

Job Description

Job Title:	Manager, Communications
Department:	Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs (GSPA)
Reports To:	Associate Director, Communications and Strategic Initiatives
Jobs Reporting:	Short-term staff, co-op students
Salary Grade:	USG 9
Effective Date:	January 2023

Primary Purpose

The Manager, Communications provides leadership and guidance on communications strategies. They are responsible for the planning, project management, delivery, evaluation, and reporting on the impact of communications strategies that support GSPA's mandate. They are responsible for the development and implementation of a robust communication and web strategy, including oversight of content and optimal user experience. The incumbent oversees digital planning and execution – optimizing the content created by GSPA colleagues and campus partners.

The Manager is responsible for raising awareness of GSPA by promoting activities, events, and workshops. They play a direct role in ensuring a successful internal communication strategy is created and implemented for current students, faculty, staff, and postdoctoral scholars. The incumbent is responsible for integrating and leveraging content across a range of online channels, planning, and creating new communication opportunities while monitoring and editing content on existing websites to optimize reach.

Key Accountabilities

Digital strategy

- Manages GSPA websites; acts as the primary 'Point of Contact' for the Waterloo Content Management System (WCMS) and oversees information architecture and user experience for the websites
- Responsible for creating and executing social media strategies, in partnership with campus stakeholders, including GSPA team; measures and reports on performance of strategies and makes recommendations for future modifications and improvements as required
- Proactively manages and implements multi-channel communications strategies, in collaboration with internal and external partners, and monitors engagement of said strategies
- Provides appropriate communication templates and training to graduate and postdoctoral stakeholders to ensure compliance across all channels
- Remains current on all issues, trends, technologies, and approaches in the digital landscape; advises Associate Director, Communications and Strategic Initiatives and GSPA colleagues on best communication strategy tactics
- Coordinates website projects including implementation of a regular website audit schedule; provides guidance, training, strategic direction and writing/editorial support for website enhancements
- Ensures that GSPA websites and communication channels reflect current, timely and quality activities of graduate students and postdocs

- Creates opportunities to raise the profile of graduate studies and postdoctoral affairs at Waterloo

Communications and content management

- Writes and edits for a variety of communication channels including online content, ensuring adherence to best practices and web accessibility requirements; ensures content is relevant, timely and aligns with GSPA and institutional goals
- Creates and manages editorial calendars and communication planning tools that align with the overall communications strategy for GSPA as well as institutional goals and priorities
- Ensures consistency, accuracy and excellence in quality and content of communication materials that facilitate regular communication with GSPA stakeholders, including students, postdocs, graduate staff/faculty
- Oversees internal and external communication needs, including providing editorial and writing best practices, in alignment with institutional frameworks and accessibility requirements
- Connected to University's emergency and crisis communication to ensure GSPA channels are in compliance with institutional guidelines
- Writes and edits content for Associate Director, Communications and Strategic Initiatives and other GSPA stakeholders to ensure consistent tone and branding to facilitate strategic alignment

Research and best practices

- Defines and sets measurable goals and regularly tracks and reports against goals to determine effectiveness of communication strategies
- Monitors, and translates performance metrics of strategic communication initiatives; provides reports to stakeholders to help facilitate an understanding of how initiatives performed and to identify future opportunities
- Actively monitors and reviews activities on GSPA website(s) to ensure optimal user experience; engages with stakeholder groups to elicit, define, and implement improvements to user experience goals
- Provides regular and ongoing training and research dissemination to graduate studies and postdoc stakeholders on best practices for communication/digital campaigns, websites, social, etc.

Project and relationship management

- Creates and updates annual tactics/process documents that detail communication activities (e.g. content calendar), and co-ordinates those activities with internal and external stakeholders
- Adopts established and effective project management methodology that ensures successful project integration with all stakeholders, ensuring thorough and open communication with all teams involved to deliver on project goals
- Works with a range of stakeholders who create and maintain web/email/digital content on a regular basis; facilitates a collaborative and supportive approach to foster and encourage creativity, excellence, and personal accountability; provides opportunities for regular sharing of best practices
- Acts in a backup capacity to Associate Director, Communications and Strategic Initiatives on communication-related matters.

**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

- University degree is required, but in select cases, equivalent education and experience may be considered

Experience

- 5+ years of experience in communications
- Experience in digital communications and strategies including website design, content management and social media
- Experience writing and editing for various platforms, across all channels (e.g. web, social)
- Thorough understanding of information architecture, web navigation, user interface, usability, accessibility and user experience, metrics and analytics
- Previous work experience in a post-secondary institution preferred
- Ability to manage multiple concurrent projects, define and deliver against organizational priorities, and build and maintain expectations for delivery amongst stakeholder groups

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Proven ability to engage stakeholders to work collaboratively and build consensus in a complex environment characterized by competing priorities
- Passion for writing, editing, and proofreading within a variety of platforms (e.g. website, emails)
- Experience using digital media to enhance and support communications strategies
- Strong organizational skills coupled with the ability to handle multiple tasks, meet deadlines, and excel in a fast-paced environment characterized by changing priorities
- Must have proven ability to work at a high level of accuracy and attention to detail
- Demonstrated ability to thrive in and contribute to an integrated and collaborative team environment and to apply a positive team approach to working with colleagues

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Communicates with colleagues and stakeholders in a wide range of departments and campus service units and at all levels to recommend and ensure the execution and integration of a variety of communication initiatives; close working relationship with GSPA colleagues;
- **Level of Responsibility:** Primary point of contact for all GSPA websites, including overall quality assurance and accessibility standards; Creates and executes communications plans; Technical expertise/know-how related to website and digital platforms. Works with minimal supervision; create opportunities for collaborations with campus stakeholders
- **Decision-Making Authority:** High level of decision-making re: website management and digital communications strategy; Accountability for decisions that have an impact on and consequences for the reputation of the university in the context of graduate and postdoctoral affairs
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Office environment (up and down from desk), dealing with distractions in the work environment
- **Working Environment:** Primarily office-based; long hours at computer; travel to/from campus-wide meetings; intermittent work outside normal operating hours to manage crisis communication and support communications for events