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International Students Officer
1st Quarter Report 2019
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PART ONE: EXECUTIVE OFFICER POSITION DESCRIPTION DUTIES

1.1 Promote via publications, promotions and campaigns, an environment within the Association and on campus which is supportive of cultural diversity.

The International Food Festival was promoted through the Otago Daily Times in an article covering Orientation Week. Some promotion for the International Food Festival was done through the OUSA Facebook page and through posters and banners put up at the Tent City site during Orientation Week.

Publications in the first quarter were mainly shared through social media, as this was the most efficient method to share events targeted towards the OUSA-affiliated Cultural Clubs. The affiliated Cultural Clubs also promoted the International Food Festival through sharing the event page with their members in their various Facebook groups, and on their official, public Facebook pages.

In promoting the Street Parade in honour of Otago University's 150th Street Parade, Facebook was used to communicate with the clubs and promote involvement. The International Students' Blackboard page has also been utilised to promote the Street Parade and to share relevant information pertaining to international student issues on a policy level.

1.2 Organise and run events of specific interest and relevance to international students.

I managed to help organise and coordinate the International Food Festival with Emma Anderson from the OUSA Events Team, including during my time away from Dunedin. Welcoming events were held by the respective OUSA Cultural Clubs. The International Committee (ICOM) is planning to hold a Wine and Cheese event sometime this semester for the Cultural Clubs. Prior to its postponement, I coordinated the Cultural Clubs' involvement in the Street Parade celebrating Otago's 150th Anniversary. With Admin Vice-President, Porourangi Templeton-Reedy, plans are in motion to coordinate a Cultural Hour on campus with the involvement of our diverse Cultural Club community.

1.3 Be a member of appropriate internal committees of the Association, including, but not limited to:

1.3.1 International Cultural Council;

Two meetings were held this quarter; one with the ICOM (the new International Cultural Council) executive, and one with the OUSA-affiliated International Cultural Clubs. The first meeting was a dissection of the International Food Festival in terms of its policies and relations with the

Cultural Clubs, as well as future events and involvement in Silverline. The meeting with the Clubs involved discussion with Emma Anderson about International Food Festival feedback, the Cultural Clubs' events for the year and coordination for future events such as Cultural Hour and the 150th Anniversary Street Parade.

1.3.2 Welfare Committee; and

International membership is no longer a part of the Constitution of the Welfare Committee. However, the Welfare Officer, Kerrin Robertson-Scanlon, has expressed that it would be sensible for International to be a member of Welfare Committee. I agree with her on this. There have not been any meetings scheduled during this quarter.

1.3.3 Education Committee.

N/A

1.4 Chair monthly meetings of the International Cultural Council, ensuring that all committee members are advised of meeting times, that the agenda is prepared and circulated beforehand, and ensuring that the standing orders of the Council are adhered to.

I chaired the ICOM meeting this month, made sure everyone was up to date with the meeting time and circulated the agenda through our ICOM Facebook page. The relevant minutes were taken by the ICOM Secretary as well and circulated to all ICOM members via the aforementioned Facebook page. We are due to have our second meeting sometime at the end of March or beginning of April, pending member availability.

1.5 Take direction from the International Cultural Council on all matters relevant to international student members.

During this quarter, ICOM shared feedback regarding the International Food Festival, ideas for future events and any feedback on issues pertaining to International Students. Everyone was actively involved in the planning of our future International events.

1.6 Work on issues specific to international students at the University of Otago, including, but not limited to:

1.6.1 Academic issues within the University; and

I attended a meeting with the Director of International Office, Jason Cushen, to discuss any potential issues and ways I could maintain communication to the International Office if any concerns were to arise.

1.6.2 Social and welfare related issues within the University and the wider community.

I shared a Welcome message on the International Students' Blackboard page during the first week of the semester. From this, I received positive feedback for the message and had students were emailing me about their

concerns. I received an email from an international student regarding difficulties with transferring funds across banks from different countries for fees payment and provided advice as per my personal experience. I received an email from an international student from Denmark regarding ways to meet other students from the same country or continent. My suggestion was to join a group such as the Otago International Friendship Network as they have student involvement from a number of European students. I recommended the Language Centre to a Chinese student whose mother is wanting to practise her English language skills and improve her proficiency and put her in contact with a member of staff.

During my meeting with Jason Cushen, we discussed StudentSafe direct billing for the physiotherapy department. I was put in touch with Danielle Yamamoto-Kerr, Manager of International Student Services and Mobility, to arrange this.

Issues regarding UniFlats were also brought to my attention. I have spoken to the Head of UniFlats, Tony Buchanan, OUSA President, James Heath, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Helen Nicholson, and Director International, Jason Cushen, regarding this matter. This issue is pending further consideration.

After the Christchurch mosque terror attacks, I was in communication with the President of the Muslim University Students' Association (MUSA), Hamzeh Obeidat, to offer condolences and support for Muslim students on campus. I have shared events to show support to the Muslim community with the Cultural Club Presidents via Facebook, such as the Dunedin vigil and Silent March. Aside from MUSA, I have offered support to Cultural Clubs with large numbers of Muslim student members, such as Otago Malaysian Students' Association and Omani Students' Association.

For Race Relations Week, I was contacted by Taylor Terekia regarding a video, "#GiveNothingtoRacism", being filmed by Te Roopu Maōri in an effort to raise awareness about racial discrimination. I have passed this information along to the Cultural Clubs to share with their members.

1.7 Maintain a good working relationship to the OUSA Student Support Centre Manager and Advocates so that the opportunity to share information about academic and welfare issues of relevance to international students is available.

During this quarter, I have not had the opportunity to engage with the OUSA Student Support Manager. I have contacted Sage Burke to set up a meeting to discuss international student concerns. I hope to cover our discussions in future quarterly reports.

1.8 Maintain a good working relationship with the International Office of the University, sharing information and ideas with them when appropriate.

I have met Jason Cushen, the Director of the International Office, to discuss any rising matters and issues. We have set times for regular meetings

throughout the year. We have discussed ideas surrounding how to approach specific international student issues.

1.9 Maintain a good working relationship with the Administrative Vice President, proactively bringing issues relevant to international students to their attention, and, where reasonable, meeting with them on a weekly basis.

I am confident Porurangi and I have a good working relationship. We have discussed the International Committee Terms of Reference and I report back my progress on my projects as necessary when I see him in the Bullpen, at least once a week.

1.10 Work in conjunction with the Finance Officer, the Clubs Development Officer and the Recreation Portfolio Executive Officer to ensure the affiliation and support of international student groups.

Bonnie Harrison, the Finance Officer, and I have a good working relationship. We have worked to create a budget plan for this year. I have been able to contact her about questions regarding the International Budget.

1.11 Perform the general duties of all Executive Officers.

During this quarter, I have done my best to attend and actively participate in most of the OUSA Executive meetings. Although I was unable to attend the training at the start of the year, I have been in regular communication with the President, James Heath, regarding my work, goals and expectations for my role.

1.12 Where practical, work not less than ten hours.

I am confident that I have worked for at least ten hours each week. I have been present at the OUSA Exec bullpen twice a week to answer emails, connect with fellow exec members and organise plans for future events. During the week when I am not in the Bullpen, I am regularly checking my emails, providing support to the International Clubs' events and chairing ICOM and Cultural Club Presidents meetings.

PART TWO: GENERAL DUTIES OF ALL EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

2.1 Where reasonable, all Executive Officers are expected to assist as volunteers for OUSA events and functions, including, but not limited to:
2.1.1 Assisting at the OUSA Tent City marquee and other activities during Summer School, Orientation and Re-Orientation;

During this quarter, I assisted OUSA Events with the planning of the International Food Festival by liaising with the International Cultural Clubs through email. I assisted Emma Anderson in collating all the Food Festival forms into one form, organised the kitchen times and kitchen supervisors, and answered any questions relating to the Food Festival. I supervised the International Cultural Clubs at the kitchens while they were cooking. I was present at the International Food Festival itself and helped OUSA Events with health safety equipment.

2.1.2 At an individual Executive Officer's discretion, be a safety contact during Orientation, Re-Orientation and other OUSA events throughout the year;

I ensured that the International Cultural Clubs were adhering to proper food safety guidelines.

2.1.3 Collecting for the capping charity; and

No collection events have been scheduled.

2.1.4 Assisting with elections and referenda where appropriate, including but not limited to advertising the election and collecting votes.

No elections or referenda were held this quarter.

2.2 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 have attended a majority of the executive meetings, except for meetings scheduled when I was away from Dunedin from mid-January until mid-February.

As the incoming 2019 International Officer, I attended the ISANA International Education Association conference in Sydney in December last year with Umi Asaka, the 2018 International Officer.

2.3 All Executive Officers with control of budget lines, or who have been allocated a budget line, shall maintain detailed budgets and not exceed their budgeted expenditure.

During this quarter, I was allocated a budget line by Bonnie. I have not yet organised any events as allocated under the budget. In future, I will be sure to maintain detailed expenditure of any events and invoices with the OUSA Accounts staff.

2.4 All Executive Officers, where possible, shall maintain regular, publicised office hours, and are expected to regularly check and respond to all correspondence received.

I have maintained regular office hours. To the best of my ability, I also regularly check and respond to all correspondence I receive.

2.5 All Executive Officers shall, every quarter, undertake five hours of voluntary service which contributes to the local community.

During this quarter, I have volunteered my services for the International Food Festival.

PART THREE: ATTENDANCE AND INVOLVEMENT IN OUSA AND UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES

I have attended meetings for the following university committees: Otago Internationalisation Committee; Otago Distance Learning Advisory Board; Otago Health Science Internationalisation Committee; and Otago Tertiary Chaplaincy Trust Board. I was unable to attend and sent apologies to the Summer School and Continuing Education Board meeting this quarter due to health reasons. I was not present for most of OUSA Events Orientation Week due to being away from Dunedin. Despite this, I maintained contact with the Executive, an OUSA Events team coordinator and the Cultural Clubs prior to and during Orientation Week.

PART FOUR: GENERAL

I have attended many of Cultural Clubs' welcoming events on campus.

GOALS/RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Tackle international student work exploitation

International student work exploitation is too common an occurrence, not only in Dunedin, but in all of New Zealand. International students either know someone who has been exploited, do not realise they are being exploited, or do not know how or to whom they can reach out for help. I plan on tackling international student work exploitation in two ways. Firstly, by working with the New Zealand International Students' Association (NZISA) to collect information on work exploitation of international students. With more data, NZISA can make a case with the government to take this issue seriously. In addition, this data can be used to further educate international students and prevent similar situations in the future. If I may be optimistic, this data also has the potential to help create a model in which employers who exploit international students will be held accountable, and cases of work exploitation can be targeted and prevented. Secondly, I plan to raise awareness of this issue among both staff and students. I plan on approaching the Careers Development Centre, so they are also aware of this harm faced by international students and can advise students accordingly in order to prevent exploitation. I also plan on sharing notices and information on the international students' Blackboard page regarding work exploitation.

2. Establish better system surrounding international student fees (i.e. set course fees)

I realise this goal is not likely to be achieved in the next year. It may take several years for this to reach fruition. Due to this, I plan on researching alternative course fee models in order to provide a basis for future International Officers. An international student fees cap has long been fought for over the years. Unfortunately, I must admit that this is unlikely to become a reality. However, it would be beneficial to look at other avenues in an effort to foster more certainty among returning international students in terms of fees.

3. Increase community engagement with international student body

The student body at the university consists of more than a hundred different nationalities. Both domestic and international students can benefit from this global experience. After the Christchurch terror attacks, I am further convinced that community engagement with the international student body is vital in creating a more tolerant, diverse and culturally-accepting society. It would be good to educate Kiwis on diversity and racial awareness, and to give them a taste of differing cultures right here on campus. For international students, it encourages an opportunity to meet new people from all around the globe, as well as from New Zealand. International students should be encouraged to seek and cultivate networks and friendship across countries and culture, in addition to seeking a world-class education. I plan to encourage further community engagement through increasing advertising and press on events such as the International Food Festival and the Cultural Carnival. This has shown to work exceptionally well this year, in the case of the first International Food Festival of 2019, which hit a record profit for the cultural clubs compared to the last four years, in part due to the advertising available during Orientation Week, on OUSA's Facebook page and through Facebook events created by both OUSA and the Cultural Clubs to engage the community.

4. Improve the Otago International Friendship Network (OIFN) framework to encourage further involvement among both international and domestic students

OIFN has conducted various methods and events to encourage friendships between international and domestic students. One of their initial methods was to facilitate an ongoing peer-mentorship programme. Over the last year, this was presented with some new challenges. During an ISANA International Education Association conference held in Sydney in December last year, I attended a session about a successful peer-mentor programme being carried out in Adelaide, Australia. The speakers shared their framework during this session and I have forwarded this to the OIFN coordinator, Justene Allen from the International Office. I hope to work more with Justene this year to implement this framework and improve OIFN's peer-mentor programme for the purposes of promoting interaction among the international and domestic student cohorts.

5. Look at where medical insurance options can be improved

A number of concerns have been voiced by the international student community regarding medical insurance options, especially around reproductive healthcare and ability to access mental health support without families potentially being notified. To support this, I will look into the numbers of international students and the services they access. It would also be useful to look into options for extending the StudentSafe insurance plan to include more reproductive healthcare services, and more discretion for students accessing mental health services. Additionally, it may also be worthwhile to look into arranging direct billing for international students under StudentSafe in other pharmacies and healthcare centres.

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