

Job Description



Job Title:	Director, Strategic Initiatives
Department:	Faculty of Mathematics
Reports To:	Dean, Faculty of Mathematics
Jobs Reporting:	Data Scientist, Recruitment and Engagement Officer
Salary Grade:	USG 15
Effective Date:	September 2021

Primary Purpose

The Director Strategic Initiatives, working directly with the Dean and Faculty leadership team, is responsible for developing, executing, sustaining, and evaluating strategic initiatives in the Faculty of Mathematics. The Director conducts research develops analyses and reports, and provides advice on strategic priorities, especially those that require broad collaboration and participation of stakeholders. With a focus on developing and implementing a strategic roadmap for the advancement for the Faculty of Mathematics, the Director leads planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation across the Faculty.

Key Accountabilities

Strategic Planning and Leadership

- Establish and implement a process and framework for strategic planning in the Faculty
- Develop and implement the Faculty Strategic Plan based on evidence gathering and broad stakeholder participation, seeking input from all communities and all academic and support units
- Facilitate the production of data that forms the foundation for self-study, the resulting plans, and monitoring desired outcomes
- Lead the development of the implementation plan for the Faculty Strategic Plan and its annual review
- Support the detailed operating plan, while ensuring implementation leads adhere to direction set by the Faculty leadership
- Organize planning meetings and retreats, including establishing the purpose and desired outcomes of these sessions in consultation with the Dean
- Facilitate workshops, discussions, focus groups, and surveys
- Lead the Faculty approach to measurement and evaluation of the work-plan initiatives including the creation of monitoring and evaluation dashboards
- Direct the monitoring of, and reporting on, the Faculty's strategic plan
- Produce plan outcomes, including but not limited to baseline data, published plan documents and overviews, annual evaluation reports
- Ensure information dissemination and broad consultation across the Faculty on all planning matters
- Prepare and deliver presentations at internal and external meetings or conferences
- Facilitate relationships with Faculty of Mathematics leadership team, departments, schools, centres/institutes, and student groups and with key senior colleagues in University offices (e.g., Institutional Analysis and Planning, Office of the Provost, Office of Research, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs, and Registrar's Office)
- Monitor the strategic plans of the University and other Faculties to identify points of alignment, leverage opportunities for collaboration, and report on the Faculty's related contributions

Job Description



Strategic Initiatives

- Identify, research, and implement, in conjunction with other members of the Faculty leadership team, strategic initiatives for advancing key priorities of the Faculty
- Research high priority projects and prepare backgrounders that cogently identify both opportunities and inherent risks
- Gather intelligence and maintain environmental scans for major initiatives and developments, both on campus and externally, that are relevant to the Faculty
- Maintain a strong knowledge base of current programs, policies, resources, and services
- Develop strong relationships with senior leadership to effectively liaise, anticipate issues and opportunities, and identify trends
- Provides counsel to the Dean and Faculty leadership on matters of plan development, implementation, and evaluation
- Support stakeholders in developing specific, measurable, actionable, and realistic indicators of success and progress in meeting their strategic and operational needs.
- Monitor and report on the progress of strategic goals and objectives
- Present and share indicators of progress with decision making bodies and various other audiences and stakeholders

Data, Analyses and Planning

- Oversee the development and implementation of strategies to facilitate University and Faculty data and analyses to advance the Faculty's strategic priorities and to enhance decision support
- Ensure the availability of a responsive data environment to facilitate planning and operation
- Provide counsel, analyses, information, and reports to support the Dean and leadership team in strategic and operational planning, decision making and evaluation
- Undertake and support advanced and complex research, analyses, and scenario assessments to provide insight and advice on the impact of decisions in the context of the Waterloo Budget Model environment
- Build trust in the use of relevant credible data and analyses to inform decision-making and evaluation of strategies.
- Ensure successful development and implementation of surveys, focus groups, key informant interviews, environmental scans and other social research methods that support planning and analysis
- Provide coaching and guidance to staff (those reporting to the Director, as well as others across the Faculty as identified by their managers) on the effective use of data appropriate to their roles and the projects they support
- Ensure reporting staff maintain current knowledge of best practices and tools needed for data acquisition, transformation, maintenance, and analysis
- Ensure reporting staff understand the importance and impact of decisions related to budget and resource allocation and that they are able to model, assess and speak directly to the impacts, potential impacts and consequences

**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

Job Description



- Master's degree required; a combination of education and experience may be considered
- University-level experience required

Experience

- At least ten years of experience in roles of progressive responsibility for planning, relationship building and strategic initiatives, preferably in an academic setting.
- A proven track record of providing strategic advice to advance the goals and objectives of an organization, taking account of priorities, mandates, and stakeholder needs and aspirations.
- Extensive experience facilitating the development and use of data and analyses to support planning and decision making
- Knowledge of federal and provincial programs and policies.
- Exceptional written and verbal communication skills.
- Experience in facilitating and motivating high performing teams, especially within the academic setting.

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Broad and deep knowledge and experience of the workings of a large research university in the Ontario system, in particular the relationship between the Institution and academic units, the workings of academic support units, and relationship across academic Faculties.
- Demonstrated knowledge and experience in the areas of facilitation, participation and strategic planning and evaluation.
- Advanced understanding of institutional data, and analyses, including how to leverage and make use of these data and analyses to inform and advance the Faculty of Mathematics mission.
- Strong organizational, prioritization and analytical skills; proven ability as a problem-solver.
- An ability to work independently and as a member of a team.
- Strong interpersonal skills; strong verbal and written communication skills; tact, good judgement, diplomacy, and an ability to maintain confidentiality are essential.
- Experience with Microsoft Office programs, including advanced skills in Excel and Power BI.
- Knowledge of best practices and tools for data acquisition, transformation, maintenance, and analysis
- Knowledge of UW policies, procedures and guidelines.

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** At a very senior level, both within and external to the University
- **Level of Responsibility:** The work requires specialized knowledge. High-level oversight and responsibility for strategic discussions and events; integral involvement in strategizing on issues of the utmost importance to the Faculty of Mathematics and the University. Actively contributing in a professional and timely manner to the management of a multitude of issues in a fast-paced, multifaceted environment.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Must be capable of making decisions independently, knowing when to escalate matters to the Dean of Mathematics or other members of the Faculty leadership team. Contributes positively and creatively to discussions around strategic decisions made by the Dean and leadership team.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Minimal demands typical of and administrative position within and office environment
- **Working Environment:** Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of an executive position exposed to stress and pressure associated with senior-level responsibilities.