OUSA, the one I missed was due to illness for which I sent my apologies. I also attended the New Zealand Union of Students' Associations (NZUSA) conference in Wellington from 28<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> January where I was present at a workshop in every timeslot available. This was an extremely rewarding time for the executive as we got to know each other a lot better through utilising bonding time in the evenings leading to important team building. Personally it was valuable to meet other students who were also beginning executive work at their Student Associations across New Zealand and know that they were facing similar things.

The VSM campaign is the probably the most important campaign that will take place in 2010 for OUSA, this is because it threatens the very fundamentals of the association's existence. I have been involved in

this campaign through the initial brainstorming and calendaring stage with Harriet Geoghegan and Imogen Roth at the Backbencher Pub and Café in Wellington. Since then my involvement has been rather limited, collecting signatures as part of the petition. Recently I helped implement the service blackout and lent a hand at the VSM debate.

Training has been an important part of my first quarter because I am new to the OUSA executive this year. This included executive training in Dunedin when we first got together as a team (including team building exercises), then again in Wellington as part of the NZUSA workshops. Training was also completed for the 'Are You OK?' initiative, communication and coping with conflict, outlook training and report writing.

### **Duties of the Divisional Representative**

7.1.1 I have assisted Stephanie Reader in training of class representatives by attending class representative training with her and Matt Tucker. The majority of this duty is carried out by the Education officer in conjunction with the Student Support Centre.

7.1.2 Class representatives have only been elected within the last month; I believe regular contact with them is unnecessary at this point in time. Regular contact with class representatives is something that will be followed up as we move into the second quarter and beyond.

7.1.3 Further to the points raised in 7.1.2, I believe that encouragement of departmental meetings of class representatives is not appropriate at this time. This will be reviewed and chased up in following quarters.

7.2 I have attended all Division of Sciences Academic Board meetings, of which there have been two this quarter. The Board meetings involved a number of changes to paper titles, prescriptions and prerequisites which are all administrative changes. There have also been a number of big changes coming through the Academic Board, this includes the complete overhaul of the structure and regulations of the Applied Science degree – reducing it from a four year degree to a three year degree with an additional honours year. This Applied Science degree restructuring is part of a bigger review of the Division, which may have further changes affecting students (mentioned in part three)

I also sit on the Health Sciences First Year (HSFY) Board of Studies, I have been unable to attend the first meeting due to University commitments. Stephanie Reader graciously volunteered to sit in on the meeting on my behalf and has subsequently filled me in on the content. I should be able to attend following meetings throughout the year.

7.3 Throughout the quarter I have endeavoured to maintain a relationship with the Pro Vice-Chancellor Keith Hunter, this has currently been through conversations before and after standing committee meetings and at social events such as the Applied Science Colloquia. Mr Hunter is new to the job this year, taking over from Vernon Squire.

7.4 I do not currently display advertising material of personal contact details and office hours around the teaching spaces of my Sciences Division, the physical location of teaching spaces within Sciences is spread across the entire campus and displaying advertising material everywhere would be extremely impractical – utilisation of social media and website advertising may be more appropriate, but fliers may be distributed in the following quarters.

7.5 I currently maintain strong links with the Applied Science Students' Association (ASSA), I am a current executive member of ASSA and will attempt to keep up the amazing job Nathalie did in 2009 working with ASSA. As yet the executive have not met, but I have been in contact with Logan Elliot and Julian Peat over the quarter. I also attended the Applied Science Colloquia where new applied science students were able to get an understanding of the benefits to doing an Applied Science degree, this was useful in maintaining contact with ASSA and associated applied science staff members.

7.6 Most Sciences information that need to be passed on to staff members is usually done through the Education Committee, this has included the Education Researcher Rona Shaw looking into issues surrounding Summer School workloads and timetabling.

7.7 I maintain regular contact with the Education Officer Stephanie Reader, this includes numerous weekly meetings and daily chats in the office. I have brought up a number of education related issues from the Sciences division to receive valuable advice from Ms Reader.

7.8 I am a member of the Education Committee and have attended every committee meeting, including submitting multiple agenda items over the first quarter.

7.9 Balancing science specific work and general work has been easily achieved through turning up to most related meetings and undertaking a number of projects (discussed in part three).

7.10 I can safely say I have met the requirement of working no less than ten hours a week in my position at OUSA, especially over the course of Wellington conference and Orientation. On a number of occasions I have achieved my weekly requirement in one day.

### **PART THREE: GENERAL**

I have undertaken a number of projects within OUSA during the first semester, the biggest of which would be the continued improvement of the Environmental Committee; this has involved familiarising myself with the terms of reference and organising meeting times. It has been a learning curve putting together agendas and chairing meetings but is also very rewarding and I hope to increase the profile of the committee throughout the University. I have amended the Terms of Reference of the Environmental Committee through executive motion to change meeting dates to 'monthly and as required' to bring the committee more in-line with similar environmental based committees. I am hoping to extend membership beyond OUSA executive involving a number of campus groups, Property Services and students working on environmental projects.

I have chosen to sit on the Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee (ESAC) that reports to the Vice-Chancellor; here a number of issues are discussed relating to environmental policy formulation and implementation across the University. I report back on discussions directly to the Environmental Committee, of which there has only been one meeting. I have been actioned to begin work drafting policy relating to 'Travel and Transportation' which ties in well with work being undertaken in Policy Committee.

I have also chosen to sit on the Policy Committee within OUSA, this has been a new challenge for me beginning to understand the complexities associated with drafting policy documents – especially with regards to wording (shall/must/will). I am currently working on drafting a Travel Policy for OUSA executive and staff, this will be quite a large undertaking as it could have far reaching implications and effects. This policy will have similarities to the 'Travel and Transportation Policy' entrusted to me at the ESAC meeting.



I have sat in attendance at the majority of Welfare Committee meetings out of personal interest, this is because a lot of 'hands on' projects are devised here which are both enjoyable and rewarding to partake in. This included the OUSA Great Bucket Delivery, for which I hand delivered fliers for and subsequently actual buckets. I also lent a hand with the Bottle Buy Back at the OUSA Market Day on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March.

I have held informal discussions with Design Students regarding to what extent the applied science restructuring will affect them and their qualifications. Students felt they were being kept out of the loop about the changes which could effectively close down the design department. I have passed these views on to the Division of Sciences Pro Vice-Chancellor Keith Hunter who has attempted to remedy the situation with further communication. The proposal for structural change will go to Senate for approval 'in principle' before it comes back to the Division of Sciences Academic Board where it will follow normal process.

I have responded to invitations to open lines of communications with members of Students for Environmental Action (SEA) and the Regeneration offshoot from the EnviroSchools programme. This has involved liaising with appropriate representatives and discussing environmental related issues involving both the University and students across campus. Communication will now be best achieved through Environmental Committee meetings on a monthly basis.

I have assisted in the promotion of Earth Hour through OUSA, this has involved liaising with Property Services to find out to what extent the University was participating, submitting information to Critic for a story published in issue three and passing on information to the Otago Daily Times to ensure media coverage of the event at the University of Otago.



## GOALS

- Raise the profile of the Environmental Committee amongst both the University and students.
- Assist in the promotion of other environmental events that arise throughout the year.
- Assist in VSM related events run on campus.
- Help ensure communication stays open between the University and design students regarding restructuring changes.

52 words.