Job Description

JOB TITLE: Assistant Registrar, Policy and Communications

DATE: July 1, 2016

REPORTS TO: Associate Registrar, Records and Systems

JOBS REPORTING: Records & Systems Analyst – Academic Advisement, Records & Systems Assistant, Records & Systems Assistant – Catalog, Editor, U/G Calendar, Manager of Communications

LOCATION: Main Campus

GRADE: USG 12

DEPARTMENT: Office of the Registrar

PRIMARY PURPOSE: The Assistant Registrar, Policy and Communications reports to the Associate Registrar, Records and Systems. Along with their direct reports and in partnership with Faculties, they are responsible for the development and modification of University and Faculty academic policies and procedures as they relate to the retention and graduation of undergraduate students, the major source of funding for the University of Waterloo. They ensure that all of the above is accurately reflected in the Undergraduate Calendar and well-communicated to the University community. In addition, the Assistant Registrar contributes to the general operation of the Office as a senior management team member.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES:

Include 3-4 key accountabilities of the role. These key accountabilities should reflect 80%-90% of “what the job does not the “how”.

1. Creation and review of policies affecting student records and progression

   The Assistant Registrar, Policy and Communications in consultation with the Associate Registrar, Records and Systems, and the Assistant Registrar, Records Operations collectively determine the strategy for student records management at the University. The overarching goal is to formulate policies and guidelines that can be applied to all University students fairly and consistently in support of the enrolment management goals of the University.

   The Assistant Registrar, Policy and Communications must lead in data-based decision making, recommending policy founded on analysis of historic data, research of peer institutions’ practices, and Faculty and Student requirements.

   The policy creation process entails close co-operation and consultation with the Faculty and Affiliated Institutes’ academic Associate Deans and the Undergraduate Operations Committee. The Assistant Registrar, Policy and Communications collaborates with and provides guidance to the Faculties and Affiliates from policy conception through to policy approval by Senate. The Assistant Registrar, Policy and Communication engages the appropriate faculty resources, and that of other central support departments i.e. Student Financial Services, IAP, CECA, SSO, Counselling, to achieve consistency of student experience across all faculties. Exceptional problem solving skills and breadth and depth of Faculty policy is required as well as superior leadership skills to negotiate common policy structure across six diverse Faculties.

   The Assistant Registrar will have comprehensive knowledge of the undergraduate calendar, Academic Advisement and Academic Progression and Graduation rules. They will provide guidance and interpret rules to faculty, staff and systems analysts. They play a key role in the enrolment management of undergraduate students.

2. Communication of Current and Future Academic Policy

   The Assistant Registrar, Policy and Communications is responsible for the timely and effective communication of important academic dates, policy and guidelines to students, faculty and staff. Responsibility for the publication of the academic calendar and maintenance of the Registrar’s web-pages falls under the Assistant Registrar, Policy and
Communications. As such, they will be viewed as the expert on campus in regards to academic policy for undergraduate students.

To ensure thorough vetting of changed and new policy the incumbent will facilitate liaison among administrative departments affected by a pending change in academic policy, including but not limited to: Finance, Financial Aid, Records Management, IST, and Co-operative Education.

The Assistant Registrar, Policy and Communications is aware of pending policy to be brought to Senate Undergraduate Council and reviews SUC agendas, advising the Registrar and Associate Registrars of agenda items of significance to the Registrar’s Office.

3. Bridging Policy, Systems and Process
The Quest system is the foundation of all current student records management for student progression and graduation. There are over 50 interfaces and integrations with other databases on campus that rely on Quest data. The Assistant Registrar, Policy and Communications develops system requirements for new policy based on thorough business analysis of current and future procedures. The Assistant Registrar, Policy and Communications is responsible for ensuring the timely and accurate maintenance of all Academic Advisement coding in Quest in order to support faculty’s, staff’s and student’s use of the degree audit capability used by students, advisors, faculty and the Registrar’s Office. The incumbent ensures that all degree audit activity is in compliance with auditor’s requirements. This requires close collaboration with the Records teams, Faculties and the Records & Systems team to confirm that business process is aligned with degree audit rules.

The Assistant Registrar, Policy and Communications is considered the faculty liaison and will proactively guide faculty on system and policy efficiencies for academic progression, graduation, and advisement. The role is responsible for collegial faculty relations, governance of policy, and continuous process improvement. The Assistant Registrar is a liaison between faculty and the analyst, interpreting policy, guiding improvements and ensuring that these improvements can be implemented by the analysts.

4. Managing, Leading and Motivating Staff
The Assistant Registrar, Policy and Communications is responsible for the recruitment, development and evaluation of staff who report directly to them and will advise and coach on the development of all staff within their scope of reporting.

The Assistant Registrar will drive the training and development of their team. The role will be responsible for creating timelines, operational procedures and advanced training on complex communication and policy principles. The role will ensure that communications and policies are consistent and efficiencies are realized across the Records Coordinators portfolios.

The Assistant Registrar provides leadership and insight for both short and long term plans that meet the objectives of the Registrar’s Office strategic plan. They identify areas for improvement and consideration for process change. They research, identify and develop recommendations for review and approval by Undergraduate Operations and Associate Deans.

The Assistant Registrar ensures the effective utilization, deployment and development of staff to productively meet department goals and objectives. They coach, train and develop employees in all area of responsibility to assure growth and development of those individuals for the role, department and University. They conduct Annual Performance Plans with direct reports.
Job Description

5. Member of the Senior Management team

The Assistant Registrar, Policy and Communications is an active member of the senior management team, and as such is engaged in the formulation, interpretation and implementation of policies affecting the Registrar’s Office in the evaluation and planning for staff, strategic enrolment management, and overall planning of Registrar activities. The Assistant Registrar, Policy and Communications will be asked to be a member of sub-committees of Senate Undergraduate Council or represent the Registrar’s Office on strategic-level committees (e.g. IT and Enrolment Management).

The Assistant Registrar works closely with Student Awards and Financial Aid, Student Accounts, Co-operative Education and Career Action, Graduate Studies Office, etc to ensure impact of any changes to policies & communications are considered and reviewed with other areas prior to implementation.

POSITION REQUIREMENTS:
If hiring today, what would be the minimum requirements?

Education: University degree in a relevant discipline (e.g. business administration), or post-secondary education and equivalent experience

Experience: Strong managerial experience and leadership skills dealing with diverse teams and situations • Excellent understanding of university policy and procedures as pertains to undergraduate students • High degree of analysis, planning and coordination skills • Excellent written and verbal communication skills for varied audiences • Excellent relationship management skills to work with a variety of partners • Understanding of issues and trends affecting post-secondary education • Strong project management skills • Experience working and advising faculty, staff and students. Must have a advance understanding of student records administrative software.

Technical: Job specific experience, computer skills

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NATURE AND SCOPE:

- **Interpersonal Skills:** Must maintain a productive working relationship with managers and staff in the Registrar’s Office, Deans and Associate Deans, College Heads, Cooperative Education and Career Action, numerous Faculty and Affiliate Institution based personnel who deal with student records, and managers in other administrative departments. Must be able lead constructive discussions with partners across campus, as a representative of the Registrar’s Office. Must have strong negotiation skills and collegial approach to solving problems.
- **Level of Responsibility:** Ensures the integrity of academic record policy and communication, impacting all students, and faculty. Must provide strong leadership to direct reports. The position is expected to develop business protocols and systems to deliver a superior level of services and experiences for applicants, staff and faculty.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Makes decisions that have a significant impact on and consequences for the reputation of the university and the success of students.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Minimal demands typical of an administrative position within an office environment
- **Working Environment:** Regular working hours, some evening/weekend work required. The incumbent must be sensitive to the stress resulting from prolonged periods of heavy workload and unforgiving deadlines common to the Registrar’s Office staff. There will be occasional, irregular and/or high volumes, multiple and/or tight deadlines beyond one’s control, and interruptions (e.g. phone calls, e-mails and unplanned but urgent support requests at different times of the year). This
role involves moderate psychological risk resulting from unavoidable exposure to hazardous, disagreeable or uncomfortable environmental conditions. This role involves moderate psychological risk resulting from unavoidable exposure to people who are upset, angry, abusive, aggressive, unstable or unpredictable (e.g. staff or faculty upset with a decision).