

Job Description

Job Title:	Graduate Studies and Research Officer
Department:	Faculty of Arts, Graduate Studies and Research Office
Reports To:	Associate Dean, Graduate Studies
Jobs Reporting:	N/A
Salary Grade:	USG 7
Effective Date:	May 2020

Primary Purpose

The Graduate Studies and Research Officer is a senior administrative position in the Faculty of Arts Graduate Studies and Research Office, reporting to the Associate Dean, Graduate Studies (ADG), and is responsible for overseeing day-to-day operations and operational improvements to business practices in the Arts Graduate Studies and Research Office. This role provides leadership to all Graduate Coordinators in the Faculty of Arts. This position will also work closely with the other senior administrative staff within the Faculty of Arts on strategic initiatives related to admissions and student success.

The Graduate Studies and Research Officer also provides support for a range of services related to the research grant application and submission process. The role supports the Associate Dean of Research (ADO) and the Faculty of Arts by providing administrative and logistical support in developing and growing research funding and research related activities within the Faculty.

Key Accountabilities

Provides strategic and comprehensive administrative support to Associate Dean, Graduate Studies, Graduate Chairs and Graduate Coordinators in the Faculty of Arts

- Develops and supports new initiatives, directing workflow to meet Faculty of Arts goals and objectives
- Analyzes internal processes and recommends and implements procedural changes to improve day-to-day operations
- Compiles information and statistical data to inform graduate program reports and appraisals for the ADG and other stakeholders
- Provides support to the ADG in addressing cases involving academic and non-academic disciplines (Policy 71), student appeals (Policy 72), and student petitions (Policy 70)
- Serves as a resource and directs administrative support for the Graduate Affairs Group (GAG) monthly meetings including submitting motions to the Arts Faculty Council (AFC) and Senate Graduate and Research Council (SGRC)
- Coordinates graduate program reviews and new graduate programs

Financial Administration

- Signs for all Arts Graduate and Research operating and scholarship accounts (excess of \$1M)
- Maintains faculty-wide annual budgets for the UW Graduate Scholarship, Faculty-level endowments, and expenditures from the Special Grad Fund
- Record and process financial requests, travel expenses and honorariums through UW's financial and HR system and balance relevant budgets (~\$95K/year)
- Supports the Faculty Financial Officer (FFO) in the preparation of per-term transfer of graduate student funding to the Arts departments; assist with data review and quality assurance

- Processes department nominations for graduate scholarship funds and maintains a comprehensive database
- Supports the Associate Deans in the development of the annual budget for the two units

Provides leadership, support and direction to academic and on-campus support units

- Enables department staff through coaching, training staff to meet new objectives, and facilitating problem resolution
- Consults with and makes recommendations to the ADG on matters affecting the Arts Graduate Office, graduate students, and graduate programs administered by the Faculty of Arts
- Plans and/or participates in meetings/workshops with department graduate personnel to communicate graduate policies, procedures and timelines, including amendments and new initiatives; attends meetings organized by Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs (GSPA) for the same purpose
- Develops and maintains a comprehensive records-management system to ensure that records of grade appeals, extensions and other essential matters are secure and readily retrievable
- Interprets and ensures Faculty adherence to UW and Faculty policies, guidelines and practices
- Guides departmental Graduate Associate Chairs, staff graduate administrators, and students in the interpretation and application of policies and procedures related to Graduate Studies in Arts
- Establishes and maintains faculty-wide best practices to meet operational goals; reviews quality and accuracy of departmental administration, and addresses and concerns with departmental staff, their direct supervisors or Associate Chairs as appropriate
- Organizes Faculty-wide graduate student orientation activities, including special events and regular workshops; liaises with departments to ensure students have completed orientation requirements
- Oversees the Required to Withdraw (RTW) notification, involving the ADG where appropriate
- Acts as a liaison between GSPA and departmental staff in updating policies and procedures from GSPA and to share feedback on GSPA initiatives on behalf of department staff
- Attends GSPA/Faculty administrator meetings on behalf of the Faculty of Arts

Scholarship Administration

- Oversees the scholarship process at the Faculty level including providing guidance to academic units and the ADG to ensure the optimal and appropriate usage of all awards, endowments and trusts within the Faculty of Arts, and processing awards nominations
- Administers supporting awards reviewed by the Faculty of Arts Graduate Studies Awards Committee
- Arranges consultation as required between the ADG and department graduate offices regarding graduate student applications for external scholarships prior to University-level discussions
- Identifies eligible candidates for various University and Faculty awards; creates messaging to inform award nominees of completion outcomes
- Reviews and processes nominations for internal and external awards in excess of \$1M independently or in coordination with departments

Workflow and process improvements

- Works with stakeholders to identify, prioritize, and implement workflow and process improvements related to graduate students to ensure clear communications with students, staff, and faculty, including measuring and reporting on results
- Reviews and assesses applications and offers for admission to graduate programs in Arts as necessary, using knowledge of educational systems in Canada, the US, and elsewhere
- Reviews admission offers for accuracy and consistency, particularly with respect to funding amounts
- Tracks and sends motions from GAG to the relevant Faculty and Senate committees for approval
- Liaises between Arts departments and GSPA for program time limit extensions; communicates with graduating students at or beyond the completion time limit set by the University

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- Prepares GAG agendas in consultation with the ADG; records and distributes minutes
- Reviews GAG motions, including graduate curricular changes and policy matters, advising departments and the ADG when revisions are required
- Reviews and evaluates sessional contracts and appointments for graduate students
- Advertises ARBUS Teaching Assistantship positions; collects resumes and distributes them to sessional instructors; prepares sessional contracts for ARBUS teaching assistants each term

Managing PhD Oral Defenses, and PhD Thesis Submission and Acceptances, ADDS Status

- Responsible for preparation and retention of records for each doctoral candidate
- Leads administration of all thesis defenses, including considerations made for absent committee members, paperwork and communications with Daily Bulletin, liaising with GSPA for the Chair of the examination committee, preparing Examination Reports and Thesis Acceptances, and delivering the Chair's package for the oral examination
- Communicates with thesis defense committees, external examiners, chairs, administration and faculty administration to confirm, remind, and notify of any changes
- Validates all records for precision and compliance to University/Faculty regulations for committee representation
- Processes paperwork related to milestone completion and thesis acceptances
- Monitors defense committee and the University/Faculty regulatory policies and timelines, clearly and accurately advising departmental faculty, students, and staff
- Updates procedures to manage high volumes of work, effectively communicating changes to staff
- Coordinates Approved Doctoral Dissertation Supervisor (ADDS) status requests from the Faculty of Arts departments to be approved by the ADG and GSPA
- Communicates with all stakeholders and updates administration related to ADDS and updates the Faculty of Arts records with approved ADDS status requests
- Briefing department Coordinators, Associate Chairs, and GSPA on exceptional cases

Provides leadership, support and direction to ADR

- Manages the research grant application process, collection, collation, and tracking of research proposals and cover sheets by various agencies and sponsors including growth in research funding, and produces reports that help to evaluate and inform the Faculty's strategic objectives
- Tracks the development and submission of research grant proposals by creating and maintaining spreadsheets for all funding programs and initiatives
- Maintains and updates a database of Faculty research activities and provides summaries of these data at the request of the ADR or Dean for a range of University and funding agency requirements
- Interacts with financial partners in Office of Research Ethics (ORE) regarding research funding financial information
- Processes all cover sheets for the Faculty to ensure accuracy and that Office of Research (OR) guidelines are followed
- Assists the Faculty's Communication Officer with the organization of major research seminars, announcements and awards as required by the ADR

**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

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- Post-secondary education, or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Leadership training/diploma would be an asset

Experience

- Several years' administrative experience in an academic environment with familiarity of graduate studies
- Financial experience with expenditures and reconciliations for awards and scholarships
- Experience using metrics to measure success and to produce reports
- Some exposure to research granting agency policies
- Advanced experience with Microsoft Excel, OnBase, and Quest, and experience using databases to generate reports. Experience creating and managing shared electronic communication sites, such as SharePoint
- Some event management experience

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Familiarity with the processes associated with admissions to graduate programs at Waterloo preferred
- Proven ability to solicit best practices from a variety of sources
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills with the proven ability to be accurate, concise, and professional
- Proven ability to succeed in a detail-oriented environment with a high level of initiative and flexibility
- Excellent problem-solving abilities and good judgment
- Excellent analytical and organizational skills
- Proven ability to work independently with minimal direction and as a team member in a busy and varied environment with deadlines, changing priorities and large volumes of work

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** This person interacts regularly with Associate Dean, Graduate Studies, Associate Dean, Research, Associate Chairs, and administrative staff in all academic units in the Faculty of Arts, as well as the University Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs Office, University-wide Graduate Faculty Coordinators/Deans, Student Awards, Financial Assistance, Student Success Office, Accessibility Services, Human Resources, the Office of Research and Finance. The role is responsible for developing and maintaining excellent working relationships with all these areas in order to guide, recommend and influence internal processes related to graduate studies and research.
- **Level of Responsibility:** This position has Faculty wide impact, and specialized work with minimal supervision. This position requires a high degree of knowledge of University policies and procedures as well as the admission and degree requirements for over 38 programs of study across 18 academic units. The position is also a leader of graduate staff in the academic units influencing graduate operations at the Department level. This position is instrumental in leading and implementing new initiatives to meet operational goals.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** This position must be able to make decisions independently, determine priorities, and will constantly be required to make discretionary judgments. Any issues beyond the scope of the above outlined responsibilities would be escalated to the Associate Dean, Graduate Studies.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Demands typical of a senior administrative position with leadership responsibilities within an office environment. Long periods of sustained attention and concentration to verify accuracy and completeness of various academic data and compiling information from various sources. Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a supervisory position.

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- **Working Environment:** Working Hours: Regular working hours with occasional evening and weekend work required. Works with confidential academic information, which may involve personal or health issues requiring sensitivity and tact.