

Job Description

Job Title:	Executive Assistant
Department:	Office of the President
Reports To:	Administrative Manager
Jobs Reporting:	None
Salary Grade:	9
Effective Date:	January 1, 2018

Primary Purpose

Reporting to the Administrative Manager, this position provides efficient and effective administrative support to the President's Office on matters relating to events coordination, protocol, development of briefing materials, and program management. The incumbent provides support to the Chief of Staff on a range of files and operational matters along with project support to all staff members including the President. The nature of support is diverse ranging from issues management, information coordination, data tracking, records management, calendar support, research assistance, communications and correspondence support and general administration.

The Executive Assistant is the first contact with a visitor or community member to the President's Office. Service excellence and ensuring best-in-class customer experiences are top priorities for the Office. The quality of responsiveness and the genuine desire to assist in the most difficult or sensitive situations is essential to the reputation of the University and to the Office of the President.

As a member of the Office of the President's team, the incumbent supports the Office with respect to calendar management, follow up systems, presentations and briefing materials, including administrative support to the President/Vice President group and other bodies. The Executive Assistant also works closely with all other members of the Office, provides continuity in the absence of the Administrative Manager and has discretion to make decisions that are in line with strategy and goals within the Office of the President. This position deals with confidential materials and requires the effective management of a high volume of information both internally and externally, as well as the ability to manage additional projects as assigned. The incumbent must be able to communicate knowledgeably with internal stakeholders at all levels of the institution, as well as various external stakeholders in order to ensure the delivery of successful events or meetings. This position is accountable to work closely with stakeholders on a variety of enterprise-wide projects that require expertise in the area of successful project execution.

Key Accountabilities

Service Excellence

- Maintains positive, collaborative relationships with campus and external partners to ensure exceptional engagement, customer service and collaboration.
- *Refers with certainty* – Directs students, staff, faculty, external stakeholders to the right contact person on the first referral or resolves their inquiries or problems immediately to exceed expectations and reduces duplicate efforts for other employees. Finds solutions - is proactive, flexible and makes it happen, whether they can personally address their needs or refer to someone who can whether online, by phone or in person.
- *Reflects a positive attitude* – Engages, listens and seeks to understand the needs and expectations of all in-person, telephone, and online interactions. Provides courteous, timely and efficient service.

Acknowledges receipt of correspondence promptly, manages expectations of response times, provides pleasant, enthusiastic and professional communications. Uses professional, straightforward language, uses proper grammar and spelling and ensures confidentiality (when necessary). Takes great pride in the actions, knowledge and image of the Office of the President.

- *Treats members of the community with respect* – Values diversity, recognizes that everyone is unique and equally important and facilitates inclusion. Exercises care and devotes attention to all in-person, telephone and online interactions.
- Supports the team in preparing the Office for guests (catering, signage [physical/electronic] flags, backgrounders, gifts)
- Ensures all security protocol for the office is followed to mitigate risk of any breach of conduct or behavior

Issues Management and Information Coordination

- Responsible for managing, delegating and ensuring timely responses (on behalf of the President) to all correspondence received through the President's public email account. Keeps all stakeholders fully informed with regard to emerging issues of importance/sensitivity.
- Provides advice, direction, and/or additional information to contacts internal and external to the university regarding information and how information should be handled. This may include direction regarding action requests, providing information from various databases, or research in preparation for the President and the Office.
- Responsible for composing correspondence on behalf of the Office or the President on own initiative and as instructed with attention to formatting, grammar, and accuracy, ensuring clear and concise communication
- Monitors the President's calendar to be aware of the issues, challenges and upcoming meetings
- Manages the electronic filing of the President's briefing day folders
- Prepares several large physical/electronic mailings annually
- Coordinates with University Relations monthly updates to Board/EC
- Prepares and arranges President's signature of various forms of correspondence (ie. retirement letters, nominations, awards submissions, government, research reports, agreements, etc.)

Data Tracking and Records Management

- Responsible for the management of all incoming and outgoing correspondence within the Office of the President including electronic files and records. A high volume of information is managed by this position and is delegated to appropriate team members or senior executives for action. Strong follow-up processes are required.
- Responsible for the development and management of multiple data tracking systems and ability to provide accurate data to the Office for decision-making purposes. The highest level of accuracy is imperative with respect to the management of the data.
- Tracks and log various metrics used to manage President's time to achieve engagement goals.
 - Logs all Presidential appointments, creates and assigns categories, analyze data, create formal reports each term
 - Tracks data related to international agreements, and meeting occurrences
 - Manages contact database and inputs contact reports weekly
 - Tracks data for President's speeches, publications, media engagement
 - Tracks President's government activities
 - Tracks and monitor correspondence from internal and external stakeholders (concerns, complaints, petitions and resolution)
 - Tracks all of the President's international travel
 - Tracks President's events on campus with students, staff and faculty

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- Develops spreadsheets and generates information and reports as required. Information must be compiled, analyzed, formatted and modified to meet various administrative needs. The highest level of accuracy is imperative with respect to the management of the data. Information flows through this position and is delegated to appropriate team members or senior executive portfolios for action.

Administrative Coordination

- Ensures the Chief of Staff is prepared for meetings, events and other engagements by means of daily briefing folders, briefing notes, policy documents and provides advice on approaches to issues.
- Manages the calendar for the Chief of Staff. Tracks and actions Chief of Staff meeting notes and follow-up items.
- Exercises judgment in determining whether issues or requests for meetings/events are appropriate or best referred elsewhere.
- Manages administration and follow-ups from President's Weekly Meetings.
- Supports the Chief of Staff in the preparation of presentations for Board of Governors/Senate.
- Manages incoming mail and provides original composition of correspondence for the President and Chief of Staff (letters, notes, annual reports, research and community reports)
- May attend planning meetings with the Chief of Staff or Administrative Manager or on behalf of them to ensure that appropriate follow-up occurs and that the Office is briefed on issues/outcomes.
- Assists Chief of Staff with administration and tracking of progress of annual workplan/key metrics
- Oversees all changes and updates to the Office Manual/workflow processes and procedures)
- Manages the meeting space(s) in the Office suite (bookings, cleanliness, general AV needs) along with office supplies
- Provides additional support to the Administrative Manager as part of the team and requires a thorough understanding of all operational activities within the Office.

Events/Program Management

- The Executive Assistant is the project leader on certain events/meetings initiated by the Office of the President which includes the development of objectives, issuing and tracking invitations, coordination of speaking remarks, drafting programs and briefing notes for the President, ensuring the President's time is maximized, ensuring proper protocol and consults with the President's team and community stakeholders.
- Evaluates requests for the President's participation in events or meetings as part of the team.
- Develops and ensures the use of project management strategies to prepare detailed schedules, identifying critical dates and deadlines.
- Assesses and recommends new events or projects that promote a culture of innovation and generates maximum exposure for the President

Required Qualifications

Education

- University degree or equivalent combination of administrative and project management education and experience.

Experience

- At least 8-10 years' experience in a front-line capacity, regularly dealing with difficult situations effectively, professionally and with compassion and demonstrate a strong service excellence orientation
- At least 8-10 years of professional experience providing administrative, business process and assistance to a C-level executive is desirable
- Must demonstrate exceptional ability to manage the calendar of a C-level executive to include complicated international travel and protocol

- Must demonstrate significant experience in the coordination of events and development of briefing materials is essential to the success of this position. Capacity for depth and clarity of thought, and the ability to think strategically
- Must demonstrate extensive experience in the communication of ideas and information in a clear, concise fashion, both orally and in writing
- Must demonstrate the ability to work independently, with ambiguity and thrive in a fast-paced, intrapreneurial environment
- Must demonstrate the ability to work within a high stress environment and operate with a high degree of confidentiality and discretionary judgment, be comfortable in an environment that requires shifts in priorities and be able to work quickly
- At least 5 years' experience managing and creating databases
- At least 5 years' project management experience with a demonstrated ability to manage concurrent projects under tight deadlines

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Demonstrate the ability to go beyond the call of duty in the capacity to provide assistance to stakeholders that exemplifies the Office of the President commitments to:
 - Serve with integrity and respect.
 - Support innovation and continuous improvement in all that we do.
 - Build the reputation of the University in all areas of our work.
- Demonstrate enthusiasm and be viewed by others as an Ambassador for Waterloo
- Strong customer focus, sensitivity to diversity and excellent judgment
- Outstanding organizational, analytical and problem-solving skills, exceptional time-management skills and meticulous attention to detail
- Ability to remain calm and in control when faced with multiple, often simultaneous demands made for important decisions/advice, both inside and outside of regular working hours
- High capacity for work and a willingness to go beyond a regular work schedule when required to meet deadlines
- Proven ability to work collaboratively with senior administration and with team members from a variety of disciplines
- Ability to serve the needs of multiple stakeholders and elicit their confidence and cooperation
- Proven ability to build strong relationships and influence individuals at all levels of an organization, as well as external constituents
- High degree of responsiveness, ability to complete tasks swiftly and accurately and ability to maintain absolute confidentiality
- Portray a professional image by interacting knowledgeably and courteously with all
- Consistent display of discretion and diplomacy
- Methodical and thorough when considering solutions to issues
- Possess exceptional interpersonal skills – A team-based approach is necessary within the Office of the President. It is a small team working in a participative, efficient and anticipatory environment. No two days are ever the same. The need for quick and accurate analysis of issues, constant communication of priorities, and collegial resolution of matters is expected
- Excellent listening skills and ability to clearly communicate both verbally and in writing are mandatory
- Possess extensive knowledge of the University of Waterloo
- Ability to build trust and strong relationships with all members of the community
- Ability to pivot quickly, change priorities and be flexible with workload
- Demonstrate advanced levels of technical experience: Outlook, Word, Excel, Powerpoint, SmartSheet, database development and automation of work flow processes

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Internally, communicates with employees in all groups and departments at all levels to deal with, influence and motivate others, often with different perspectives and concerns. Able to succeed in high profile, pressure situations with significant campus and public scrutiny and potential for impact on the university. Required to work closely with external as well as internal partners to ensure consistency and management of the President's image and reputation through events, meetings and activities. The Executive Assistant will be a self-starter, have a strong entrepreneurial spirit, be driven to engage with a wide-range of internal and external stakeholders and will take proactive measures to enhance the profile of the Office of the President through enhanced communication and coordination of activities with assigned portfolios. Collaborative team player comfortable leading as well as executing and taking constructive input from multiple sources. Proactive in anticipating the needs of the President and team members and ability to manage tight deadlines, competing priorities and stress.
- **Level of Responsibility:** This position provides guidance and problem solving support to the President, Chief of Staff, Administrative Manager, and Executive Assistant on a wide range of issues. The incumbent will be accountable to recognize the competing demands on the President's time and provide options and recommendations to solve conflicts with respect to events, meetings and issues. Will ensure that the Chief of Staff is prepared for events or meetings through the coordination of all briefing materials and anticipate information requirements. The nature of the work performed provides an opportunity for the incumbent to demonstrate problem-solving abilities and increased responsibility through initiative, and self-motivation. The incumbent must demonstrate an understanding of the impact of their work in the President's Office by being proactive about process improvements. Must ensure timely completion of objectives, act as a role model and resource to others in the performance of duties, have a thorough in-depth understanding of the work, and demonstrate the ability to deal effectively with complex issues by finding workable resolutions.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Makes decisions when required on behalf of the Administrative Manager and seeks expert advice when required. Makes decisions on timelines, on the Chief of Staff's participation in events or meetings. The incumbent must be a strategic thinker, analytical and insightful, able to assess and interpret the various factors affecting the university, the President, its communities and its stakeholders. Makes decisions that have significant impact on the reputation of the University.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** This position works collaboratively with all members of the Office of the President. This requires outstanding customer service, sound judgment, a strong work ethic and an ability to work under very challenging time constraints, constant interruptions and changes to priorities. Flexibility in working hours is required. Use of a BlackBerry allows the Executive Assistant to be accessible to all members of the Office including the President at all times and beyond normal business hours. Access to the internet from home is an ongoing requirement for this position.
- **Working Environment:** Reporting to the President are the Vice President, Academic and Provost, the Vice President, University Relations, Vice President, Advancement, Vice President, University Research, Vice President, Finance and Administration and the University Secretary. The Executive Assistant must maintain a strong relationship with all of these Vice Presidents and members of their staff as well as members of the Board of Governors and Senate. External relationships include contact with prime ministers, premiers and cabinet ministers, MPs, MPPs, Offices of Provincial and Federal Ministries, Ambassadors, senior international officials, representatives of Canadian and international universities, CEOs, major donors to the university, community organizations, parents, students, faculty, and members of the public.