

Job Description

Job Title:	MASc/MEng Coordinator/Advisor
Department:	Electrical and Computer Engineering
Reports To:	Manager, Graduate Studies
Jobs Reporting:	None
Salary Grade:	USG 6
Effective Date:	July 2021

Primary Purpose

The MASc/MEng Program Coordinator/Advisor (Coordinator) is a specialist position responsible for the administration of all Electrical and Computer Engineering Masters programs, including the online Electric Power Engineering program. S/he must assist and advise graduate students throughout their graduate program from admission through to degree completion and ensure compliance with all academic regulations. The Coordinator also manages Ontario Visiting Graduate Students, the Canadian Graduate Student Research Mobility Agreements and exchange students.

The Coordinator is a key component of the quality of student experience in ECE. The Coordinator must have an appreciation for the diverse backgrounds and experiences of the department's student body

Key Accountabilities

Academic Advising and Student Support

- Provides guidance and support to masters students on academic regulations, policies, requirements, procedures, and individual program requirements
- Serves as the main point of communication between masters students and the university including significant news, procedural changes, important dates, and other relevant information
- Responds to enquiries pertaining to the department's course-based graduate programs
- Investigate inquiries of a complex and unique nature and advocate on behalf of students who require accommodations or non-standard arrangements
- Interprets and applies university regulations, and Faculty/department policies and procedures to help resolve student issues
- Prepares documentation regarding cases of academic dishonesty, student appeals, etc.
- Acts as a liaison between students and faculty members regarding change of supervisor
- Provides advice or direction and work with stakeholders on academic issues to help students cope with stressful circumstances or negative academic decisions
- Provides assistance on academic and non-academic matters as needed, redirecting students to appropriate resources on campus
- Exercises judgment with respect to confidentiality and sensitivity of student issues/concerns
- Assist new students, mostly international, with their transition to Waterloo

Graduate Program Administration

- Monitors student academic progress from admission to convocation
- Liaises with Graduate Studies and Post-Doctoral Affairs (GSPA) to ensure that admission conditions are met and resolves any outstanding academic issues
- Reviews course registration and other academic requirements to ensure milestones are completed
- Co-ordinates MASc research seminars

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- Updates and maintains student records and graduate student database (FileMaker)
- Identifies academic progression issues and provides guidance for resolution of problems to the Graduate Manager
- Confirms proper procedures are followed to ensure a student's eligibility for the conferment of a master's degree
- Applies Faculty and department academic policies, programs and procedures and identifies potential solutions to issues
- Consults with the Manager and Academic Coordinators to resolve more complex cases
- Provides background information, research, advice, and administrative support in the academic decision-making process
- Generates reports as required for program revisions, departmental appraisals, etc.
- Maintains appropriate records to demonstrate compliance with safety information
- Organizes orientation activities, departmental information sessions, and special events
- Completes a weekly review of the FileMaker discrepancy report and resolves any issues
- Collects course syllabi for each upcoming term and updates the graduate course listings website
- Enters course list for each term into the FileMaker student database
- Oversees all graduate grade submission and uploads grades into FileMaker
- Processes program extensions for masters students

Visiting Graduate Students

- Coordinates the Ontario Visiting Graduate Students (OVGS) program
- Maintains visiting graduate student records on FileMaker
- Serves as primary point of contact for OVGS and exchange students
- Reviews OVGS acceptance forms, supporting documents, and obtains required signatures if applicable
- Submits completed OVGS forms to the GSPA

Other

- Attends meetings of appropriate committees and/or workgroups
- Assists with new graduate student orientation
- Provides backup assistance for other graduate team members as needed
- Recommends enhancements of department data management software (FileMaker)
- Maintains procedures and documentation pertaining to the responsibilities of the position
- Provides support to periodic internal and external graduate program reviews
- Provides back up coverage for the other administrative staff during absences
- Other duties or projects as assigned by the Manager or Administrative Officer

**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's Degree or equivalent education and experience in a related field

Experience

- Three plus years related experience in an academic environment. Student advising experience preferred

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

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- Comprehensive understanding of university policies and procedures as they relate to graduate studies is strongly preferred
- Intermediate to advanced skills with Microsoft Office, databases and other web based applications required – Excel, Word, Outlook, SharePoint, FileMaker, WCMS, PeopleSoft, and student information systems such as Quest and OnBase
- Ability to learn and adapt to specialized software and systems at the University
- Unwavering commitment to client-centered service and a positive, dynamic, outgoing approach in interactions with students, clients, and colleagues
- Ability to maintain confidentiality and appropriately handle confidential data and information
- Ability to think and act quickly and effectively under pressure, exercising tact, diplomacy, discretion and good judgement
- Ability to identify and assess problems, and to develop and implement creative ideas for solving non-routine situations
- Effective information gathering and analytical skills
- Proven ability to manage multiple priorities with a high level of initiative, flexibility, thoroughness, accuracy, and attention to detail, with minimum supervision is essential
- Ability to set priorities and remain organized in a deadline driven environment required
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills including the ability to articulate and interpret issues, guidelines or policies to others clearly and without error.
- Multi-cultural competency with the ability to work with diverse student body in a crosscultural environment
- Demonstrated advising skills with the ability to support students through difficult situations
- Proven ability to create and maintain effective working relationships with faculty, staff, and students
- Experience in event planning and group presentation skills an asset

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** The Coordinator interacts directly with graduate students, staff, Associate Chair- Graduate Studies, Master of Engineering Program Coordinator, Director of the Master of Engineering Electric Power program, teaching faculty, Engineering Graduate Office, GSPA, AccessAbility, and other student support units on campus. Externally, this position will have contact with prospective students. Interactions with others requires understanding and supporting people by applying knowledge. S/he influences others, causing understanding, actions or acceptance. Persuasiveness or assertiveness, as well as sensitivity to others' points of view are often needed to deal with situations. The Coordinator must possess sensitivity to cultural differences and an appreciation for the diverse backgrounds and experiences of the department's student body.
- **Level of Responsibility:** The Coordinator is expected to manage and monitor all masters students' academic progress. S/he must make decisions related to adjusting priorities, advising others, and responding to immediate concerns while adhering to policies and procedures. S/he makes independent decisions regarding student advice and refers for resolution of intricate student issues. The Coordinator exercises professional judgement to refer to other campus services as appropriate as well as think strategically to arrive at solutions to unanticipated issues.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** The Coordinator is expected to use judgment to make decisions based on existing policies and procedures. Extraordinary issues are referred to the Director, faculty Program Coordinator, or Manager with recommendations for solution or action. Errors in decision or information could impede the academic progress of a student and cause adverse relations with students, faculty and staff.

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- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Long periods of sustained attention and concentration to verify accuracy and completeness of various academic data and compiling information from various sources. Exposure to a fast-paced service oriented environment with constant interruptions, deadlines, changing priorities, large volumes, and large number of interactions. Must possess mental fortitude and patience in cross-cultural and inter-personal relations with a large international clientele.
 - **Working Environment:** Busy office environment. This role involves psychological risk resulting from unavoidable exposure to disagreeable situations and deals with people who are upset, frustrated or angry, in crisis, or with people who have mental health concerns. Works with confidential academic information, which may involve personal or health issues requiring sensitivity and tact. Responds to high volume of competing demands and people with varying needs. Provides information or explanations that may not be well received by the recipient. There may be ambiguity of situations and shortcomings in data, and some internal clients may be demanding, may request breaking policy, and some situations may require escalation. This role responds to situations where there is a lot of pressure to find a solution quickly.