

2014 UCSA President's Annual Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 2014 was a year filled with challenges and opportunities for the University of Canterbury Students' Association (UCSA). As we look to the year that was, it is clear the UCSA has, through every facet of our organisation, committed to creating a student experience like no other and most importantly, committed to helping all UC students succeed and feel they belong.

2. Representation and Governance

The Executive

- 2.1 The 2014 UCSA Executive comprised of twelve (12) elected students. Nine (9) of these were general Executive members, who held both an external portfolio and an internal portfolio.
- 2.2 External portfolios relate to University Faculties and Services while internal portfolios are relevant to UCSA services or the role of the UCSA.
- 2.3 The respective names and roles are set out below:

Name	Faculty Portfolio	Internal Portfolio
Jared Van de Geest	Commerce	Clubs
Daniel Chan	Sport	Clubs
Michael McRae	Business & Law	Development, Innovation & Capital Expenditure
Emily Osborne	Science	Welfare & Communication
Claire Laredo	Clubs	Clubs
Jenny Chiu	Engineering	Development, Innovation & Capital Expenditure
Sophie Beaumont	Education	Development, Innovation & Capital Expenditure
Rachael Gresson	Post Graduate	Welfare & Communication
Miria Scott-Toft	Arts	Welfare & Communication

- 2.4 In line with and in addition to their portfolios the UCSA Executive were active members of over thirty (30) committees and faculty and representative meetings within the University. Students were actively represented on the Library Committee, Transport Working Group, Teaching Award Committees, Health and Safety Committees as well as being represented at University Council its subcommittees (Finance, Planning and Resources, Audit and Risk, Honorary Doctorates Committee, Academic Board, Academic Appeals and Council Appeals).

Special Projects Fund

- 2.5 In 2011, the Special Projects Fund was initiated in order provide Executive members with the opportunity to specifically create, develop or implement a small idea, object or event that they were passionate about and most importantly, would benefit students. The Special Project Fund policy was formalised in 2012.
- 2.6 This year Cameron Bignell (Finance Officer) utilised the fund to introduce the Borrow a Bike project; an initiative that allows students to borrow a bike (and helmet), between 9am and

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5pm, Monday to Friday, for free. A student simply needs to produce their UC student ID card to the UCSA reception and return the bike by 5pm, on the same day that they borrowed it.

- 2.7 This initiative has been extremely successful and keeping up with the demand has been one of the biggest issues (a good problem to have). The UCSA will work towards future proofing and expanding this service in 2015.

The Advisory Board

- 2.8 This is a Board appointed and ratified by the UCSA Executive, which makes recommendations and gives advice as to the UCSA's activity (particularly within the commercial area). The Board is comprised of up to six (6) professionals with varied skill sets, the President, the Vice-President and the Finance Officer.
- 2.9 The Board met once a month during 2014.
- 2.10 The President chairs the Advisory Board meetings and the Chief Executive sits in attendance.
- 2.11 The 2014 external Advisory Board members were:

Name	Year Appointed
Nigel Watson	2006
Joanne Milne	2010
Pip Tschudin	2012
Jeremy Blake	2012
Paul Munro	2013

- 2.12 In December 2014 Pip Tschudin resigned from the Advisory Board. I would like to thank Pip for her thoughtful insight as an Advisory Board member and for her service over the past two years.
- 2.13 Pip had specific skills around media and communications and the 2015 Executive will continue the conversation the 2014 Executive did have regarding the necessary skills sets a new external Advisory Board member or members might have as we look to replace Pip.
- 2.14 The Advisory Board has continued to provide an invaluable resource to the Executive. Their ongoing support is extremely appreciated, and it is appropriate to take the opportunity to thank them for their continued dedication to the UCSA and the student experience.

University Council

- 2.15 Following the proposed changes in legislation regarding the makeup and constitutions of University Councils around the country extensive consultation between the UCSA and the University of Canterbury Council has taken place.
- 2.16 The 2013 Half AGM saw Dr. John Wood, Chancellor attend, and more importantly inform students that the University of Canterbury Council had a moral obligation to retain student representation and followed by making a commitment to students to do just that.
- 2.17 Furthermore, the 2014 University of Canterbury Council unanimously decided to stand by the current draft constitution (that was also passed unanimously) which retains student representation.
- 2.18 The Council has continued to take active steps to engage with the Minister on this issue.

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3. Student Services Levy

- 3.1 In 2014, the UCSA has again played a leading role in the decision making process of the allocation of the 2015 Student Services Levy
- 3.2 The process of allocating the Student Services Levy is facilitated by the Joint Operations Advisory Board (JOAB). This Board which meets fortnightly is co-chaired by the UCSA President and the Director of Student Services and Communications. The UCSA Finance Officer and Chief Executive also sit on JOAB alongside the President.
- 3.4 Recommendations to the Vice Chancellor from JOAB regarding the allocation of funds are driven by you, the students, through the UCount Survey. The results from the UCount Survey are available from the UCSA office.
- 3.5 One of the key areas of student concern has been club space on campus. This has subsequently become a priority at JOAB. Due to the lack of available space and the limited ability to increase space in the immediate future, a clubs grant specifically for club space was created. Hiring space off campus, while necessary, is becoming crippling for many clubs and soon will no longer be an option. This grant will seek to help these clubs afford the facilities they require until the UCSA or UC can provide them on campus again.

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4. Services

4.1 The UCSA services have been split across three key areas in 2014:

- Advocacy and Welfare
- Clubs and Events
- Media and Communication

4.2 In 2014, many of our services operated extremely well while some faced some challenges.

4.3 The usages of these services are included in the tables below (Jan - Dec 2014)

Activities & Events	2014		
	Actual	Target	Var %
Club Affiliations	122	100	22.0%
UCSA student activities & events	113	100	13%
Student attendees (cume)	92,795	70,000	33%

Media & Comms	2014		
	Actual	Target	Var %
Facebook Followers	17,000	15,000	13%
Web hits (New)	840,000	500,000	68%

Advocacy & Welfare	2014		
	Actual	Target	Var %
Foodbank Granted	127	200	-37%
Emergency Dental	51	150	-66%
Subsidised Dental	1,683	1,680	0%
Hardship/Mickle Fund	69	55	25%
Advocacy	198	169	17%
Class Reps	761	750	0%
Total	2,889	3,004	0%
Total (excl class reps)	2,128	2,254	-1%

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5. Commercial Activity

Food & Beverage

5.1 In 2013, the UCSA brought the food and beverage operation back in house. While making this decision has meant some challenges have needed to be overcome, it was known many of these might arise when the decision was made. More importantly it has meant we have been able to increase the offering, flexibility of opening hours and pricing range.

5.2 Cafes

The UCSA owns and operates the following cafes and bars;

- Chilton's
- Se-Juice
- The Greek
- Cut-Lunch
- The Wok
- The Burg
- Eng Café
- Alibi
- Collective Café
- The Shed
- The Foundry
- The Shilling Club
- The Hard Hat Cafe

It was a particularly hard decision for the previous Executive to re-take control of the food and beverage operation, having to weigh up the benefits of increased flexibility to the food offering and the financial risks that this would bring to the UCSA. Although our financials show that our food and beverage has made a loss for 2014, we believe that the additional value this has brought to students justifies the decision.

Throughout the year we have opened Se-Juice, a new café outlet selling healthy smoothies and a range of fresh juices. We have decreased the price on a number of items and increased the range and quality of the food offering, for example we have seen a decrease in the price of sandwiches and pies, introduced combo deals and of course produced more \$2 rice than ever before.

Towards the end of the year we opened a new café called the Hard Hat Café. This café was implemented to cater to the increasing number of construction workers on campus, in order to decrease the wait times in the Undercroft food outlets, particularly when most students have a 10 minute window between lectures.

5.3 The Foundry

Throughout the 2014 year we made significant improvements to The Foundry. We introduced a loyalty card, \$10 meals, and cheaper jugs and attracted a large number of international artists to the Foundry including Netsky and Bombs away.

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Early Learning Centres

- 5.4 The UCSA owns and operates two (2) Early Learning Centres (ELCs); Montana (on the corner of Montana Ave) and Ilam (opposite the Health Centre).
- 5.5 In 2014, Montana ELC had a daily role of 35 children. Approximately 50% of these children are the children of students. For under 3s the student rate was discounted by \$.72c per hour and over 3s the student rate is discounted by \$.61c per hour (for hours other than 20 Free ECE).
- 5.6 In 2014, Ilam ELC had a daily role of 82 children. 43% of these children are the children of current students, and the remaining number are children of ex-students, University staff or from the community. A discount of \$.72c per hour is extended to UC students.

6. University Bookshop (UBS)

- 6.1 The UCSA has continued to manage our 50% shareholding of the UBS however considerable change to both the governance and management of the UBS has been made in 2014.
- 6.2 2014 has seen the UCSA Chief Executive join the board. Dave (our CE) has quickly formed a strong working relationship with the board and has worked closely with the Board to initiate key strategic decisions that will help the effectiveness of both the Board and the running of UBS.
- 6.3 The board has dropped in size from five (5) members to three (3), creating a more nimble Board and saving substantial money.
- 6.4 UBS now also has an online presence with a website and is looking to take over UC Merchandise; a conversation that will continue and hopefully be actioned early in 2015.

7. UCSA Building

- 7.1 2014 has seen good progress made in relation to the UCSA Building.
- 7.2 As background; the UCSA owns 65% of the UCSA Building, UC own 35%, the land and held the insurance.
- 7.3 Following the University of Canterbury finalising their global insurance settlement (Dec 2013), negotiations have begun to confirm the portion of the global settlement that the UCSA will receive for the building.
- 7.4 The 2014 Executive has also built on the information and insights passed on from previous UCSA Executives to understand the details of the space that was previously provided by the UCSA Building, as well as what we (and clubs and students) are using currently. Most importantly though, the 2014 Executive has put substantial time and effort towards understanding what the future student will require and how to best future proof the UCSA Building.
- 7.5 Furthermore, progress has been made to ensure the student body has their say on what the UCSA Building will look and feel like. This process will ramp up in 2015, particularly once students are back on campus early in the New Year.
- 7.6 The 2014 Executive is confident that 2015 will see even more progress and many key decisions being made particularly regarding the best way to move forward in relation to the future of the current UCSA Building.

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- 7.7 Though it has been a long (almost) four (4) years, and while it is important to move swiftly, ensuring the right processes are taken, taking time to seek the opinions, wants and needs of clubs and the student body and not rushing the next few steps for the sake of slightly earlier completion is crucial.

8. General

Increasing Awareness of the UCSA

- 8.1 One of the key goals of the 2014 Executive was to increase the awareness of the UCSA among all students.
- 8.2 Sending over 2000 letters to first year students in January and February was one of the first steps taken towards this goal. The content of the letter let 'new to UC' students know who the UCSA were, what we did and where to find us. Simple but something that first years have said has made a difference. This will now be standard practice for the UCSA in the Jan/Feb of each New Year.
- 8.3 As well as letters to first years, the full UCSA Executive visited each hall of residence (and the halls without walls group) in the first term and then I visited each hall, each subsequent term. The purpose of these visits were again, to first let students know who we were and then update them about upcoming events or information they should be aware of (AGMs, Student Forums with the VC, Re-O week, Elections etc.)
- 8.4 While there is still more to be done in this area and it is important to not just focus on first year students, if these steps and more are continued for the next four (4) years and beyond we will have a much more informed and aware campus with regards to the UCSA.

University Challenge

- 8.5 November 2014 saw the return of University Challenge to TV screens around New Zealand. This is the first time the show has aired since 1989.
- 8.6 Extensive work has gone in behind the scenes pre November to select and prepare the team and credit to Rachael Gresson, one of UCSA Executive, who has taken this project on and managed it from start to finish.
- 8.7 The show has started with round-robin format and the final result will not be known until early next year.

Student Wellbeing Advisory Group

- 8.8 The 2014 Executive recognised the need to increase the diversity of student voices heard within the UCSA organisation.
- 8.9 The Student Wellbeing Advisory Group will endeavour to ensure all students have a voice within the UCSA, create a greater sense of belonging on campus for all student communities and specifically further develop diversity and inclusivity in the UCSA's decision making.
- 8.10 This will be a project that the 2015 Executive will progress.
- 8.11 Furthermore a new UCSA Student Wellbeing portfolio will be introduced for the 2015 Exec and beyond.

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9. Moving Forward

- 9.1 2014 has been year of growth for the UCSA. As an organisation we have faced and overcome many challenges that have presented themselves this year and I believe that these challenges have presented incredible opportunities for the UCSA to develop and work towards becoming a stronger students' association that better represents all of its students, than ever before.
- 9.2 I would like to thank the 2014 UCSA Executive for the way they have conducted themselves throughout the year. They have been committed, enthusiastic and professional at all times and I think that is a real credit each of them. Their diligence and passion has been invaluable and was needed to overcome the challenges we faced. Being a general executive member is not an easy position but one that they have chosen to stand for and you as students chosen to elect them to and they have carried themselves with dignity and served you well throughout the year.
- 9.3 I would also like to especially thank Luke Gillespie (Vice-President) and Cameron Bignell (Finance Officer) for their unwavering support and strong leadership throughout the year. The UCSA Executive is built on team work, passion and commitment. These two excel in all three areas and I am extremely grateful to have them by my side.
- 9.4 Thanks must also go to the staff who work for the UCSA. An incredible number of people choose to work with the UCSA and all are committed to making the student experience better, whether that be through events, advocacy, support, communication, providing child care or even food - each aspect is crucial to our organisation. Thanks and congratulations to Dave Hawkey, our Chief Executive, who in November completed his first year with the UCSA. Dave has joined the UCSA at a challenging time and his leadership, experience and energy truly pulled the UCSA together.
- 9.5 Lastly, it is important to thank you, the student body; firstly for putting faith in each of us and electing us to be your UCSA Executive but also for holding us accountable and standing by us. The role of the UCSA is to help all students succeed and belong at UC. We know we may not be perfect but I can absolutely assure you, each and every day the UCSA Executive and staff come to work and do our best to make a positive difference to your student experience.
- 9.6 Looking to 2015 and beyond we have the opportunity to continue to improve and develop - to be a more inclusive students' association than we have ever been before and I have no doubt that next year's Executive and all future executives will relish that opportunity.



Sarah Platt
2014 President
University of Canterbury Students' Association