

Job Description

Job Title:	Advocacy Specialist
Department:	Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association (WUSA)
Reports To:	Manager, Advocacy and Stakeholder Relations
Jobs Reporting:	Co-op and Part-Time Student Staff
Salary Grade:	USG 7
Effective Date:	February 2023

Primary Purpose

The Advocacy Specialist is responsible for leading and coordinating advocacy efforts driven by and on behalf of undergraduate students at the University of Waterloo. This includes understanding current student issues, monitoring, and interpreting relevant legislation and regulations, supervising part-time staff, coordinating advocacy campaigns, and building and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders.

Key Accountabilities

Student Advocacy Planning and Execution

- Develop and implement advocacy strategies and programs that are driven by WUSA's long range plan to promote student engagement and representation.
- Promote equity, diversity, and inclusion within the institution through the development and implementation of initiatives and policies.
- Collaborate alongside their manager to ensure that advocacy priorities are known and understood by administration at the university.
- Prepare regular reports on advocacy efforts and outcomes for Manager and other stakeholders.
- Works closely with the Advocacy and Outreach team to plan and execute events, such as rallies, press conferences, educational campaigns and lobbying days, to advance the organization's policy and advocacy goals
- Establishes performance indicators and assessment methods to measure achievement in all areas of responsibility including program goals and objectives and individual program success.
- Represents the students' interests and concerns at meetings and events with external stakeholders

Staff Management and Development

- Supervise a team of part-time staff, including student volunteers, to assist with research and advocacy efforts.
- Responsible for making key decisions in times of crisis when the Manager, Advocacy and Stakeholder Relations is not present. They must therefore have experience managing difficult situations, crises and making decisions independently, with little direction.
- Oversees the day-to-day operations of the student part time staff. The Specialist will be expected to provide additional program support, leadership, and assist in decision making during peak times as programs evolve and grow.

Job Description



- Develops and coordinates the recruitment, hiring, selection, onboarding, training, performance management, appreciation of and recognition of all direct reports.

Administrative and Project Management

- Monitor and interpret relevant legislation and regulations that affect post-secondary students in Canada.
- Maintain a strong understanding of current trends and best practices around the student experience in higher education.
- Communicate the organization's policy positions and advocacy efforts to the media, members, and the public.
- Collaborate with other departments and the organization's leadership team to ensure policy and advocacy efforts align with overall organizational strategy.

Relationship Management and Collaboration

- Facilitate a strong working relationship with internal stakeholders (WUSA) and campus partners.
- Works closely with other staff at WUSA to ensure a coordinated and integrated approach to program development and delivery, and communications.
- Participate in and contribute to regular team and department wide meetings, as appropriate.
- Along with the Manager, works closely with internal staff and campus partners to ensure the needs of current students are being met.

**All employees of the University are expected to follow University and departmental health and safety policy, procedures and work practices at all times. Employees are also responsible for the completion of all health and safety training, as assigned. Employees with staff supervision and/or management responsibilities will ensure that assigned staff abide by the above, and actively identify, assess and correct health and safety hazards, as required.*

Required Qualifications

Education

- Post-secondary degree in a related discipline or equivalent combination of education and experience

Experience

- A minimum of 3 years of experience in advocacy or related field.
- Minimum of 1 year of experience supervising, evaluating and coaching part time employees
- Strong research and analytical skills.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Knowledge of conventions and standards in policy/stance writing.
- Experience in determining if policies/stances align with objectives.
- Strong organizational and project management skills.
- Experience in supervising and leading teams.
- Knowledge of relevant legislation and regulations affecting post-secondary education in Canada.
- Experience in promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion.

- Demonstrated ability to be creative and engaging in event/idea generation.

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Passion for advocating on behalf of post-secondary students and a commitment to promoting access and affordability in post-secondary education.
- Analytical and decision-making skills, creative problem-solving approaches
- Develops, writes, and follows appropriate process documentation
- Project management, leading teams and delegating to achieve results through teamwork.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team; ability to take initiative and be proactive
- Advanced: MS Word, Office Suite

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Working with various stakeholders of WUSA, both external and internal to the organization. Will work with members of the university and wider community depending on the advocacy priority set from the Board of Directors.
- **Level of Responsibility:** Policy and procedure development, strategic planning, process flow development, leadership, influence, casual staff management, coaching, direction, financial accountability, risk management, upholding the image of the University of Waterloo and WUSA, relationship building
- **Decision-Making Authority:** This position is expected to be self-directed in executing their responsibilities. The role has a mix of defined, specialized, routine, and non-routine tasks and requires sound judgement, tact, and discretion in juggling and executing these responsibilities. This position will make recommendations to the Manager of Advocacy and Stakeholder Relations the execution of their responsibilities
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Mostly stationary work, with high volume of meetings with stakeholders across campus. Ability to manage multiple and competing priorities in a changing environment with shifting priorities.
- **Working Environment:** Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions. The team operates within a shared open workspace environment. Work outside the normal operating hours of the institution may be required in some instances, but is limited. The Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association is a student-driven organization with elected student leaders that change on an annual basis. Further, the political landscape is a diverse and dynamic environment. As such, this position will need to be sensitive and adaptable to change and be comfortable with changing deadlines and projects as needed.