



UOPISA

University of Otago Pacific Islands Students' Association

President of the University of Otago Pacific Island Students' Association

Seluvaia Ratoul

1st Quarterly Report 2025

Submitted: Sunday 16th March at 2pm

Word Count: 1918

Part 1: Executive Officer position Description Duties

- 1.1 The University of Otago Pacific Islands Students' Association President shall be a voting ex-officio member of the OUSA Executive**

In the meetings I have attended I have voted when matters are presented to the Otago University Students' Association Executive.

- 1.2 The duties of the University of Otago Pacific Islands Students Association President are outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding between the Otago University Students' Association and the University of Otago Pacific Islands Students' Association (UOPISA)**

The Memorandum of Understanding between OUSA and the UOPISA has yet to be met and passed but should be very early in the 2nd quarter!

- 1.3 Where practical, perform the general duties of all Executive Officers**

See in Part 2.

Part 1: Continued

The President is the primary elected representative of members of UOPISA. The President will lead UOPISA in fulfilling its core functions and achieving its goals.

- 1.1 Main spokesperson or representative for UOPISA**

I have represented UOPISA at a events such as:

- i. Attended and spoke at the Welcome of Dianne Sika-Paotonu as Deputy Vice Chancellor, Pacific
- ii. Attended and spoke at Taimane (Pacific Academic Mentoring Programme)
- iii. Meet and Greet with Matt Angel and the Academic Committee and Services Team
- iv. Meet and Greet with Dave Scott – University of Otago Proctor
- v. Meeting with Hon Grant Robertson, Vice Chancellor
- vi. Meeting with Hone Paul – Director of Marking
- vii. Monthly meetings with the University of Otago Pacific Leadership Group (PLG)
- viii. Senate
- ix. UOPISA had a tent for Clubs Day

UOPISA Member Association Events

- x. Attended and Chaired the Kiribati Students' Association SGM and Welcome
- xi. Attended and spoke at the Pacific Island Law Students' (PILSA) Association Welcome
- xii. Attended the Niuean Students Association Welcome
- xiii. Attended the Otago Business School Pacific School Welcome
- xiv. Attended the Pacific Island Commerce Students' Welcome
- xv. Attended the Tongan Students' Association SGM

1.2 Chair and convener of executive and general meetings

I have chaired all UOPISA meetings and Presidents' Standing Committee.

1.3 Chief Representative and responsible for all internal and external relations

Other than attending PLG meetings, I am in contact with UOPISA's member associations through either social media or in person. Although it is an incredibly busy time for our member associations, I am grateful for the one-on-ones I have had with Presidents and wider executive members. The future of Pacific Leadership is bright!!!!!!

1.4 To establish and maintain our relationship with OUSA, Te Rōpū Māori and the University, where appropriate

I have attended 1 of the 3 exec meetings so doing pretty good so far. I met up with Liam before Uni started to introduce ourselves and to pre-emptively talk about the year and how UOPISA and OUSA can work together. I also joined the OUSA retreat in Waiholā for a few hours to introduce myself to the rest of the Executive, who have been great and have fostered a welcoming space.

Need to organise a proper catchup with Ngātiki and Pou to discuss how TRM and UOPISA can work together this year! But I am super excited to see our executives work together in full force this year.

1.5 Establish and maintain relationships with external/internal stakeholders where appropriate

- i. Professor Dianne Sika-Paotonu (Deputy Vice Chancellor, Pacific)
- ii. Tagilima Feleti (Manager of Pacific Islands Centre)
- iii. Dr. Edmond Fehoko (Associate Dean Pacific Division of Sciences)
- iv. Dr. Michelle Schaaf (Association Dean Pacific Division of Humanities)
- v. Dr. Rose Richards (Deputy Director of the Va'a o Tautai in the Division of Health Sciences)
- vi. Jo Oranje (Manager Student Pastoral Care)
- vii. Gaseilevao (Nas) Faletolu-Toaiva (Te Whatu Ora)

Member Associations <3

- viii. Biomedical Otago Pacific Island Students' Association
- ix. Humanities Otago Pacific Island Students' Association
- x. Otago Cook Island Students' Association
- xi. Otago Fijian Students' Association
- xii. Otago Kiribati Students' Association
- xiii. Otago Melanesian Island Students' Association
- xiv. Otago Niuean Students' Association
- xv. Otago Samoan Students' Association
- xvi. Otago Tongan Students' Association
- xvii. Pacific Island Health Professional Students' Association
- xviii. Pacific Island Law Students' Association
- xix. Otago Pacific Island Commerce Students' Association
- xx. Science Students' Pacific Island Association

Part 2: General Duties of All Executive Members

2.1 The appointed for all OUSA Executive officers shall commence from the 1st of January and will terminate on the 31st of December of that same year

Still in progress.

2.2.1 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 helped out with Tent City. BBQ'd some snags, good fun.

2.2.2 Assisting with elections and reference where appropriate

N/A.

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.

Like I said I have attended 1 meeting out of 3 of them. But I do intend to make all of the meetings in the next quarter! I did not attend the training sessions at the start of the year due to other UOPISA commitments and/or summer school but I tried to make it up for it other ways, like that treacherous drive to Waihola in the fog had to be worth something!

2.3 All Executive officers shall:

2.3.1 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;

N/A

2.3.2 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;

Lived and experienced it! In saying that, I do believe it's just as important to keep growing my knowledge of the experiences of all marginalised groups in Aotearoa, especially for Pacific peoples to recognise our status as Tangata Te Tiriti. Although we face similar hardships as Māori we must not forget our obligation to honour Te Tiriti in advocacy and in our daily lives.

2.3.3 Prioritise of sustainability and minimization of environmental impacts in all aspects of their role and keep up to date with environmental issues;

An area for improvement for UOPISA. As young Pacific Islanders we UOPISA are not strangers to the effects of climate change on our Islands, but setting concrete policy pertaining to the sustainability and minimisation of environmental impacts needs to be done.

2.3.4 Every quarter undertake five hours of voluntary service which contributes to the local community;

Super grateful that this role allows me to do this virtually every day. I have attended many events and meetings which allow me to connect

with our local community and I am so glad I am able to establish and maintain UOPISA's relationship with our wider Dunedin Community.

Currently I am working with Te Whatu Ora and Southern District to facilitate interpreting services to Pacific Island patients at Dunedin Hospital. Currently in the process of organising a meet up with the team to discuss how I can help!

2.3.5 Regularly check and respond to all communications

I think I'm pretty good at this!

Part 3: Attendance and involvement in OUSA and University Committees

1. OUSA Executive
2. PLG (Student Representative)
3. Senate
4. UOPISA Presidents' Standing Committee

Committees yet to begin:

5. Advancement of Teaching and Learning (CALT)
6. OUSA Constitutional Review Committee
7. University of Otago Blues and Golds Panel

Committees delegated to UOPISA Executive members:

8. Distance Learning Advisory Board
9. OUSA Academic Committee

Part 4: Goals and your Progress

1. Build genuine and meaningful relationships with our 13 member associations with wrap around support.

One of my main goals I had from the outset was to ensure our 13 member associations feel suffocated with support. Financially this will look like solidifying the Equity Fund for our member associations to ensure they are guaranteed financial support in the coming years.

I have also changed the way our UOPISA mentors are assigned, so our member associations have a mentor who has pre-existing connections to these associations and more importantly clubs are equipped with UOPISA mentors who understand the inner workings of each individual association.

Beyond that, I have done my absolute best to foster genuine relationships with our member associations. Although there is so much work to do in this space, I am so excited to work and build on this. Shout out to our amazing member associations they really do all the mahi while UOPISA gets the treats. THANK YOU!

2. Advocate!!!

I do not carry the weight of the role lightly and recognise all the mahi from the past UOPISA Executives who have ensured that 1) UOPISA members are paid like our parallel student body counterparts OUSA and TRM and 2) Ensure our member associations receive funding through the Equity Fund. I am in a privileged position and recognise past executives did not have the resources I and UOPISA have today. Therefore it is only right to continue the advocacy of past executives.

1st Establishment of UOPISA Fale

- This manifested from the need to have an office space something the intention is that the space will be the main base for executive operations including, but not limited to, formal meetings, office space, equipment and archival storage, and for events. More importantly, it is a space for our member associations to access and utilise. Currently I have been reading through a Fale policy drafted by previous UOPISA executives, so in the current stage is just finding a space that is available.

2nd Gather advocacy priorities from our member associations to support and lobby

- From talking to the Pacific Island Law Students' Association, establishing Pacific Island Law Pathways is a priority for them, so I have organised a meeting with the PILSA President for the coming Friday. I am curious to know if there are more concerns from our member associations that UOPISA can raise. So I have asked the rest of our member associations to do the same, and bring these to me as soon as they can.

3. More UOPISA Held Events!

- The burden of organising consistent social and academic events falls on our member associations. Given the diverse backgrounds and academic divisions our students represent, it is also important that UOPISA hold events that are inclusive and open to all students, and more so a way for all of our Pacific students to get together. Fortunately, I have the best Executive team who are working to make this happen!

Part 5: General

Throughout this quarter, I have been in constant contact with associations to aid with their Special General Meetings and Welcomes that occur in March, as well as tried to help new associations with things as little as booking meeting rooms. I have also tried to utilise the 1st quarter to gain as much insight as to what our Pacific students and member associations want from UOPISA.

Currently I am also organising a focus group of Pacific students' for Gordon Roy to gain insights as to what Pacific students' want in terms of dedicated spaces for Pacific students across campus.

It has been a busy quarter for me specifically so learning to find a balance and delegating more will be an important priority for me in the 2nd quarter. Otherwise I love the work and I love what I do in this role and can't wait to see what the finish line has in store when all is said and done because I have a feeling its going to be a loonggg year.