

Job Description



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| Job Title: | Administrative Coordinator, PhD |
| Department: | Engineering Graduate Studies Office, Faculty of Engineering |
| Reports To: | Manager, Graduate Operations |
| Jobs Reporting: | None |
| Salary Grade: | USG 6 |
| Effective Date: | November 1, 2019 |

Primary Purpose

The Administrative Coordinator, PhD is an administrative position in the Engineering Graduate Studies Office (EGSO), reporting to the Manager, Graduate Operations (MGO), and is responsible for overseeing day-to-day operations of the faculty's PhD graduate degree programs from admission to degree completion. Additionally, this position provides support in the governance of the Faculty graduate programs by managing faculty level oversight committees and the associated processes. The Administrative Coordinator, PhD administers certain award competitions and special projects such as the 3 Minute Thesis Competition (3MT).

Key Accountabilities

Managing Engineering PhD Comprehensive Exams, PhD Oral Defenses, and PhD Thesis Submission and Acceptances

- Responsible for preparation and retention of records for each doctoral candidate
- Manages Chair selection process for all comprehensive examinations within the faculty
- Collects and maintains comprehensive Chair records and mailing lists for the faculty
- Prepares regular Chair reports to send to Faculty members and Department Chairs to indicate faculty/departmental participation levels.
- Manages the Comprehensive Exam Extension Request process, including using data extracts to identify which students are beyond limits, and approving extensions on behalf of the Associate Dean, Graduate Studies (ADG)
- Chief administrator for all thesis defenses including considerations made for absent/missing committee members, all database updates, paperwork and communications, liaising with GSPA to identify the Chair of the examination committee, preparing Examination Reports and Thesis Acceptances, and delivering the chair's package for the oral examination
- Oversees the online thesis system and is the primary administrative contact for all system issues
- Provides all communications for comprehensive examination and thesis defense committees, external examiners, chairs, administration and faculty administration
- Confirms all comprehensive and defense records are complete and free of any errors, omissions or inconsistencies and that University/Faculty regulations for comprehensive exams/defenses have been adhered to
- Works independently to resolve complications associated with planning and completion of the thesis defenses and comprehensive examinations
- Monitors deadlines set by exam/defense committees and University regulations and advises the ADG, Departments and students as appropriate
- Processes paperwork related to PhD milestone completion and PhD thesis acceptances

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- Ensures the PhD thesis defense information is provided to the external examiner and that they are aware of the pertinent regulations and procedures for the defense
- Clearly communicates with faculty, students and staff regarding comprehensive exam/defense procedures, regulations and timelines for submission
- Updates procedures as needed to manage a high volume of work and effectively communicate changes to departmental staff

PhD Records and Admissions Management

- Reviews and approves graduate records on behalf of the ADG for all Engineering PhD students ensuring continuity across all Departments in decision making
- Maintains relevant documents in electronic files
- Confirms all records are complete and free of any errors, omissions or inconsistencies and that University/Faculty regulations have been adhered to
- Responsible for critically reviewing and approving complex PhD program applications and providing backup admissions coverage for all other programs during busy periods and absences
- Works independently to resolve complications associated with PhD records and admissions, seeking the guidance of the MGO, ADG or GSPA staff when needed
- Clearly communicates with the MGO, ADG, Department Coordinators, Associate Chairs, and GSPA regarding best practices, deadlines, and when reviewing exceptional records and admissions cases
- Assists other EGSO staff to support strategic recruitment and admissions initiatives
- Recommends improvement with in EGSO, for departments, or to GSPA and implements new policies and procedures to improve efficiency
- Maintains EGSO webpages for 'Current Students' and information for departmental staff including PhD program information, Faculty deadlines, etc.
- Organizes the faculty Three Minute Thesis (3MT) competition. This includes collaborating with all engineering departments to ensure the events are run smoothly and providing guidance and assistance to all departments

Financial Management & Awards Administration

- Responsible for budgeting, processing and reconciling all External Examiner expense claims and honorarium payments (approx. \$95,000 per year)
- Keeps record of EGSO expenses through the University's financial system (UNIT4)
- Responsible for the administration of the Doctoral Thesis Completion Award (DTCA) including processing awards nominations (approx. \$75,000 per year)
- Provides backup coverage for awards processing

Governance Support

- Provides administrative support to the Engineering Graduate Studies Committee (EGSC) and Engineering Graduate Operations (Eng Grad Ops) meetings
- Receives, sends and tracks all motions from EGSC to the relevant Faculty (EFC) and Senate(SGRC) committees for approval
- Liaises with the GSPA to review and follow up on unsuccessful motions
- Administers Approved Doctoral Dissertation Supervisor (ADDS) status requests from departments to be approved by the EGSO and GSPA
- Communicates with all stakeholders and updates records regarding all approved ADDS status requests

Support to the Engineering Graduate Studies Office

- Assist the Administrative Coordinator, Master's with the Program Extension Request process, including reviewing student petitions and approving extensions on behalf of the ADG

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- Assists the MGO and ADG on strategic initiatives to improve administrative operations within the faculty and departments
- Contributes to the Department Coordinator's meetings and attends the GSPA Faculty Admins meeting when relevant and/or in place of the MGO
- Compiles data as needed by the MGO and ADG
- Assists in the training of new Departmental Graduate Coordinators regarding policies and procedures related to Doctoral programs
- Orders and maintains office supplies and inventories for the EGSO
- Serves as back up for the Administrative Coordinator –Master's
- Provides administrative support to the ADG in the absence of the MGO

**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

- Bachelor degree or equivalent combination of education and experience.

Experience

- 1-3 years' experience in a university setting building relationships with a variety of stakeholders and balancing conflicting demands and priorities
- Experience working with students, faculty and staff and the ability to handle sensitive and confidential information with discretion
- Experience as a student or staff advisor an asset

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Proven ability to succeed in a detail-oriented environment with a high level of initiative and flexibility
- Good working knowledge of graduate policies and procedures including thesis defense and program requirements an asset
- Familiarity with the processes associated with admissions to graduate programs at Waterloo preferred
- Intermediate level experience with Microsoft Office including Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Access as well as OnBase, Quest, SharePoint, Unit 4 and web content management software (WCMS)
- Excellent problem solving abilities and good judgment as well as strong analytical and organization skills
- Proven ability to work independently with minimal direction and as a team member in a busy and varied environment with deadlines, changing priorities and large volumes
- Strong written and verbal communication skills are required

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** This position interacts regularly with graduate students, Faculty members, the Associate Dean, Associate Chairs and administrative staff in all academic units in the Faculty of Engineering as well as the Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs Office, and Faculty of Engineering Finance team. Externally, this position also has contact with External Examiners and must represent the University and Faculty with professionalism and tact at all times. The Administrative Coordinator, PhD is responsible for developing and maintaining excellent working relationships with all these areas in order to guide, recommend and impact internal processes related to graduate studies.

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- **Level of Responsibility:** The Administrative Coordinator, PhD has faculty wide impact, and specialized responsibilities. This position requires an extensive knowledge of University policies and procedures as well as the admission and degree requirements for Doctoral programs across 8 academic units. The Administrative Coordinator, PhD also supports graduate staff in the academic units influencing graduate operations at the Department level. This position is instrumental in supporting new initiatives to meet operational goals. Additionally, the Administrative Coordinator, PhD provides constructive feedback on GSPA processes and projects anticipating their impact on Faculty of Engineering Departments and processes.
 - **Decision-Making Authority:** This position must be able to make decisions independently, determine priorities, and will constantly be required to make discretionary judgments. This position has delegated signing authority for admissions and students records for the Associate Dean, Graduate Studies and frequently determines final approval on a variety of student record forms. Any issues beyond the scope of the above outlined responsibilities would be escalated to the Manager, Graduate Operations.
 - **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Demands typical of an administrative position within an office environment. Long periods of sustained attention and concentration to verify accuracy and completeness of various academic records. Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a support unit position.
 - **Working Environment:** Working Hours: Regular working hours with occasional evening and weekend work required. Works with confidential academic information, which may involve personal or health issues requiring sensitivity and tact.