

Job Description

Job Title:	Assistant Director, Student Development and Residence Experience
Department:	Housing and Residences
Reports To:	Director of Housing
Jobs Reporting:	Manager, Residence Life (2); Manager, Living-Learning; Manager, Desk Services; Manager, Graduate & Student Family Housing; Research Analyst
Salary Grade:	USG 13
Effective Date:	January 2020

Primary Purpose

The Assistant Director is accountable to the Director of Housing for leading the strategic development and management systems for all staff, student-staff, programs, and services directly impacting student life and learning in the residence halls. The incumbent aligns and advances the work of Housing and Residences' by leading an interdependent and collaborative team across five (5) functional areas – Residence Life, Living-Learning, Desk Services, Research & Evaluation and Graduate & Student Family Housing. These functional areas are committed to integrating the student voice and connecting research and evaluation to practice so that staff and student-staff continuously build on their understanding of students' wants and needs and on their knowledge of how living environments contribute to student success. The team's curricular approach facilitates the design and delivery of experiences and services so that students achieve priority developmental and educational outcomes.

The incumbent oversees the integrated implementation of all experiences, programs and services for nearly 6,000 residents and 250+ student-staff. The Assistant Director is knowledgeable about current and prospective student needs and they apply student development theory for the purpose of building diverse residence communities based on mutual respect, peer mentorship, inclusivity, wellbeing, and learning.

Key Accountabilities

Organizational Leadership

- Manages and leads a team of 35 staff plus 250+ student employees, creating and maintaining a positive and productive culture of strong working relationships in alignment with the department's mission, vision and values.
- Establishes clear expectations, measures and evaluates performance, and provides ongoing feedback to staff.
- Ensures the development and execution of a robust recruitment, training, and ongoing professional development program which attracts and retains high-performing, equity-conscious, wellness-focused, values-driven staff and student-staff who feel engaged in and fulfilled by the work they do.
- Provides leadership and support for the department's strategic planning, policy development, financial administration, strategic occupancy management, evaluation of existing facilities – including rationalization for revitalization, replacement, or new facilities, and resource allocation in conjunction with the senior leadership team.
- Acts on behalf of the Director of Housing when needed.
- Maintain an annual operating budget of \$3.5 million.

Curriculum Design + Delivery

- Articulates an educational philosophy for the residence experience and leads the development and implementation of strategies based on peer mentorship, community building, and student-focused services, that integrate academic learning support into students' residence experience.
- Ensures staff and student-staff have the knowledge and training necessary to execute a curricular approach so that they can effectively fulfill their roles and deliver learning experiences that are sequenced, intentional, and outcome-based.
- Oversees the management team's investigation, development, and regular review of competencies and learning outcomes for residence students to ensure that programs and experiences are aligned with and supporting the educational priorities of the Faculties and the University's strategic plans.
- Strategizes with partners across campus to enhance residence programming, services, and activities to enhance student success and growth.

Research + Evaluation

- Fosters a culture of research informed practices, processes, and structures across the department.
- Identifies and strategizes opportunities to support and expand research opportunities and partnerships across campus with institutional data and relevant faculty member-based research.
- Leads the management team in generating new ideas and proposals for collaborative (institutional, provincial, national, international) grant-funded, endorsed and/or sponsored research projects, based on the department's vision and priorities, the University's strategic plan, and trends in higher education student affairs and/or student housing associations' research priorities.
- Makes formal and informal presentations to individuals and groups, both internally and externally, to showcase how research and evaluation results inform practice and connect the residence experience with the university strategic plan.
- Leads the production of reports, presentations, summaries, and regular updates on Housing's research activities and the evaluation of the business unit's curricular approach (student development and learning) for the purpose of building staff and student-staff knowledge and for the purpose of communicating the positive impact of the residence experience on student success outcomes (transition, retention, persistence) which is the value proposition and differentiator of on-campus housing from off-campus housing.
- Participates in relevant department and campus committees and groups to collaborate and share insights on the research proven benefits of residence on student engagement.

Student Voice + Engagement

- Creates and fosters an engaging and transparent culture with residents by ensuring that staff and student-staff are building positive relationships with students and regularly sharing and inviting validation and involvement from students to engage them as co-creators of their residence experience and to maintain a positive brand reputation.
- Leads the development of strategies that ensure staff are regularly hearing about the student experience in residence directly from students to inform and evolve our practices and provide optimal value to residents.
- Ensures that staff are engaging with and understanding the experiences of students belonging to marginalized communities (e.g. first-generation students, LGBTQ+ students, racialized students, and more), strengthening the ability for Housing to better serve our diverse populations.

Student Wellness, Support, and Complex Case Management

- Establishes and maintains the department's case management strategy for students who require wellness and/or behavioural support; ensuring that strategy is focused on and balanced between: role clarity and thresholds, proactive skill building and resources referral, sustainable practice, and clear communication/expectations.
- Be available on-call (24/7) to lead, advise, and support the response to human (e.g. suicide, sexual assault, harassment), facility (e.g. fire, flood), and environmental (e.g. severe weather events) crises

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that impact the residence operations, directing investigations and developing support/response plans afterwards when appropriate.

- On behalf of the business unit, foster positive and collaborative relationships with campus partners in the circle of care (including Campus Wellness – Health Services and Counselling Services, Police Services, AccessAbility Services, the Secretariat, Legal and Immigration Services, Office of Human Rights, Equity, and Inclusion, Associate Deans within each Faculty, and the Associate Provost, Students) to understand risk and provide appropriate support to residence students.
- Oversee the management team's application of residence policies and internal judicial processes. Apply campus policies (i.e. Policy 33, 34, 42 and 71) and federal/provincial legislation (i.e. Canadian Human Rights Act) and to identify when a residence student's behaviour intersects these policies and may require a coordinated campus response.

**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. Master's degree or equivalent in a relevant discipline preferred (e.g. Student Affairs Administration, Leadership, Adult Education).

Experience

- A minimum of 5 - 7 years of progressive leadership experience within a campus housing, student affairs or higher education setting (or equivalent), leading teams of professional and student-staff.
- Demonstrated experience in working collaboratively, building consensus and managing sensitivities, perspectives and interests of diverse team and stakeholder groups (students, student-staff, staff, faculty) in order to execute a strategy is required.
- Experience with fiscal resources and control (budget development and reporting, purchasing, and contracts) is required.
- Experience in conflict mediation, issues management and emergency response is required.
- Mental health, suicide intervention training, violence risk assessment and management training required.
- Demonstrated experience leading large-scale initiatives and/or strategic plans.

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Be knowledgeable and raise awareness of emerging trends in focus areas such as: student development theory, residential environment literature, learning and cognitive development, academic classifications, unique student populations, high-impact practices, and academic progression and achievement.
- Demonstrated high level of emotional intelligence, maturity, competence, diplomacy and professionalism.
- Demonstrated complex problem-solving skills with ability to work autonomously and collaboratively within a team and/or across many teams is required.
- Ability to handle sensitive issues with discretion while maintaining trust and confidentiality.
- Knowledgeable about best practices, competency frameworks, and learning outcome models in higher education (e.g. OACUHO, CACUSS, CAS, ACUHO-I, ACPA, NASPA).
- Proven ability to negotiate with and influence others towards the resolution of conflicting priorities and viewpoints.

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- Experience with student behavior and conduct management in a residential environment is preferred.
- Working knowledge in local, provincial and federal polices, acts or bylaws related to housing
- Knowledge of campus housing facilities management practices is an asset.
- Knowledge of campus housing occupancy practices (contracts/agreements, applications and assignments, trends) is an asset.
- Ability to identify risk and to use sound judgement in the response to and management of that risk.
- Superior communication, organizational, and interpersonal skills, adaptable to changing demands, comfortable speaking to and facilitating large groups with the ability to clearly communicate a vision.

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Internally this position interacts regularly with the Director of Housing, Assistant Directors of Housing Occupancy and Marketing Services and Residence Facilities; as well as with members of the Housing and Residence Management Team, staff and student-staff in the department. This position also interacts with faculty members and Associate Deans, the Associate Provost, Students, representatives of WUSA and the GSA, the Student Success Office, Campus Wellness (Counselling Services, Health Services, Health Promotion & Education), Police Services, the Office of Human Rights & Equity and Inclusion, Legal and Immigration Services, Food Services, Athletics and Recreation, and AccessAbility Services
- **Level of Responsibility:** This position is responsible for all of the accountabilities listed above.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** The Assistant Director has final decision-making authority for all activities within the business unit, and as a member of the department's senior management team, determines the strategic direction of Housing's programs, processes, and strategies. This position can act in the absence of the Director of Housing.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** The responsibilities of this role occur primarily in an office setting and require frequent use of a computer. Some infrequent duties require moderate physical demands resulting in slight fatigue, strain, or risk of injury.
- **Working Environment:** Regular working hours in an office-based environment, some evening/weekend work required. Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions. The role involves some exposure to stress as a result of pressures associated with overseeing and responding to a 24/7 on-call system for student crisis and complex case management, handling multiple ongoing demands, time management, and priority setting. There may be unusual hours or schedules, multiple and/or tight deadlines beyond one's control and constant interruptions (i.e. phone calls, emails and unplanned but urgent requests) that are impacted by varying student volumes at different times of year resulting from working within a student residential environment.