

## REPRESENTATION

**Introduction:** This report will outline the introduction and progress of Student Representation during Summer School and the overarching task of introducing processes for Class Representatives (herein referred to as CR) for Summer School.

AUSA organizes and supports students on several University committees. Their involvement ensures that student perspectives are heard and considered by the University when making decisions. In this section, you will also find information pertaining to the AUSA appointed Committee Representatives and the student appointed Committee Representatives and their roles in AUSA. Further to this, AUSA seeks to have wider representation outside of the university.

### Semester Objectives

- To redevelop and rebrand the Class Rep System
- To ensure Summer School students are adequately represented through the Class Rep System
  - That all Summer School courses have an AUSA Class Rep
  - Issues are relayed and addressed
- To improve representation
  - Increase accountability and reporting for University Committees
  - Submit to local and national bodies
  - Seek to represent AUSA on external Boards.
  - To train and assist committee representatives so they can make a substantial contribution to the work on their committees.
  - AUSA/Student representatives on committees been asked to complete a committee report after every meeting which goes to the AUSA Executive so all elected representatives are aware of any issues arising through areas within the University and creates a more efficient system. Confidential Committees are reporting simply outlining what meeting it was and when with no details about the meeting for better accountability to the executive that appoints them.

### Key Activities

- Assisting student representation on University Committees (that have sat already this year)
  - Occupational Health and Safety Committee
  - Education Committee
  - Teaching and Learning Quality Committee
  - Student Liaison Committee
  - Discipline Committee
  - International Committee
  - Council
  - Senate
- Preparation and Accountability for Committees
  - Committee Templates developed
  - Compulsory reporting from Committees
- Revamping the Class Rep Handbook
  - Categories and content simplified
  - Responsibilities expanded
- Rebranding under 'AUSA Delegates'
  - More incentive to be a class rep through restructure and tangible and intangible benefits
  - The current system for the AUSA Class Representatives

sees one volunteer or elected student of each University course represent the common interests of their fellow classmates to their lecturers, departments, and faculties. They are essentially a first point of contact for students and act as a liaison between students and staff members. Class Reps attend Staff-Student Consultative Committee (SSCC) meetings twice a semester to report and address specific issues raised by students. This way AUSA gains representation of the student body on many levels within the University.

- Overall, the AUSA Class Reps provide student representation to the University within an academic context. The idea of creating the 'AUSA Delegate' as identification for many areas AUSA is involved in, is to reach further and represent students on a much wider network. In terms of Class Reps, the AUSA Delegate system would see an organic approach of Class Reps also being a liaison between students and the Students' Association. In 2012, over 900 students held Class Rep titles. By utilising this ever-increasing numbers, AUSA will be able to serve students through correspondence and advocate for the student body on a much larger scale.
- Policy is currently being developed to make the AUSA Class Rep system compulsory on all campuses, schools, and faculties of the University of Auckland. AUSA has making the Class Rep system and processes more enticing and enriching for students to voluntarily join. This includes building on incentives (for example, promoting the idea of improving leadership skills for future employment) and benefits (such as a 10% membership discount at the University's Rec Centre) that the students will gain from bring a Class Rep. We believe the AUSA Delegate structure can pull more students into volunteering to be their course's Class Rep, thus improving the whole Class Rep system's appeal.
- Developing the AUSA Delegate Network
  - Website planned
  - Categories and features drafted
- Reconsider the AUSA Class Rep Policy in Teaching and Learning Quality Committee
  - Reviewed
  - Tabled pending the extent of operational details
- Wider Representation
  - First Year Transition Working Group for Academic Orientation 2014
  - Ako Aotearoa Advisory Board which is a government funded group which funds research projects that improves Teaching and Learning Quality and administers the Teaching Excellence Awards
- Pride Festival
  - AUSA did a debate in conjunction with the Writers' and Author's Society representing Queer Students
- DroppedMyDegree
  - Preparing for campaign to reinstate student allowance and reverse education cuts
  - Website being designed with email, petition and stories function
  - Contacted groups such as TEU, PGSA and faculties for endorsements

- Auckland Regional Transport
  - AUSA reviewed the Kaipatiki Submission on the Regional Transport Plan for the next decade
  - AUSA intends to review individual routes as they open up for further consultation
  - AUSA is preparing a submission on cheaper public transport
- General club support
  - Attended clubs Forum
  - Attended sports Forum
- Faculty Association Support
  - Regular catch ups with faculties
  - Some financial support for projects
- Reviewed Discipline Committee Procedures
  - Too excessive fine
  - Inconsistency between statutes
  - Possibility of double punishment
  - Inconsistency and over-extending of powers to Faculties and Individuals
- Education Vice-President appointed on the Working Group
- To work closely with the TEU on common interests and goals

## Key Outcomes

- 21 courses represented by the Class Rep system
- Liaising with IT Services to improve the system of capturing CR contact details and authorise the student's role as a CR for that course.
- During the Summer school we fielded 34 queries from CR and CR Coordinators.
- As students had already launched into their Classes, the queries we receive were mostly advising us that they were CR, requesting the dates of the SSCC meetings, and what did they need to do to complete their role
- Departmental queries from CR Course Co-ordinators were mostly about providing CR details, advising who the new CR Coordinator was and whether using Facebook to communicate between CR and students was appropriate.
- The students mostly reported that they were satisfied with their courses.
- One commented that their "lecturers kept students well informed about upcoming issues such as non- recorded lectures".
- Another mentioned that the lecturers were helpful advising them about assignments. Because of this help there were no issues with the course at all or any difficulties.
- One CR was surprised to report that "the First Lecturer was unaware of what a Class Rep" was.
- Additional help with extra tutorials were organised when students raised this as an issue.
- Examples of work were posted after class on Cecil when requested by the CR.

## Difficulties

- A lack of time and staff resources to organise class rep system before the start of the Summer School in 2013.
- In the interim a provision system was organised and a new system will be in place for 2014 Summer School.
- Only the Science and Arts faculties reported that they organised CR's over Summer School.
- Difficulties passing class rep policy because faculties had

problems with the operational details- it is currently still under review.

- Faculty discrepancies of treatment and importance of class representatives

## Trends

That overall the Class Representatives reported that the classes were well run.

## Key Statistics

- 23 Class Reps for Summer School.
- Arts and Science Faculties only selected CR's.
- Maths and FTVM classes were best represented.
- 12 class rep certificate requests to date.

## ADVOCACY

**Introduction:** The Advocacy Service provides independent and confidential support for individual students at the University of Auckland. The aim of the service is to support students who encounter problems while they are studying, either in their personal or academic lives, to be resolved quickly to minimize the impact on their ability to study successfully.

The Advocacy Service follows a model of Legal Advocacy with a focus on Empowerment Advocacy. It is based on the belief that it is better to support students to uphold their own rights and resolve their own issues within the Universities Student Charter and Grievance Procedures.

## Semester Objectives

- To provide an advocacy service independent from the university which represents and advocates for students
- To ensure prompt and effective resolution of disputes
- To ensure students are aware of their rights
- To promote the advocacy service to new students on campus
- To promote the advocacy service to students in general
- To provide a prompt 24 hour response for initial enquiries
- To offer general legal information and referral for personal issues
- To ensure our service is in accordance with fairness, respect & the law.
- To offer professional, quality support to all students with grievances and concerns about academic matters.
- To develop working relationships with other University student services.

## Key Activities

- Assisted several students to resolve a number of academic issues about enrolment
- Assisted in the resolution of a number of potential academic grievances.
- Referred a number of students to relevant websites
- Referred students to a number of other service providers
- Provided brochures as required to students seeking advice on general issues.

## Key Outcomes

- A student successfully defended their honesty at a Disciplinary committee meeting, thus enabling them to graduate

and commence work immediately.

- All cases were dealt with quickly.
- Information and options were considered to help resolve concerns.
- Thus far the Service has continued to operate efficiently and effectively with an increase in student contact during January.

## Difficulties

- The relocated of the office space and time to advertise the new location.
- Resource cuts despite increased numbers of students requesting assistance.
  - Specifically, the lack of offices given to AUSA by the University for Advocacy. Last year prior to the move, a University rep showed an AUSA rep around the buildings and AUSA were shown nine offices that would become 'ours', However, since that period AUSA has only received six offices leading to hugely complicated sharing situations that cannot sustain the advocacy demands during semester time. We thoroughly encourage the University to reconsider its allocation due to the highly confidential nature of advocacy services.
- University staff imposed restrictions to promote the Advocacy Service to students facing Discipline Committee hearings.
- The disestablishment of the Mediation Service
  - AUSA is extremely worried that the triage process will be ineffectual in resolving disputes
  - AUSA is extremely concerned that the triage process could prejudice certain groups by having issues resolved in a manner that suits the employers – the university.
  - AUSA feels that contacting the direct manager may not be appropriate or taken seriously as a student expressed to us recently following a complaint submitted to senior management at the University.
  - AUSA is also concerned that reporting and application to have an issue heard by an external mediator is extremely difficult and can result in conflicts of interest
  - AUSA is concerned of the availability of such a mediator and their availability to be accessed by students
  - AUSA is also extremely worried that this new process or the existence of mediation is not well publicised to student body at large

## Trends

- Issues in relation to flatting problems, an employment scam and Studylink funding for limited full time study increased.
- Regulations on academic standards are affecting more students trying to re-enter study.
- On line enrolment problems particularly if course changes haven't been updated on the system thus affecting FTE and students meeting allowance requirements.
- Impact starting to become evident about changes to Studylink entitlement.

## Key Statistics

- 38 students (up to 19th February), sought help from AUSA Advocacy Service.
- 5 students sought advice about academic issues- increase of 12% from 2012.

- 4 students had problems enrolling- 15% increase from 2012.
- Overall there was an increase of 150% increase of students using the service in January.
- 13 Students sought help in the period to 18th February.
- Most cases involved not being entitled to Student Allowance.
- 1 student tried to lay a fairly serious complaint against a University staff member but was unable to due to the disestablishment of the mediation service.

## WELFARE

**Introduction:** AUSA provides Welfare Services to students in need. This is vital to ensure that there is a safety net for those students who because of circumstances beyond their control need assistance. The uptake in Summer School has historically been limited, thus the extent of our services offered this semester are not as wide as Semester One and Two.

This semester has been focusing on readjustment with our move and developing new projects for the year. Due to unforeseen financial constraints our welfare office has been creative and working hard to generate new sources of revenue, but there needs to be more support from the university.

### Semester Objectives

- Move the Welfare office and AUSA Foodbank to new location in Old Choral Hall
- Set up framework through which to contact new donors to support the AUSA Foodbank
- Prepare systems and improve knowledge to limit any issues with changeover from previous Welfare Officer to current

### Key Activities

- Moving office and AUSA Foodbank
- Contacting potential donors
- International Students Magazine
- General Welfare
- Foodbank
- Lost Property
- Satellite Campus's
- ParentsSpace
  - Started moving
- QueerSpace
  - Requested for funding
  - Preparing press release
- Alternative Calendar
  - Drew up calendar for GenEd
- Welfare Trust
  - Diaries
- Projects in progress
  - Clothing bin
  - Perishable foods
  - Planning for foodbank weeks
  - Sponsorships

### Key Outcomes

- Food packs being collected from AUSA reception since the 5th of February
- AUSA Foodbank and Welfare Office fully prepared for beginning of Semester One

- International Students Magazine
  - International Magazine being translated to multiple languages
  - International Magazine written for the first time ready to be published as a PDF.
  - Magazine provides key information on
    - Accommodation
    - Profit
- Lost Property
  - AUSA to start collecting lost property for student benefit.
- Satellite Campus's
- Set up ParentsSpace in its new location with access to adequate facilities
- WomenSpace
  - Maintenance of resource facilities in WomensSpace
  - International Women's Day organised by Zonta Foundation in conjunction with Auckland Council.
  - Drafting committee on sexual health and restrictive user-pay system of healthcare to be considered at the Equity Committee
- Ensuring all first year students are aware of our welfare services
  - Alternative sources of revenue, food and
  - Diaries – AUSA had to charge for diaries this year due to no advertising revenue coming in from O-Week.
  - Services Agreement, Sponsorship and Advertising
  - Welfare Trust

### Difficulties

- Financial constraints
- Lack of a services agreement despite AUSA offering a huge amount of services to the University of Auckland students- AUSA thoroughly recommends the University negotiate such agreement with AUSA due to the impact its non-existence is having on our welfare services fundamental to students mental health and well-being.
  - No funding for ParentSpace and sub sequentially, compromised facilities
  - No funding for QueerSpace and sub sequentially, compromised facilities
  - No funding for Lost Property and sub sequentially, compromised service.
  - Sponsorship funding for O-Week that allows us to do basic student association things like funds used to produce Craccum were cut to a state of non-existence this year, placing a huge financial constraint on AUSA.
  - No funding for WomenSpace and sub sequentially, compromised facilities
- Lack of resources such as office space following the Kate Edgar/Old Choral Hall transition. AUSA does not have enough offices to sustain its advocacy and welfare needs as it took a reduction in offices following the office swap. This has led to hugely complicated sharing situations that cannot sustain the advocacy demands during semester time. We thoroughly encourage the University to reconsider its allocation due to the nature of such services and the impact on the services to students by the University failing to offer space. AUSA had to move ParentSpace out of AUSA House into Old Choral Hall as we do not have enough offices to accommodate our executive

and the growing needs of marginalised group spaces such as QueerSpace and WomenSpace.

### Additional Concerns by AUSA

- The relationship between Campus Life, some University senior management and AUSA.
- The behaviour of some University staff towards AUSA

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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