

Job Description



Job Title:	Manager – Academic Advising
Department:	Arts Undergraduate Office
Reports To:	Associate Dean, Undergraduate Students (Faculty of Arts)
Jobs Reporting:	Academic Advisors (5)
Salary Grade:	USG 12
Effective Date:	April 2020

Primary Purpose

To direct, implement, and monitor academic support services for students in the Faculty of Arts (including all Arts students, UWaterloo students taking Arts courses in aid of transfer and UWaterloo students taking concurrent degrees, and non-degree and conditionally admitted students); to initiate and implement curricular and regulatory change in the Faculty in collaboration with Faculty leadership; to contribute, as leader, to decisions about admissions, academic progression, exceptions to academic regulations, and convocation. To provide guidance to and liaise with undergraduate student advisors and other university staff in support of Arts learners, academic requirements, and resource specifications.

Key Accountabilities

Manager – Academic Advising Function: The incumbent manages/leads all undergraduate academic advising processes within the Arts Undergraduate Office and the Faculty of Arts as a whole, and is responsible for developing training processes for all academic advisors (staff and faculty) in Arts.

- Maintains in-depth and current knowledge of Arts' undergraduate curriculum and academic requirements for all programs; of Arts' admissions regulations and practices; of the areas of expertise related to concurrent degrees; of the University policies and Faculty regulations of particular relevance to student issues; and the sources of support and help that are available to students, both within and outside the University.
- Works closely with the Academic Officer and Records Supervisor for Arts on academic progression and the determination of academic standing decisions for Honours Arts students; also, in conjunction with the Records Supervisor for Arts, assists and advises Departmental Academic Advisors in Arts on issues relating to academic progression.
- Maintains appropriate contact and communication with those offices and entities elsewhere in the Faculty, in the University, and in the outer community that are particularly relevant to the areas of the Manager's own responsibilities. Liaises regularly with advising leadership across campus to share best practices and common issues, collaborate on university-wide and inter-faculty advising initiatives.
- Provides support in undergraduate matters for the Faculty of Arts as a whole.
- Develops guidelines and proposes new advising initiatives for increased advising efficiency in the AUO, including cross-training of AUO advisors. Creates and maintains training protocols and practices for new and existing academic advisors on advising topics such as Plan Modification Forms, Student Petitions, etc.
- Explores opportunities for innovation, such as implementing digital tools and technologies that can support and mediate advising.
- Provides overall strategic direction for all aspects of web advising, such as FAQs, triage, and forums.

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- Develops and creates new Faculty regulations and proposes changes to existing Faculty regulations.
- Applies a data-driven approach in decision-making and in providing recommendations regarding strategic directions of undergraduate student affairs.
- Provides leadership and direction in the planning and execution of training workshops for Arts advisors throughout the year. Identifies learning needs and gaps, and collaborates with staff within AUO and campus resources to create training content.
- Manages the Arts International Exchange process. Oversees and delegates student-facing responsibilities, and is able to act as International Exchange Co-ordinator when needed. Works with Waterloo International, Records Supervisor for Arts, and other Faculty Exchange Coordinators to offer information and guidance to student participants on Exchange opportunities as well as to ensure appropriate course selection (incoming exchange students) and transfer credit application (outgoing exchange students).

AUO Staff Supervision

- Hires, trains, and supervises the AUO's advising team staff members.
- Maintains and revises, as necessary, the distribution of responsibilities between Academic Advisors, including but not limited to: service to distinct student groups, cross-campus and cross-faculty liaison and training, the administration of international exchanges, planning of mass advising events/initiatives, and special projects.
- Contributes, as appropriate, to revision of job descriptions and assignment of duties for other office staff, such as Student Services Assistants.
- Provides general direction and oversight for new student orientation activities and responsible roles.
- Participates in AUO manager group and contributes to management-level decisions.

Admissions: As primary undergraduate Admissions Officer in Arts, works with Admissions Officers for the University to manage the admission of all undergraduate students to the Faculty, including the assessment and awarding of transfer credits for admitted applicants.

- Holds voting membership on and provides support to the Arts Faculty Admissions Committee.
- Ensures consistency in the interpretation of academic records and assessment of transfer credit(s) for admitted students who have had previous post-secondary experience.
- Provides support in other categories of applicant assessment, both on-campus and online.
- Makes readmission decisions, including course selection approvals, course selection QUEST entries, Academic Advice Service Indicator additions and removals, students tracking, academic progression decision making, and average clearing.
- Provides advice and information to the Faculty and its Admissions Policy Committee on associated matters.
- Represents the Faculty of Arts at recruitment events: Ontario Universities' Fair, Fall Open House, March Break Open House, and You@Waterloo Day

Committees/Meetings:

- Contributes and votes on matters considered by the Arts Examinations and Standings (E&S) Committee (which vets all Arts student petitions), the Arts Undergraduate Affairs Group (UGAG, which vets undergraduate curricular plans, rules, and regulations), the Arts Regulations Committee (which reviews existing, and creates new, regulations pertaining to undergraduate students), and the New Student Transition Working Group (which oversees first-year student transition programming).
- Chairs regular meetings of the AUO's academic advising team.

Special Projects:

- Serves as a Faculty of Arts representative at university meetings dealing with policies and procedures and implementation of new systems related to undergraduate student service

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- In conjunction with the Associate Deans and Administrative Manager, maintains the advising portion of Arts undergraduate officer training materials (e.g. Advisors' Handbook).
- Co-ordinates and participates in the post-offer course selection and transition initiatives scheduled for new Arts entrants in June and July.
- Provides general oversight and direction for new student orientation activities.

Student Advising:

- Handles readmission decisions.
- Addresses complex, out-of-the-ordinary student cases.
- Backs up the portfolios and work of advising team as needed during periods of high volume.
- Provides assistance to students in the preparation of petitions.
- Supports students pursuing concurrent degrees with the Faculty of Arts:
 - Provides academic advising on course/program selection and changes, degree requirements, preregistration, and all academic issues for students considering or pursuing an Arts BA concurrently, from declaration to graduation.
 - Co-ordinates the academic progression and advisement for the concurrent degree cohort. This responsibility includes assessing students' academic standing and completion of course requirements; and generating appropriate comments and decision codes for the Office of the Registrar.

**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

Experience

- 5-10 years of undergraduate academic advising and familiarity with university rules and regulations
- Strong managerial experience and leadership skills dealing with diverse teams and situations

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Vulnerable sector check required
- Advanced use of MS Office products, especially Teams, Word and Excel
- Advanced understanding of data sources available to support Academic Advising, including ASIS, Quest, and IAP data
- Strong communication skills (written and oral) are required, including clarity, diplomacy, and tact
- Experience in making and presenting data-driven decisions in support of student academic success
- Ability to work independently, with minimal direction, and as part of a team
- Effective organizational, research, strategic thinking, analytical and problem-solving skills
- Knowledge of UW academic programs and curriculum processes; Arts program knowledge preferred

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Arts Undergraduate Office personnel; Registrar's Office; Undergraduate Officers in the Faculty of Arts; Office of the Dean of Arts; Office of the Associate Dean of Arts, Co-op and Special Programs; Arts department staff; Waterloo International; Other uWaterloo Faculty Undergraduate Offices and advisors.

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- **Level of Responsibility:** The position is responsible for managing staff, advising students, and managing curriculum and policy change. Self-initiated, detail-oriented, strategic thinking is required. Excellent time-management skills.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Makes independent decisions in the deployment of academic support services in the Arts Undergraduate Office. Responsible for hiring, training, and supervising staff, making admission and academic progression decisions, organizing and managing academic services for Arts students. Responsible for monitoring university and faculty policy and implementing changes as they arise. Refers matters to Associate Deans when necessary.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Demands are typical of an administrative position that functions within office and meeting environments. Exposure to a fast-paced service oriented environment.
- **Working Environment:** Exposure to conditions typical of office work and meetings; expectation of periodic travel within Ontario annually. Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a supervisory position and one where it is necessary to convey negative or unwelcome information to students. May experience exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of working with people in distress. There may occasionally be multiple and/or tight deadlines beyond one's control. Deprivation caused by constant interruptions. Work volume varies at different times of year.