

2019 Half-Yearly President Report

Sam Brosnahan

Representation

The Executive

The 2019 Executive is comprised of 12 elected students, and 1 co-opted student. This year there are

- 6 general representatives,
- a postgraduate representative,
- an Equity & Wellbeing Representative,
- a co-opted Te Akatoki Representative,
- a Finance Officer,
- Vice-President,
- President
- and for the first time, an International Representative.

The new international portfolio has proven a success with our International Rep Kevin boosting representation of International Students through the international advisory group as well as starting a pilot of a new international student buddy system to be rolled out this term.

Members of the Executive hold external and internal portfolios as well as work on individual special projects. The external portfolios are, where required, College-based and the internal portfolios are relevant to services of the UCSA. The Vice-President and Finance Officer act alongside the corresponding staff as team leads for the portfolios. The Executive continues to provide strong student representation at the University among a range of various boards and committees.

The Advisory Board

UCSA has an advisory board which advises the Executive on UCSA activities and operations, particularly on commercial decisions. This year, the Advisory Board reverted back meeting once a month after trialing a period of combined executive-advisory meetings towards the end of last year. The Advisory Board are a great asset to the organisation and continue to give valuable advice to the Executive on strategic issues.

Academic Representation

- This year a new paid staff role within the UCSA was established, called the Academic Coordinator, which has been capability filled by Sarah Davidson. The purpose of this role is to strengthen support for the 6 College Representatives on the Executive as they represent the student voice.
- Sarah along with Vice President Tori McNoe, have led a well-coordinated effort in the academic space this year submitting over 50 student feedback submission on different course and degree proposals.
- Since the beginning of the year, Vice-Chancellor Cheryl de la Rey has been gathering input from the UC Community to feed into her UC-wide strategy designed to guide UC into the next 5-10 years. Direct consultation with students took place with the Vice-Chancellor meeting with the UCSA exec and our student advisory groups. Wider, more qualitative data was obtained via an all-student survey where over 1000 students took part where a recommended focus on student success and wellbeing was a prominent feature.

Student Advisory Groups

UCSA runs 3 advisory groups - which provides valuable feedback on UC and UCSA operations. The International, Postgraduate and Equity & Wellbeing advisory groups are chaired by the corresponding executive member of the same position title and meet twice termly. They continue to be an effective mechanism of obtaining a diverse range of student feedback, ie the UC-wide strategy mentioned above.

Services

The services the UCSA provide are funded by a portion of the Student Services Levy – a compulsory part of university fees. The Joint Operations Advisory Board (JOAB), made up of UC and UCSA, advises the Vice-Chancellor and how the Levy would be best spent each year. The UCSA is funded only for the services it provides students such as advocacy and welfare, clubs and events, media and communications including CANTA, and the dental scheme. The remainder of the Levy, which is about 75%, is allocated to UC departments and other providers like the Rec Centre, Disability Resources and UC Careers. There is also a capital fund component which funds certain student projects e.g. the fitting out of the Undercroft and heat and eat stations.

Governance

Haere-roa

July 2019 marked the long-awaited opening of Haere-roa, replacing the previous UCSA Building, which was demolished as a result of the 2011 earthquakes. Haere-roa, features spaces for study, relaxation, food, club events, concerts and performances.

The building cost \$32m, where UC own 49% and the UCSA retains 51% majority ownership. UCSA's stake was primarily comprised of insurance payouts from the previous UCSA Building

as well as \$3 million through donations from hundreds of generous friends and alumni. We continue to fundraise for the remaining shortfall through various initiatives such as the Save Me A Seat campaign aimed at having all 320 seats sponsored in the new Ngaio Marsh Theatre sponsored.

Advocacy & Welfare

The Advocacy & Welfare team continues to be a critical and valuable resource to students - through services such as the foodbank, hardship grants and well as advocacy services. So far in 2019, the A&W team has seen an increase in demand for advocacy and dental services, with year to date appointments up on the previous year. Wellness events and activations continue to be a success for students in building awareness. A new event called Autumn Arrival, run by UCSA and co-designed with UC, was successful in attracting over 2000 students in its first year.

Events & Activities

Our Events and Activities team continues to provide relevant and exciting events for our students. O-Week proved to be on the whole successful, with the majority of them selling out. The less-attended Summerstein event is under review and a new format and theme are being considered for 2020.

Re-Ori over the last week and a half was successful, with four sold-out gigs and one partially sold-out gig in the new Ngaio Marsh Theatre. There was a lot of positive feedback on the concert venue itself however, there were major issues around access to toilets and huge queues. For the last couple of events, a temporary solution of hiring portaloos was put in place which seemed to help the issue. At the time of this report, a more permanent solution ie installing urinal/s is being considered to help address the issue long-term.

Media & Communications

The Media team continues to entertain students and communicate key messages. The hiring of a new Communication Coordinator has proved successful in making sure we strengthen our messaging through students ie through videos, all-student emails. Having just recruited a new CANTA editor, the magazine is looking to angle towards more news-based content as well as have more of a focus on diversity and inclusion.

Commercial Activity

This includes food and beverage, early learning centres and UBS. These divisions are not funded by the student services levy and therefore must operate at a sustainable level and any surpluses produced are used to fund our current or future operations or future capital investments like our new Building.

Food & Beverage

The UCSA owns and operates 7 outlets around campus including Nuts and Bolts, The Shilling Club, and Chilton's. The new Foundry, just opened in Haere-roa, has quickly proved popular with students. The Mon-Fri 8:30am-late operating hours are designed to help ensure the Foundry becomes a reliable destination that students can attend, with a range of cafe-style food offerings throughout the day. Our catering services continue to be very successful, with the UCSA picking up a large proportion of the catering jobs on campus.

Early Learning Centres

The UCSA owns and operates two Early Learning Centre's (ELCs) and both continue to provide a great service for UC Students, University staff and community. Both ELCs continue to be either full or very close to full.

Financial Update - Millie Morgan

Finance & Engagement Officer

Over time, the Finance Officer's position has shifted from a primarily finance-related role to more a hybrid position combining external engagement and leadership of the executive. While it's still the role of the Finance Officer to regularly sign off accounts and payroll, many notable changes over the last decade have taken place, that have expanded the role of the Finance Officer into non-finance-related areas.

These areas include:

- playing a prominent leadership role within the executive, alongside the President and Vice President
- assisting the executive with special projects
- administering the internal portfolios of the UCSA

In terms of the overall workload, a recent review into the current workload of the Finance Officer role found that **less than 15%** of the total time devoted to the role was actually finance-related. Considering the above points, the purpose of this motion is for the Finance Officer's position title to more accurately reflect the current demands of the role. This is in order to:

- reduce the misconception of the role of Finance Officer role within the student body, that the role is solely finance-related, as the name suggests
- reduce the misconception that a student has to study finance, accounting or other financial degree areas to undertake the Finance Officer role
- In reducing these misconceptions and making the engagement component of the role more explicit, it is hoped this change will open up the role to a broader pool of prospective candidates, who may not have considered this role previously.
- In spite of this, the UCSA will continue to have sound financial oversight with a Chief Executive, Advisory Board with financial expertise as well as professional accountants and auditors.

The executive is therefore proposing that the position title be changed to **Finance & Engagement Officer** in order for the title to more accurately reflect the actual duties and responsibilities of the role.