Job Description

**Job Title:** Manager, Media Relations

**Department:** Marketing and Strategic Communications (MSC)

**Reports To:** Director, Media Relations & Issues Management

**Jobs Reporting:** None

**Salary Grade:** USG 11

**Effective Date:** September, 2013

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**Primary Purpose**
The position is responsible for creating, enhancing and maintaining media relations initiatives in support of a global media relations program with the goal of publicizing Waterloo’s academic and research excellence and positioning the institution as among the world’s best universities. The incumbent will support the university's media and public relations community and broader outreach agenda, as well as supporting issues/crisis management activities, working both proactively and reactively, to ensure a positive reputation and outcome for the university.

**Key Accountabilities**

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<th>Planning and budgeting</th>
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<td>- Contributes to the development of the media relations strategy within an overall MSC strategic plan and the associated multi-year action plan and budget for the media relations program</td>
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<td>- Maintains the measures of effectiveness for media relations initiatives and for regular program evaluation.</td>
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<th>Program development and execution</th>
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<td>- Develops and manages delivery of tactics to support the media relations strategy to meet established program targets:</td>
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<td>- Executing press outreach, attends media events, initiate media calls, develop collateral/press materials</td>
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<td>- Monitor university events and developments, identifying those with the greatest potential for being picked up by the media ensuring an emphasis on institutional priorities, specifically increasing the university’s research and international profiles</td>
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<td>- Gather information, conduct research, interview sources, and write a variety of materials for the media on a wide variety of subjects (e.g., news releases, social media releases and multi-media content in support of news releases); Strategize and tailor messages appropriately</td>
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<td>- Issues news releases on behalf of campus colleagues and the university; developing and maintaining distribution lists for news releases; increase both quality and quantity of earned media in selected and targeted media</td>
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<td>- Researches and identifies media targets; initiate, develop and steward relationships</td>
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<td>- Provides a superior experience for media contacts – reporters, editors, producers - to ensure Waterloo is the first point of contact for media by ensuring knowledgeable and timely response, immediate referrals to campus experts and appropriate follow-up</td>
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<td>- Contributes to the maintenance of the university’s news pages and the homepage news feed on the university’s website and working collaboratively with the digital initiatives team ensure best-in-class approaches and new technologies are identified and introduced</td>
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- Maintains an up-to-date and best-in-class experts guide and other materials to support and engage media.
- Provides excellent customer service to senior administration and academic and staff colleagues across campus including but not limited to the timely creation and distribution of the daily NewsWatch.
- Drafts correspondence and media messages to meet outreach needs at the request of senior administration and senior staff members and in consultation with the government relations team.
- Optimizes use of the double-end studio for advancing media relations goals.

**Quality control**
- Ensures excellent quality and consistency in all media materials.
- Focuses on the use of ‘plain language’ and multi-media to bring academic research to life for the media and general public is expected.
- Uses research and insights to develop and enhance media relations initiatives and will understand and apply media relations best practices.

**Image and issues/crisis management**
- In conjunction with the Director, Media Relations & Issues Management, enhances the profile, image and reputation of the university in the media and general public in support of the university’s strategic plan.
- Supports the Issues Management team as needed and will have a role in executing the Crisis Communications plan.

**Collaboration and outreach**
- Works closely with marketing and communications officers campus wide to identify opportunities for media engagement in alignment with stated goals, the communications calendar and the university’s priorities.
- Develops and builds strong relationships with university faculty and researchers.
- Provides support to campus experts who field media calls by providing training and tips on responding to media inquiries.
- Performs media outreach by initiating, developing and maintaining superior working relationships with media reporters, editors and producers.
- Liaises with the public, media and government public relations offices (in consultation with government relations team) and the university’s internal community.

**Required Qualifications**

**Education**
- Bachelor’s degree in English, journalism, communications, public relations or communications-related field.

**Experience**
- At least 7 to 10 years of media relations experience with a proven track record in a complex, fast-paced environment.

**Knowledge/Skills/Abilities**
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills; excellent editing skills.
- Critical thinking and excellent analytical skills to enable immediate and appropriate assessment of complex issues of concern to stakeholders including among others, the media, the public, and funders.
- Strong organizational skills and ability to handle multiple tasks and meet deadlines.
- A service mind-set and a team approach to working with colleagues and media partners.
- Video production and photography experience a plus.
Job Description

- Actively engaged in social media

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Internally, communicates with all employees in all groups and departments and at all levels. Able to succeed in high risk, pressure situations with significant public and campus scrutiny and potential for impact on the university. The incumbent will be required to work closely and collaboratively within MSC and campus wide marketing and communications colleagues to ensure consistency in institutional messaging and management of university image and reputation through paid and earned media, public relations initiatives and issues/crisis management.

- **Level of Responsibility:** The position is responsible for specific results of the media relations program against specified goals. The position will be involved in emergency, crisis and issues management situations. The position demonstrates a broad understanding of the news media and its needs and will have a sensitivity to the political, cultural and social contexts in which the university operates and those affecting the campus community. The position is expected to bring innovative approaches and new concepts and models to media relations programs.

- **Decision-Making Authority:** Responsible for the delivery of media relations initiatives that best support the university’s priorities.

- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Minimal demands typical of a position operating within an office environment

- **Working Environment:** Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a position exposed to stress and pressure associated with management level responsibilities. Work outside the normal operating hours of uWaterloo can be expected in this role.