



EXECUTIVE HALF YEAR REPORT

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NAME	Nathaniel Manning
POSITION	Campaigns Officer
REPORT PERIOD	1 January – 30 June 2015
HOURS WORKED	376.25 hours (235.7 required)

Reporting on Priority Goals:

Goal 1:

Education Quality: To ensure that the University provides the best teaching and learning, research opportunities, assessment and training to students.

This goal has not been much of a particular priority in the past 6 months. While I have had discussions with the education team on education campaigns, and helped out when required, they have mostly taken a lead on campaigns like the Know your Rights pamphlet themselves. In the next 6 months, this is a goal I'd local to focus on more, especially in the form of an alternative to the shelved Alternative Student Handbook. Planning with the Education Team, and Rory Lenihan-Ikin has taken place, but any progress towards this project has been postponed until the second term.

Goal 6:

Public Issues: To be the critic and conscience of the University and society, by promoting discussion and action on issues concerning students.

This has been more of a focus in the first half of the year than the first goal.

- Who Should Rule The University:

Arguably, one of the biggest issues facing university students at Victoria that was taking place during the first half of this year was the first stage of consultation by the University on changes to University Council. Before the consultation process began, I attended a number of meetings with groups, including the TEU, NZUSA, and the Chancellor.

As the consultation process opened, I worked with the Events team to run the VUWSA-lead consultation forum, which resulted in some useful discussions. I also wrote up the VUWSA Consultation Document with Jonathan, both a substantive and brief version, and analysed the 1004 survey responses and wrote up VUWSA's submission to the Governance Working Group, along with other members of the Executive.

- Other issues

I think VUWSA has also responded well to issues that have arisen on a national level, especially a press release on the increase to Student Loan and Allowance Living Costs, which was picked up by a number of media outlets including Stuff.co.nz.

In the second half of the year, this will continue to be the main goal that I work toward, especially with the second round of consultation on university Council taking place, and also University fee setting. I would also like to be able to have to diversify campaigns, so that they weren't so Uni-Council centric, but at the same time, I've always had it in the back of my mind that a key criticism from students about VUWSA, from the Carte Blanche report, is that VUWSA has been "too political" in past years.

Another big push that will be happening in the second half of this year will be getting students engaged with the Select Committee stage of changes to the Residential Tenancies Act, for which a Bill will be introduced to Parliament later in 2015.

Reporting on Other Goals:

Goal 5:

Activities: To support sporting, social and cultural activities for and by students; primarily through Clubs and Representative Groups.

This has been one of the goals I've worked toward most this past 6 months, and the biggest contributor to my surplus of hours. I worked a lot with the Engagement Team, especially Toby and Mali, to get students engaged with VUWSA, especially on satellite campuses. With Toby, we set up a stand promoting VUWSA at both Te Aro and Karori a couple of weeks, outside of the OWeek schedule.

- OWeek

OWeek was also a large part of this goal. Over OWeek, I was the Volunteer Co-ordinator, and organised over 30 volunteers for OWeek. This was something I consciously decided to put a lot of time into, with hopes of building a strong team of volunteers that could be called upon to help out with campaigns. While the post-OWeek engagement with volunteers has been mixed, I feel that the team we had over OWeek was a huge success.



Image 2: Me with Darryl, one of our awesome volunteers at the DJ workshop



Image 1: Jonathan and I serve up hotdogs at OWeek

- Love Parade

One event that I view as a personal highlight of the past 6 months was organising for a group from VUWSA and UniQ to march in the Love Parade, as part of the Out in the Square festival. This was the first time that such an event has been held in Wellington recently, and VUWSA's presence, with UniQ, was well received, and highlights

VUWSA's commitment to the queer community. I have also been reasonably active with UniQ, attending events, including the shared lunch spaces most weeks.



Image 3: Me with members of the VUWSA executive and UniQ, posing after a successful Love Parade at Out in the Park

- Give Away Days

With Toby and Mali, I helped facilitate giveaways to students, including V, Mi Goreng and crackers. Toby and I also used one giveaway day to encourage students to fill out the Who Should Rule the University survey we had running at the time, by borrowing a couple of laptops and a muppet, and setting up a little survey station in the hub.

Goal 4:

Services: To provide quality, cost effective services for the benefit of members, and, where appropriate, students.

Along with the rest of the executive, I helped out the Welfare Team give away free breakfasts and lunches during Stress Free Study Week. The responses received from students at Te Aro campus, where I was situated, just showed that this is one of the services most utilised and appreciated by students.

I helped out with setting up, and providing drinks/snacks at the Flu shot clinics at both Te Aro and Kelburn campus.

I was also involved in giveaway days with the Engagement team at Pipiteia, Kelburn, and Te Aro, giving away free food to students. Events like this are one of the more visible services provided by VUWSA, and with Toby, we used it as an opportunity to also promote the Community Pantry to students who may need it.

I have also helped out generally at the VUWSA reception and around the office when required.

General Tasks and Initiatives

1. Te Aro and Karori Sign Ups

Outside of the ReOweek/OWeek periods, Toby and I set up a stall at satellite campuses to gather sign ups, and promote VUWSA services.

2. Wellington Region Suicide Prevention and Postvention Draft Plan 2015-2017 Workshop

I attended this workshop on behalf of VUWSA to make sure that students were catered for in the draft plan, and made sure amendments, such as intersectionality, were included into the draft.

3. Pink Shirt Day

I organised/encouraged everyone in the staff and exec to participate in National Pink Shirt Day.



4. Social Media presence

I have been one the most active on the VUWSA twitter account, and have also at times used Yik Yak to promote VUWSA services, including one Yak on flu shots that got over 100 yakarma.

Representation

1. Executive Meeting

The VUWSA executive meets fortnightly. I have attended the majority of these meetings, and apologies noted for those which I could not.

2. Executive Reporting Committee

Although not one of the original members co-opted onto this committee at the start of the year, I have become a “de-facto” member, have attended nearly every ERC meeting since March.

3. Policy Committee

The Policy Committee meets monthly. My contributions to this committee have been minimal thus far, due to other commitments consuming my time, but will be submitting more policies over the second half of this year.

4. OWeek Focus Groups

At the commencement of OWeek, I helped organise and sat on a couple of Focus Groups with groups of students, along with Mali and KJ. The outcome of these meetings provided invaluable feedback from students, which will be used to plan OWeek 2016.

5. Engagement Team Meetings (informal)

I regularly have informal meetings with Toby and Rory M on Engagement.

6. Event team meetings (informal)

I have semi-regular catch ups and planning sessions with Mali on Events. The frequency of these vary and are dependent on the Event Timetable.

Strengths

1. **Workaholic:** See also; hours surplus, weakness #2.
2. **Relationships with volunteers.** Over OWeek I built a strong relationship with many volunteers, many of whom I still catch up with regularly. A lot of what VUWSA does relies on the support from our volunteers, so the relationships I've built, as well as other Executive members, with volunteers has been a huge strength. Many first time volunteers at OWeek were always keen to be involved again in other events, like SFSW, and at least two have even told me that they'd be keen to run for next year's executive.
3. **Relationship with staff and exec.** Over the past year I've been lucky enough to work with some amazing people, and have built strong relationships, both professional and personal, with them. I especially work well with Mali and Toby on Engagement things, and the rest of the exec on general tasks.

Weaknesses

1. **Timeliness.** While I've been on top of getting my Work Reports done, at times I have been late at completing of items, or have left them to the last minute. I think that it's just been accepted by Mali that the Engagement team are all likely to turn up to meetings as well 10 minutes after they were scheduled. This is certainly an area that I'd like to improve in the second trimester.
2. **Work/life balance.** Often I have found myself over committing, which has meant that my prioritisation and organisational skills have lacked at times. I also need to learn to make more time for myself.

Overall Rating

Overall I believe that I've left a positive contribution to VUWSA and the students of Victoria University. At the start of the year it took me a while to settle into the role of Campaigns, which was caused by a number of factors, including being tied up with Oweek, and also trying to feel out my role for the year, as the role of Campaigns Officer in the previous two years was largely tied up with Local Body Elections in 2013, and the General Election in 2014. This meant that I was left to define what the role of the Campaigns Officer was for the year, without being able to go on what was done by my immediate predecessors. While this took some time, I have become confident within the role, and have some big things planned for the second half of the year.

