



EXECUTIVE HALF YEAR REPORT

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NAME	Tori Sellwood
POSITION	Clubs & Activities officer
REPORT PERIOD	1 st January – 30 June, 2016
HOURS WORKED	284.75
HOURS REQUIRED	254.25

Priority Goals:

1. Goal 4 – Services

Clubs Council and Sponsorship Panel Reform

My main focus as the beginning of the year was reforming the VUWSA Clubs Council to allow it to play a more meaningful role within the University. Over the past few years Clubs Council has predominantly focused on providing recommendations on Club sponsorship applications that would then be considered by the Sponsorship Panel. This was a time consuming task, which prevented the Clubs Council from fulfilling its purpose of representing Club Members by raising broader issues and influencing the strategic direction of the VUW Clubs Community.

To ensure Club Members were being adequately represented and the services provided were sound, I reformed the Clubs Council. Council no longer considers sponsorship applications at their meetings. Council members have the opportunity to sit on the Sponsorship Panel to provide input into application decision making. The Clubs Council now focuses on bringing to light and providing recommendations on the broader issues that Clubs may face.

To begin this transition the Clubs Council now individually contacts each Club, and identifies their current needs. They then provide recommendations on how to resolve any issues; and issues are provided to the Recreation Centre as part of their Trimester 2 Club Support Review.

Throughout the above process it was also necessary to reflect on the role of the Sponsorship Panel. The Panel membership was necessarily altered by adding up to two Clubs Council members to the Sponsorship meetings. It also meant the Sponsorship Panel would provide greater scrutiny over the club sponsorship applications as they could not rely on the scrutiny of the Clubs Council that had previously been provided. A Terms of Reference for the Sponsorship Panel is currently being developed to clarify the reporting lines and decision making powers of the Panel and Clubs Council.

The modified structure of the Sponsorship Panel has worked well as it has allowed the Panel to have a more holistic conversation about sponsorship and identify issues in the process. At the end of the year the Sponsorship Panel will reflect on the year of sponsorship and develop precedents and guides to help improve the process for years to come and ensure the equitable standards we strive for are being upheld.

Clubs Website

Another predominant focus of mine during the first half of the year was to reshape the Clubs pages on the VUWSA website. At one of the first Clubs Council meetings it was identified that neither the VUW nor VUWSA website offered comprehensive information for Clubs that could answer all generic questions. The information was shared across the two websites in an unclear manner and it was difficult for Clubs to find what they needed to know.

I researched and compared the content available for Clubs on the websites for other Universities and developed a proposal to alter what and how information was provided on the new VUWSA website. Working with Tim and Christina (VUWSA staff), we decided that we would update and add to the information on the VUWSA website, such as finding a club, starting a club, running a club, sponsorship, Blues and Golds Awards and on Clubs Council. This is still in development stages and will hopefully be launched early next Trimester. The updated Clubs section on VUWSA's website will provide comprehensive information for new and existing clubs; and links to the information that is provided on the VUW website, which will allow easy and efficient navigation.

ACSSL Recreation Review

This year a review of the services provided by Recreation was undertaken. I was involved in this process and ensured that a comprehensive review was completed and that relevant issues were identified. This was particularly important for my Clubs portfolio as Clubs Support is administered by Recreation. I worked closely with Jono, Rory, and Nathaniel to develop proposals for the review on behalf of VUWSA to ensure the student services levy was being well spent and the services provided by Recreation were constructively critiqued.

2. Goal 3 – Equity

Golds and Supreme Club Awards

Early in the year I became aware that although VUW celebrates and awards sporting excellence, there was no award ceremony that celebrates cultural or club success. When the Blues Awards meetings to plan the event later in the year commenced, I enquired into the possibility of creating an awards ceremony to celebrate both the individual cultural success of VUW students and the achievements of outstanding clubs. It was noted that although the possibility of such an event had been discussed in previous years, there had been no formal action to implement it.

To ensure cultural and club excellence was not already being recognised, I undertook a review of the current award ceremonies offered at Victoria University. There are four main ceremonies that celebrate student achievement including the Blues Awards, the Vic Plus Awards, Vic Volunteer Awards, and the VUWSA Student Representation Celebration Awards. An awards ceremony recognising exceptional achievement in the cultural sphere with the same prestige as Blues Awards, as well as a ceremony celebrating the outstanding achievements of how Clubs enriches the student experience, were noticeably missed.

I then undertook a comparative analysis of the models used at other universities to celebrate sporting, cultural and club excellence. Every other university in New Zealand has an awards ceremony to celebrate success in the cultural and club spheres. There are two main models: (1) a combined event recognising individual sporting and cultural excellence as well as outstanding clubs within the university (2) two events separately recognising sporting excellence on the one hand, and cultural and club excellence on the other.

I presented my research to relevant VUWSA and Recreation representatives and proposed that we adopt a separate event to the same prestige as Blues Awards, which recognises exceptional achievement in the cultural sphere and outstanding clubs within the university community. This would allow the Blues Awards planning and marketing to go ahead as planned (a combined event would be too large and too long). I also recommended that we adopt a model recognising exceptional cultural achievement through a “Gold Award” and outstanding Clubs through a “Supreme Club Awards”.

I used the criteria from other universities as a foundation to develop unique criteria for VUW’s own awards ceremony working closely with Roselle, VUW’s Clubs Administrator. We decided on five different Club Awards and created high level criteria for the Gold Awards for individual cultural excellence, and of an equivalent standard to the Blues Awards.

The Gold and Supreme Club Awards were unanimously accepted as a necessary, and all relevant stakeholders were on board. The difficult part was securing the finances to fund the event. However, the event has been strongly supported by the University who have agreed to fund a budget that Mali (VUWSA Events Manager) developed. The event will go ahead on the 6th of October this year, which was a huge win for the equitable celebration of student success.

Other Goals

3. Goal 5 – Activities

Faculty Games

The Faculty Games is the biggest sporting event under my portfolio that I take the lead on. Rory McNamara, the 2015 Clubs and Activities Officer, worked hard to re-establish the Faculty Games as a prominent event in the events calendar after not taking place in 2014.

The event has really good foundations, but this year I want to develop it into a much bigger involving more than just the sport. The Games will be held in September, however and event planning is already underway. This year I am working more closely with Recreation than in previous years, as they have great infrastructure for events such as these.

My point of contact has been Josie Fitzsimons who has been very helpful in setting a date and ensuring preliminary matters are organized in a way that will work logistically on the day. We have decided there will be four sports tournaments with three being played on the Boyd Wilson Field and one in the Main Gym. There will be a much greater emphasis on getting the support crew involved with awards for best chant, best uniform, and best mascot among other things to help grow the event and build better foundations for years to come. The next step will be for me to consult with the different faculties at the University to get them on board and give them time to get teams together.

General Tasks and Initiatives

1. O-Week

I was involved in supporting the O-Week events and activities that we hosted including MC-ing the Welcome Festival.



2. Clubs Week

At Clubs Week I engaged with a lot of clubs who had stalls and promoted the newly reformed Clubs Council with support from Engagement VP Nathaniel.



3. Flu Shots

I helped with the administration of Free Flu Shots.



4. Active A 2 B

We created a team to represent VUWSA in the Active A 2 B Challenge, which was run by the Greater Wellington Regional Council to encourage people to take public transport or walk to work.



5. Stress Free Study Week

I helped with Stress Free Study Week to provide services to students to reduce stress in a very stressful time of year!

5. Salient Column

I wrote a column for Salient on Skype Interviews.

6. Residential Tenancies Amendment Bill Submission

I made a written submission to Parliament on the Residential Tenancies Amendment Bill.

7. Club Events

I tried to attend different Club Events throughout the Trimester to support and promote them. These events included the Just Speak “Justus” evening where a performance by Massey University Students and a panel of speakers addressed the problems with including 17 year olds in the adult criminal system.



Representation

1. Clubs Council

I am the Chair of Clubs Council which is an elected body of Clubs Members representing the interests of the clubs community as a whole. We attempt to make strategic decisions that help provide sound services for the clubs that enrich the student experience.

2. Sponsorship Panel

I am also a member of the Sponsorship Panel, which makes decisions on applications by clubs and individuals for the sponsorship of different events and endeavors. This is a partnership between Recreation and VUWSA to help facilitate the exceptional talent the student body at VUW possesses.

3. Executive Meetings

As a member of the VUWSA executive I attend our fortnightly executive meetings where we discuss and make plans and decisions on how we can best support students at VUW.

4. Meetings with Recreation

As part of my role as Clubs and Activities Officer I work very closely with Raewyn Clarke (Clubs Manager), Roselle Usherwood (Clubs Administrator), Karl Whalen (Recreation Manager), and Josie Fitzsimons (Sport Administrator). I have regular meetings with them and maintain close relationships to ensure the service provision and events for Clubs and other students are sound.

5. VUWSA Committees

I am on the VUWSA Policy Committee where we develop and revise internal policies. I am also on the Audit & Finance Committee where we manage the finances of VUWSA. I am also on the new Revenue & Venture Committee, which considers diversifying revenue streams.

Strengths

1. Organisation

A lot of my role revolves around organising large projects and events. I am not a last minute person and like to be very organized well in advance to ensure these projects run smoothly.

2. Relationship Management

I am good at developing and maintaining positive relationships with the people that I work with. I have a good and close relationship with every member of the VUWSA Executive and with the VUW Recreation Staff whom I work closely with.

3. Efficiency

I like to get things done. I am good at setting a task and following through and often complete these tasks efficiently due to good organization.

Weaknesses

1. Over-commitment

I like to do a bit of everything, which means I tend to over-commit myself and this puts a lot of pressure on me during stressful periods.

2. Preparation for meetings

Possibly as a result of my over-commitment I often find myself rushing to prepare properly for meetings. Although I will almost always make time to read through documents before meetings, I often don't leave enough time to critically evaluate the information which can impact on my ability to participate constructively in meetings.

3. Balancing priorities

I underestimated the workload of VUWSA and took four law papers, which was probably in hindsight very optimistic (over-commitment!). I found it difficult to balance VUWSA and university workloads and found myself constantly struggling to prioritise the right things.

Overall Rating

I am very proud of the tangible wins this first part of the year has brought – particularly with reforming the Clubs Council to have a meaningful role within the University, and with the creation of the Gold and Supreme Club Awards. We have a very busy Trimester 2 ahead but we have some good planning already underway and I am really excited for Blues, Gold, and Faculty Games to come!