**Josh Stewart**

**Postgraduate**

**Second Quarter Report 2024**

**Submitted June 15th**

**Word count: 2094**

**Part One: Executive Officer position Description Duties**

**11.1. Promote via publications, promotions and campaigns, an environment within the Association and on campus which is supportive of postgraduate students.**

I have used both social media, and Critic, to promote SPS activities and events from the Graduate Research School (GRS) and have also been asked to advertise the upcoming New Zealand International Science Festival, who are seeking postgraduate volunteers.

**11.2. Work with the University and the Student Support Centre to implement the Association’s policy on Postgraduate Student Representatives.**

I visited Student Support once to discuss what support is available for a student who inquired about OUSA support.

**11.3. Be one of the Association’s representatives on the University of Otago Senate.**

I sit on the Senate and have attended 3/4 Senate Sittings thus far this year.

**11.4. Be a member of appropriate committees of the Association, including, but not limited to:**

**11.4.1. Society for Postgraduate Students; and;**

I am currently the Chair.

**11.4.2. Academic Committee.**

I have attended the OUSA Academic committee, and looking forward, there will be some Academic committee work on advancing the lecture recordings policy.

**Additional:** Political Steering Committee. I have sat on Political Action Committee and taken minutes. I also have written, on behalf of Political Action Committee, as submission against the Regulatory Standards Bill.

**11.5. Chair monthly meetings of the Society for Postgraduate Students, 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 committee are adhered to.**

N.A. There is no SPS executive. Please see Part Four for more details.

**11.6. Take direction from the Society for Postgraduate Students on all matters relevant to postgraduate members.**

N.A: However, I have taken direction from the Divisional Postgraduate Representatives on several matters which I have taken directly to GRS. Please see Part Four for more details.

**11.7. Be the Association’s representative on the Board of Graduate Studies.**

BoGS has been disestablished, so I would recommend in future this clause be reworded to read: “Be the Association’s representative on the University of Otago Academic Committee”. I have attended all Academic Committee meetings.

**11.8. Maintain a good working relationship with relevant OUSA staff, ensuring that information is shared on issues of relevance to postgraduate students.**

Donna is incredible (but we knew that). I haven’t had much else to do with other OUSA staff thus far, although the Clubs and Socs Tour was very fun!

**11.9. Facilitate a variety of student representation on postgraduate related University Committees.**

I continue to voice my perspectives on the committees I sit on. In particular, I have raised the concerns of the tutor workload that postgraduate students may be expected to do with more enrolments, and the implications of this on graduate research workloads.

**11.10. Maintain a good working relationship with the Director of Graduate Research School and endeavour to meet with them on a regular basis.**

I have so far met with Diane Ruwhiu twice this year, and both meetings have been productive. I also see Diane on several university committees. We both have an understanding to want to do more together.

In addition to Diane, I also have a good working relationship with Nick Barker, who is a Senior Professional Practice Fellow at GRS. He has advertised GRS events to me that I can then pass onto Postgraduate Students, and in turn, I have provided him with postgraduate feedback for what students would like.

**11.11. Maintain links with and assist affiliated Postgraduate bodies.**

In late May, Logan Chalmers, a Postgraduate in Marine Science reached out, and we met. This meeting was an important snowballing meeting for later postgraduate student engagement. However, this is still an area where I need to do more work in.

**11.12. Maintain a good working relationship with the Administrative Vice-President, proactively bringing issues relevant to postgraduate students to their attention, and meeting with them on a weekly basis.**

Amy Martin and I have met bi-weekly, sometimes doing calls or text updates if we can’t meet in person. I have looked to take direction from her and her management and encouragement has been important for keeping me on-track and motivated.

**11.13. Sit on the Society for Postgraduate Students as an ex-officio member and maintain and fulfil the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding held between the Association and the Society for Postgraduate Students.**

I am the Chair of SPS.

**11.14. Perform the general duties of all Executive Officers.**

I have been performing general executive duties.

**11.15. Where practical, work not less than ten hours per week.**

I have not yet been working 10 hours a week (as of writing 8.29 p/w for the second semester), and this is reflected in my hourly breakdowns. I would add that this is partially due to one week when I was away on family matters, and one week of the mid-semester break. However, this is an area that Amy Martin and I have identified as needing to put some more work into.

**Part Two: General Duties of All Executive Members**

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**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.**

**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;**

This has not been applicable so far, however, I will be here for Re-Orientation!

**3.2.2. Assisting with elections and referenda where appropriate.**

I advertised the referendum, and submitted a referendum question, and was at the Executive Meetings when the Referendum Question shortlist was hashed out.

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

I have attended most executive meetings, unless I have had clashes or been out of town. Unfortunately, due to a tutoring commitment, I had to leave six executive meetings before we had finished. I am not tutoring that paper again this semester coming so I will be more available.

**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.**

**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;**

I have not had any spending beyond budgeted expenditure or personal expenditure.

**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;**

This semester, I have tutored MAOR110 (and Liam and Deborah as a result), however this is something I could do more work in. I am not returning to tutoring so this is something I can look to in the Third Quarter.

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

I believe I have.

**3.5.4. Where reasonable, attend events hosted by clubs related to historically marginalised demographic groups;**

I have not attended many club events this year, so this is a space I can do more in (although your Matcha Cookies were awesome Buki!)

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

I sit on the Air Travel Steering Group and will continue to remain a part of this steering group. I could also aspire to make more environmentally conscious personal choices.

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

I am actively involved in the New Zealand Red Cross, where I volunteer approx. 3-10 hours a week.

**3.5.7. Regularly check and respond to all communications.**

I routinely check my emails.

**Part Three: Attendance and involvement in OUSA and University Committees**

I sit on the HUMS Academic Committee, HUMS Divisional Board, the Air Travel Steering Committee, GRS, Graduate Research Student Liaison Committee, the Human Ethics Committee, AOCSG, and the Library Services Committee. I have attended over 90% of all these meetings and have only sent apologies when I have been out of town.

**Part Four: Goals and your Progress**

**SPS**

In early April, I organised and advertised an SGM for SPS, as I discovered on arrival that an AGM hadn’t been held the previous year. I had a poster made; I advertised on social media, in Critic, and sent an email to the previous year’s mailing list. Quorum was made (just), some robust discussions were had (thank you Deborah for taking minutes!), however, after the Chair’s report, and my election to the Chair’s role, no wider SPS executive was elected. After this, I was frankly demoralised, and so SPS work fell off at that stage. I ran a survey on Google Forms but only received 17 responses. At this stage, I was quite put out, and was probably guilty of thinking it was a redundant exercise.

However, in early May, a student reached out to me for a meeting about postgraduate engagement. From that meeting, I set up a meeting with various divisional representatives and programme postgrad reps. We had the meeting, and at it SPS was discussed. At the meeting, we agreed that it would be better to leave the academic or career development side to university programmes like GRS and inform them of what we would like to see. We decided that the main thing we would like to see from SPS is social events and be a space for postgrad students to come together, meet other postgrads, and be part of a broader postgraduate community. From this came the idea of a monthly postgrad morning tea, and the first one of these was held on the 12th June. A divisional representative agreed to help me with advertising, and posters and flyers were made. This was a tremendous success, with higher turnout than for the SGM, and an interesting range of students from all divisions attending.

The plan now for SPS, with me as chair, is to run low-cost engagement events for this year, build up a network, and work in conjunction with the divisional reps to advertise and build up wider postgrad networks. It is also imperative that we have a 2025 AGM proper during the stipulated window of 1st September to 31st October, as this was a major learning from last year’s SPS.

**Local Body**

While I am not the Politics representative, I have communicated that I want to be involved with the OUSA Local Body Elections campaign, as [art of the work of the Political Action Committee.

**Other**

At the SPS Postgraduate Morning tea, a contingent of students came over from the Division of Commerce, including several mature students. One of these said that he was happy to have been invited to a face-to-face event, and that this is something that could be done. After this conversation, I am going to arrange a meeting with the Division of Commerce postgraduate students, and go over, in person, and introduce myself and OUSA to them.

A new goal has also emerged: Engagement with non-Dunedin campuses. After the GRSLC meeting, I arranged a zoom with Ellie Johnston, the Postgraduate Representative for the Wellington campus. When we called, she revealed she was appreciative for the outreach, and this was something she felt had been lacking. I have another call scheduled with her, the Christchurch-campus Rep, and Jo Oranje.

**Part Five: General**

My family circumstances have been noted in a previous quarterly report. This semester, while the raw shock has subsided, I have probably been only operating at c.60-70% of what I know my capacity to be this year. This has not been an OUSA-exclusive phenomenon, but across other work and volunteering. Consequently, I have not, by my own admission, been as effective in the role as I might have otherwise been. I acknowledge this shortcoming

However, in the last three weeks, I feel that I have really turned a corner and beginning to get quite comfortable in the role. Successful postgraduate outreach, the first major SPS event, and getting more comfortable with the job mean that I feel I am beginning to pick up some momentum and re-found the joie de vivre and passion. With ongoing projects, plus local body, I feel much more optimistic going forward that I have a firm grip on the role.