

REPRESENTATION

AUSA Class Representative Report - Semester 2, 2013 Class Rep Coordinator

INTRODUCTION

This report focusses on the Auckland University Class Representative system and AUSA's role in coordinating during Summer School 2014.

Summer School has traditionally been quiet regarding class reps. Departments usually don't have enough time to organise SSCC meetings, however, they are encouraged to let class reps know they can contact the course coordinator if there are any problems.

AUSA does not provide training for Summer School class reps, however, this should be something we look at changing for 2015 as I had a number of class reps who came to me for advice.

Note: I don't have Summer School statistics for any other year so I can't compare numbers.

SEMESTER OBJECTIVES

- Proactively engage with class reps by sending out regular Class Rep newsletters. These newsletters will focus on AUSA events, news and any other tertiary education updates (e.g. changes to StudyLink).
- Start implementing recommendations from the 2013 class rep analysis

KEY ACTIVITIES

- Summer School certificates
- CR newsletter (sent in February)
- On-going support for CRs seeking assistance including advice on how to resolve problems within a department (see enquiries table).
- Support for Class Rep Coordinators seeking assistance
- One-off training session for Graduate of Management Masters students.
- Drafted up a new Class Rep Handbook to include some of the recommendations from the class rep analysis.

KEY OUTCOMES

- Updated the Class Rep training to include sample SSCC minutes

DIFFICULTIES (CLASS REP ADVOCATE)

- Getting all papers represented.
- Getting up-to-date contact details for current Class Rep Coordinators

DIFFICULTIES (CLASS REPS)

No trending difficulties listed for Class Reps

KEY STATISTICS

Faculty	Summer School
Business School	7
Faculty of Arts	30
Faculty of Education	0
Faculty of Engineering	0
Faculty of Law	0
Faculty of Medical & Health Sciences	0
Faculty of Science	5
National Institute of Creative Arts and Industries	0
Total	42

TRAINING

Faculty	Number
Business School – Graduate School of Management (one off training)	13

CLASS REP CERTIFICATES

Semester	Number of Certificates emailed
Summer School	22

CLASS REP AND CR COORDINATOR ENQUIRIES

Class Rep Enquiries	Number
Summer School CR certificates	22
SSCC enquiries	3
Advocacy related enquiries - Problem with Lecturer	2
Total	27

OBJECTIVES 2014

- Formulate a plan to provide better support for Class Reps on other campus (Grafton, Tamaki, Tai Tokerau). Will do this with help of satellite campus exec and the satellite campus coordinator.
- Implement recommendations from the 2013 Class Rep analysis
- Continue updating the Class rep training presentation to include recommendations from Class Rep Analysis.
- Look into providing a separate training session for post graduate Class Reps.
- Send mass email out to get updated contact details for 2014 Class Rep Coordinators.
- Look at ways to increase Class Rep registration for Summer School 2015

ADVOCACY

INTRODUCTION

AUSA Advocacy is a service run by the Advocacy Manager, Denise Lazelle, who works alongside the Senior Advocate and the Student Advocacy Network, a group of volunteer law students trained in advocacy.

AUSA Advocacy is completely independent of the University and operates in complete confidence from other entities, including AUSA. We provide a wide range of information and advice on academic issues, employment rights, benefits, debt and funding, consumer issues and housing problems.

SEMESTER OBJECTIVES

- To provide a principled service in accordance with fair-

ness, respect & the law.

- To offer professional support to all students with grievances and concerns about academic matters.
- That the service is respected and well supported by students.
- To offer general legal information and referral for personal issues.
- Promote the Student Advice Hub as the first port of call when a student has a problem.

KEY ACTIVITIES

We are extremely pleased with the progress that the Student Advocacy Service has made over Summer School. The substantial increase in numbers of students accessing the Service demonstrates the success of the team in promoting the Service and the demand amongst the student body for a professional, independent service to complement the wide range of support that University of Auckland can offer its students.

The Student Advocacy Service continues to be of huge benefit to students by helping even more students than it did over Summer School last year. This report is especially useful in highlighting some of the issues that students face, which may help to inform the University of any trends that disadvantage students' enjoyment of the facilities and their student experience.

Our major activity has been related to developing and publicising the Student Advice Hub.

We have further developed effective case work management systems and extended these systems for quality assurance. We are planning to launch an updated and redesigned website which we hope will be a portal of information and signposting for students that will complement the new student gateway to free advice.

KEY OUTCOMES

- Despite the large increase in caseload, we are confident that the professional delivery and standard of the service offered has been maintained.
- We continue to work toward implementing procedures and internal policy to further ensure that all students receive excellent support and advice.
- We have further built on and strengthened our relationships with other support services within the University.

- Several students have successfully been enrolled in courses after having difficulty navigating what is the appropriate course and the online enrolment procedures.

KEY STATISTICS

- We have provided training for 20 students recruited from the Law School for the Student Advocacy Network.
- The Student Advice Service has been accessed by 74 students over Summer school.
- The Service dealt with 12 cases of undergraduate academic grievance and 3 postgraduate grievances.
- The general issues were mostly financial hardship or accommodation issues.
- There were 42 advocacy cases in January which is an increase of 68% compared to 2013.

DIFFICULTIES

- We have noticed a significant increase in the casework load which has remained manageable although we have been exceedingly busy at peak times and expect this to continue into semester one.
- While the Service has seen a broad mix of students during Summer School, they are spread over almost all demographics and certain trends can be identified. As part of the strategic plan of the Service, we will both continue to monitor this data to see what statistically significant trends can be identified over the year.

KEY TRENDS

- Students have reported problems enrolling in selected courses if their GPA from previous study excludes them from their choice of study returning as mature students.
- Students over 20 returning to study have been frustrated by the inconsistent information or lack of information, about what their options are for pre-entry to university courses.
- Students have reported long delays obtaining approval when applying for credit transfer gained from overseas institutions.

WELFARE

INTRODUCTION

AUSA provides Welfare services ranging from food support to monetary grants for emergencies and textbooks. The welfare provided by AUSA is one of our key services, as it provides a much-needed safety net for many students in need. This is particularly the case following recent widespread cuts to student support by the government. Increasingly, students need help urgently, and mostly to a far greater extent than AUSA is able to provide.

Fortunately, AUSA Welfare is in a more comfortable position financially as of the beginning of 2014 than it has been in recent years. However, while the system is gradually expanding, we continue to face difficulties in scope. While at the moment Welfare provides only small-scale, short-term help, there is a definite need for projects on a larger scale. However, there is a fear that if the program extends too far, we will rapidly deplete our resources. This is particularly the case given funding currently depends on the initiative of the individual Welfare Officer, and the generosity of donors (the vast majority of whom are students themselves). More funds, resources, and more staffing hours would be required to allow us to move to the next level of support.

KEY ACTIVITIES

Generally Welfare has been inactive during Summer Semester in previous years. Following the trend from 2013, however, basic Welfare services including the foodbank and the Hardship Grant system have been on offer this semester.

Moreover, a considerable amount of effort has been put in to developing structures to enable the Welfare Officer to work efficiently. This has included the establishment of a permanent foodbank room, soon to be equipped with a fridge, and rewriting of some of the forms used for our services.

The Summer Semester has also been a period of handover and knowledge sharing, as well as of set-up for the year. The 2013 and 2014 Welfare Officers have spent time going over the role and ensuring service will remain consistent. Time has also been spent setting up services for the year, for example contacting potential foodbank donors, and reestablishing links with student groups (who mostly have new leadership) who helped Welfare in 2013.

Similarly, our support spaces have been setting up for the year. Queerspace is in the process of redecoration, including painting and new furnishings (largely courtesy of the Equity Office), and Womenspace has been seeking out new donors for products to be used in their space, and preparing for a

membership drive and events early in Semester One.

The end of Summer Semester has also seen the advertisement of key services to educate new first years and returning students about what they may access. This has included Textbook Grant advertising and a greater focus on Welfare during our membership drive.

KEY OUTCOMES

The Foodbank has been open and a new shelved Foodbank room has been established. While the Foodbank has not been advertised over the summer period, 12 food parcels have been collected. \$200 in hardship grants was also granted.

The AUSA Lost Property system has continued to collect, return and store lost property as usual. Notably Lost Property has been advertised on the AUSA-run "Lost & Found & UoA" Facebook page (now with over 1600 members, and with additional information about where to access lost property on campus).

The AUSA Textbook Grant application process is once again open. This has also been advertised at the Tai Tokerau campus for the first time.

DIFFICULTIES

- Financial constraints, which limit services directly and due to lack of staffing hours. This is exacerbated by a lack of funding security, which limits forward planning and makes it necessary to 'hoard' funding and resources due to fear they may not be replenished regularly. .
- Limited staffing. Expecting more is difficult without payment or further support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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