Job Description

Job Title:	Graduate Program Manager (2)
Department:	Physics and Astronomy
Reports To:	Administrative Officer
Jobs Reporting:	None
Salary Grade:	USG 7
Effective Date:	January 2026

Primary Purpose

The Graduate Program Managers (Program Managers) are responsible for the management and delivery of services that enhance, promote and advance the Department of Physics and Astronomy's graduate programs, serving a community of over 250 students, 50+ faculty supervisors and 50+ adjunct supervisors and committee members. The Program Managers provide leadership and administrative oversight in all aspects of program operations including admissions, academic advising, internal and external scholarship competitions, student funding and budget management, graduate scheduling, communications, student wellness, and teaching assistantships allocations. The Managers ensure compliance with University, Faculty and Departmental policies and procedures and oversee the effective operations of the Graduate Office. The Program Managers conduct research, analysis and strategic planning to inform departmental initiatives that strengthen, distinguish and elevate the reputation of Waterloo's Physics and Astronomy graduate programs.

Key Accountabilities

Strategic Management

- Provides strategic oversight and leadership for the graduate program in Physics & Astronomy, including working with directors and graduate administrators at the University of Guelph, Institute for Quantum Computing, and Perimeter Institute.
- Provides research analysis and interprets student and program data for the Associate Chair, Graduate Studies, and Graduate Officer in support of strategic priorities.
- Develops critical administrative systems and processes, updating, refining, and streamlining as necessary.
- Oversees activities and serves as consultant to the Physics and Astronomy Graduate Studies Committee.
- Attends Science Graduate Studies Committee meetings and GSPA meetings as the department representative.
- Liaison to the Physics & Astronomy Graduate Student Association; builds student engagement, attends PhysGSA meetings as appropriate, coordinates events for student success and alumni engagement.
- Manages the preparation of the department review and implements feedback received into policy and procedures.
- Undertakes special projects and other duties assigned by the Associate Chair, Graduate Studies, Graduate Officer, and/or Administrative Officer.

Program Management

- Manages a portfolio of student-related functions from recruitment to graduation, including but not limited to admissions, orientation, academic integrity, milestone administration, advising, program funding,

grievances/petitions, required-to-withdraw decisions, scholarships, teaching assistantship allocation and course scheduling.
- Provides leadership, sets goals, establishes team agendas and workload balance, and supports problem-solving for the Graduate Program team.
- Provides leadership and maintains positive relationships with staff and administrators at IQC, the Perimeter Institute, and the University of Guelph to ensure alignment in admissions, course scheduling, and overall program management.
- Maintains up-to-date knowledge of, and sets, departmental expectations to ensure faculty members are up to date on policies and procedures governing the graduate programs and graduate supervision.
- Manages the departmental database, including implementation of upgrades to ensure efficiency.
- Ensures the accuracy, integrity, and security of Physics & Astronomy graduate student records.
- Creates and maintains documents for staff, faculty, and students, including training materials, TA contracts, supervisory guides, student resources, departmental forms, and web content.

Student Advising and Student Wellness

- Acts as a resource and provides confidential advising to students on a variety of issues, policies and milestones relating to their individual academic program, educational goals and relevant non-academic matters.
- Interprets and provides guidance on university, faculty, and departmental policies regarding academic integrity, petitions, grade reappraisals, required-to-withdraw decisions, accommodations, and responsibilities of graduate supervisors, providing feedback to graduate students.
- Primary contact for students in crisis (academic or personal), advises on available academic options, works in conjunction with Student Wellness, Counselling, and AccessAbility Services and refers students to other support services as required.
- Advises graduate students on financial matters, visa requirements, housing, banking and working relationships
- Consults on cases flagged to proactively resolve potential issues such as missed milestones, courses, or grades.

Academic Services: Recruitment, Admissions and Communications

- Manages, evaluates and develops departmental systems for the graduate admissions process.
- Reviews and evaluates 450+ applicants yearly, ensuring transcript and admission requirements are met, Advises the Associate Chair of inadmissible applicants.
- Evaluates and provides council on non-standard admissions, qualifying programs, and non-degree students in consultation with GSPA Admissions staff when necessary.
- Prepares offers of admission for all faculty members and adjuncts related to Physics and Astronomy, ensuring all admissibility requirements are met and funding packages and admission conditions are correct.
- Evaluates and assesses enrolment targets, tracks acceptances and enrolments of graduate students, ensures conditions are met, and processes deferrals as required.
- Handles all departmental correspondence with prospective students, visitors, and applicants, including visa and immigration inquiries.
- Identifies and recommends applicants for entrance scholarships.
- Plans and represents the department at graduate recruitment events locally and internationally, including the coordination of travel, accommodation, and meeting logistics.

- Creates and manages graduate program web content and recruitment materials. Collaborates with the Science Graduate Recruitment Officer and GSPA to review and verify marketing materials and messaging.
- Manages and updates Physics & Astronomy graduate studies webpages, LEARN communities and mailing lists.
- Creates and distributes graduate studies term newsletter for faculty and students.

Academic Services: Program Milestone Administration

- Monitors degree progress, milestones, verifies completion of degree requirements and coordinates program extensions for the 10 graduate programs offered within the department
- Provides advice to faculty supervisors, external faculty supervisors (20+) and adjunct supervisors (50+) on graduate program/milestone regulations, courses, petition/appeals processes, including how to prepare documents effectively
- Manages workflow of form processing and tracking in the graduate office, implementing changes that improve efficiency and streamlining when possible
- Coordinates and participates in departmental graduate student orientation activities, provides individual orientations to incoming graduate students when necessary
- Maintains departmental records of current students and graduates and internal graduate forms and informational documents
- Assists students and supervisors in the coordination and administration of annual committee meetings and defences for all students, as well as comprehensive exams for doctoral students
- Prepares content for individual comprehensive exams
- Generates and reviews grade reports for all graduate level PHYS courses, provides summaries and rankings, brings problem cases to the attention of the Graduate Officer
- Conducts final review of student transcripts to ensure all requirements have been met for program completion; Confirms final update for graduation on Quest
- Reviews PhD progress reports; arranges for approvals for PhD dissertation proposals, MSc thesis proposals, and MRP proposals
- Provides students with documentation as required for course and term registrations
- Accesses student information on Quest and Slate for the Perimeter Institute
- Liaises with staff at Perimeter Institute to facilitate course enrollment in PSI courses
- Oversees Canadian University Graduate Transfer Agreement requests

Academic Services: Student Funding and Financial Management

- Independently manages, allocates, and reconciles graduate student funding, including but not limited to graduate research studentships, departmental and University awards, teaching assistantships, and buyouts.
- Ensures that teaching assignments are consistent with student funding packages.
- Analyzes student funding to develop budgetary strategies/projections for award budgets, and updates annual funding packages based on funds available.
- Works with the Financial Officer to ensure faculty members have sufficient resources to support graduate students throughout their programs.
- Prepares funding memos, corrections, adjustments, and account changes as they relate to student funding.
- Prepares payroll submissions for students employed as TAs and proctors. Troubleshoots payroll student issues in consultation with the Administrative Officer, HR or GSPA.
- Manages recruitment budgets and expenditures for internal and external events and visitors.
- Manages departmental conference support budget, coordinates student applications.

- Works with PhysGSA to ensure department club funds are managed appropriately.
- Participates in the annual budget building process.

Academic Services: Scheduling & TA assignments

- Independently manages TA assignments and proctors for PHYS undergraduate and service courses as well as graduate PHYS and PSI courses by matching student skills with courses requirements and enrollments as per Policy 30. Assigns ~225 TAs yearly.
- Provides conflict mediation between TAs and instructors as needed.
- Serves as the department timetable representative for graduate programs; coordinates submissions of shared offerings with QNC, ECE, AMATH, PSI and University of Guelph.
- Ensures the Academic Calendar is up to date and reflects academic standards, requirements, and procedures; proofreads submissions, including major and minor modifications.

Academic Services: Scholarship Competitions

- Scholarship coordinator for all graduate scholarship applications (including but not limited to OGS, QEII, Tri-Agency Canada Graduate Scholarships, Master's and Doctoral Scholarships and other competitive awards), for current and prospective graduate students
- Ensures eligible masters and doctoral students are aware of available external and internal awards; assists students with applications as required
- Collects, organizes, and presents information to the departmental ranking committees

**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 required
- A combination of equivalent education and/or experience will be considered.

Experience

- 3+ years of progressive leadership, administrative and financial experience, preferably in an academic setting
- Demonstrated experience in and commitment to providing academic support and counselling for graduate students
- Strong understanding of graduate student funding, admissions and scheduling systems and procedures at the University of Waterloo
- Demonstrated ability to manage multiple deadlines and lead projects of varying scope
- Experience in data collection, analysis, and reporting
- Experience managing a high volume of emails and prioritizing work
- Experience as a graduate student or working with graduate students an asset

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Comprehensive knowledge of university policies, procedures and requirements related to graduate studies administration and academic advising.
- Client-focused with a positive, professional approach to interactions with diverse faculty, students, and colleagues.
- Highly organized and detail-oriented; able to prioritize tasks and adapt to changing demands.
- Strong problem-solving skills, sound judgment, and ability to work independently or collaboratively in high-volume environments.
- Discreet and professional when handling confidential information and engaging with multiple stakeholders.
- Demonstrated excellent interpersonal and communication skills (oral and written), including the ability to manage internal and external relationships.
- Ability to multitask and work with frequent interruptions.
- Proven ability to lead and 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.
- Ability to manage large amounts of data.
- Familiar with virtual meeting platforms, such as Zoom, WebX and Teams.
- Advanced skill level in Microsoft365
- Proficiency in WCMS, Quest, Slate, LEARN, DCU, Workday an asset

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** This position interacts regularly with Physics & Astronomy, Institute for Quqntum Computing, Perimeter Institute and University of Gueph staff, faculty and students; Science Graduate Studies Office, AccessAbility Services, Campus Wellness, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs, Human Resources, International Experience, Scheduling, Student Financial Services and The Centre.
- **Level of Responsibility:** This position has 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. This position is instrumental in leading and implementing new initiatives to meet operational goals. The Manager works closely with the Graduate Officer, Associate Chair, Graduate Studies, the Administrative Officer, and Department Chair.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** The incumbent must be able to make decisions independently, determine priorities given multiple deadlines and demands, and will constantly be required to make discretionary judgments on complex and non-standard matters. Any issues beyond the scope of the above outlined responsibilities would be escalated to, or solved in consultation with the Associate Chair, Graduate Studies and/or Graduate Officer and/or Administrative Officer.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands**: Demands typical of an administrative position with management 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. Must possess mental fortitude and patience in cross-cultural and inter-personal relations.
- **Working Environment:** Busy and noisy office environment. This role involves psychological risk resulting from unavoidable exposure to disagreeable situations and deals with people who are upset, frustrated or angry, in crisis, or with people who have mental health concerns. Works with confidential academic information, which may involve personal or health issues requiring sensitivity and tact. Responds to high volume of competing demands and people with varying needs. Provides information or explanations that may not be well received by the recipient.