

Job Description

Job Title:	Undergraduate Advisor and Program Administrator
Department:	School of Planning
Reports To:	Academic Services Manager
Jobs Reporting:	None
Salary Grade:	USG 6
Effective Date:	December 2020

Primary Purpose

Reporting to the Academic Services Manager and providing support to the Associate Director, Undergraduate Studies, The Undergraduate Advisor and Program Administrator manages the administration of the undergraduate program and supports students and faculty in the School of Planning. Significant aspects of the position include academic and administrative management of the degree program and processes, oversight of academic advising and being the primary point of contact for prospective and current students. The incumbent must be knowledgeable of policies and procedures related to Undergraduate Studies at the University of Waterloo.

Key Accountabilities

Academic Advising, including but not limited to:

- Provides academic advice to Co-op Planning students, potential transfer students, and exchange students regarding their individual course and program/plan selection and career goals (enrollment, plan modification and academic progression);
- Approves course exemptions and waivers to Planning degree requirements;
- Assists students with preparation of Petitions, Exchanges, Letters of Permission, and Academic/Work Term Sequence changes;
- Conducts degree checklists, and review of all students nearing graduation to advise students on degree requirements and strategy for completion;
- Verifies and approves students have met program degree requirements for Convocation.

Student Success Initiatives, including but not limited to:

- Identifies students at-risk academically by liaising with course instructors to develop a plan of action for student success and eligibility for Foundation Term through student interviews;
- Monitors the academic progression of students identified as at-risk and be ready to further intervene when students are not progressing;
- Independently assesses and confidentially documents student problems and issues. May be the first contact to advising students in crisis. Immediate action may be required to connect students with University resources and/or provide practical assistance.
- Contacts and interviews conditional standing and required to withdraw students as identified by the end of term academic progression reports and provides academic advice and strategies for success;

- Assists students through their program and tracks their progress from admission to completion, including monitoring the number of co-op job applications, completion of work terms and Professional Development Modules, English Language Proficiency, and degree requirements;
- Advises students who are in their Foundation Term and non-degree students who have been required to withdraw and are seeking re-admission;
- Informs students of all relevant academic deadlines, policies, events, and activities by individual email and newsgroup messages.

Admissions, including but not limited to:

- Provides academic advice to prospective students, parents, teachers, guidance counselors, mature and transfer students about admission requirements or status of an application;
- Approves OSS, Non-OSS, re-admits and internal transfer student admissions to Planning co-op programs;
- Assesses and authorizes transfer credits from internal and external institutions, and course exemptions and waivers to the Planning degree requirement;
- Develops customized course sequencing for all readmits and internal transfer students;
- Reviews and recommends entrance scholarships and awards to incoming students.

Academic Administration, including but not limited to:

- Manages the School of Planning undergraduate office, serving as “first-contact” for the faculty, students, and external parties;
- In conjunction with the Associate Director, Undergraduate Studies, co-ordinates and compiles information to plan and implement changes to related program requirements and course descriptions
- Active member of the Faculty of ENV Undergraduate Studies Committee, responsible for review, implementation and optimization of the business practices as they relate to the UG programs in Planning;
- Participates on Committees and attends meetings by providing information, conducting research, developing materials and reports to contribute to discussions and decision-making: School meetings, Undergraduate Operations, ENV Undergraduate Studies Committee, ENV Work Term Report Committee, Advisor meetings;
- Approves changes to students’ academic standing (Conditional, Required to Withdraw; Foundation Term);
- Recruits and allocates the undergraduate teaching assistants; authorizes TA payments; reviews teaching evaluations to identify issues;
- Administers and monitors the submission of all Planning undergraduate grades to the Registrar’s Office;
- Updates and maintains the School’s student advisory materials on the School’s UG website;
- Compiles, coordinates, and edits UW Calendar changes related to program requirements and course descriptions;
- Administers work report process: authorizes evaluator payment, collects reports, issues extensions, maintains grades, determine Faculty Work Term Report Award recipient;
- Administers Senior Honours Essays: advisement to faculty and students of policies and procedures, grades and assessments, essay binding, maintenance of database.

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- Implements and updates Academic Advisement Templates for all plans and specializations in Planning;
- Reviews the proposed course scheduling to identify conflicts and resolve problems; provides enrollment projections and monitors and reports enrollment anomalies;
- Monitors completion of students' work terms, work reports, Professional Development Modules and degree requirements by maintaining accurate records;
- Analyzes statistical information relating to admissions to provide vital information for forecasting, reporting purposes, and long-term planning;
- Participates in, assists with, or attends special events: Fall and March Open Houses, Student Life 101, Induction and Graduation Ceremonies, Toronto Alumni Dinner, ENV Graduation Reception, Pragma Conference, and Ontario Professional Planners Institute visits to campus;

**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

- Bachelor's degree or higher in related field or equivalent education and experience

Experience

- Several years' experience working in an academic environment within student services preferred
- Experience with interpreting and advising on undergraduate policies and procedures, is preferred
- Excellent organizational, analytical, interpersonal, customer service skills required,
- Experience with University of Waterloo online data systems (such as Quest, Infosilem/DCU Scheduling system, LEARN), or equivalent systems is an asset

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Demonstrated understanding of the university environment and its organizational structure
- Familiarity with University of Waterloo undergraduate programs from a variety of academic units is an asset.
- Advanced technical skills with MS Office Suite and demonstrated ability to learn and administer new software
- Ability to help guide students in the development of a coherent course sequencing is an asset.
- Demonstrated ability to communicate effectively (oral and written) with a diverse group of individuals.
- Excellent interpersonal, organization, and time management skills.
- Proven ability to work independently with minimal direction as a team member in a busy and varied environment with deadlines and changing priorities. Evidence of the ability to handle multiple projects with competing deadlines, prioritize tasks, and make decisions under pressure.
- Exceptional verbal and written communication skills, Proven ability to handle multiple projects with competing deadlines, prioritize tasks and make decision-under pressure, Excellent human relations skills; proven ability to guide students, foster constructive team relationships, and to work effectively with faculty, staff and students
- Sound judgment, tact, diplomacy and problem-solving skills
- Proven aptitude for accurate and detailed work.

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Academic Services Manager, Associate Dean Undergraduate Studies, Associate Director, Undergraduate Studies, Registrar's Office, Assistant Registrar, Records, Admissions, Co-operative Education, Student Success Office, Student Awards and Financial Aid, Planning Student Association, Faculty and Staff throughout UW, Marketing and Recruitment and other UW Departments as required. Externally makes contacts with prospective students and parents, Secondary teachers and guidance counsellors, alumni, OPPI, and Personnel at other universities
- **Level of Responsibility:** The incumbent is expected to show initiative and be able to work independently as well as in a collaborative team environment. This position requires a high degree of knowledge of University policies and procedures as well as the admission and degree requirements
- **Decision-Making Authority:** The incumbent 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 Director Undergraduate Studies, or the School Director.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** i.e. distractions, attention to detail, lifting, carrying
- **Working Environment:** Regular working hours, some evening/weekend work required to support student engagement and events, occasional travel, Some exposure to disagreeable conditions, deals with people who may be upset, frustrated or angry, in crisis, or with people who have mental health concerns.