

Job Description

Job Title:	Associate Director, Executive Communications
Department:	University Communications
Reports To:	Associate Vice-President, Communications
Jobs Reporting:	None
Salary Grade:	USG 12
Effective Date:	March 2018

Primary Purpose

This position is accountable to the associate vice-president, communications (AVP, COMMS) and is advisory directly to the president of the University of Waterloo. The associate director, executive communications exercises an enterprise-wide leadership role by providing counsel, stakeholder relationship management expertise, and politically astute strategic communications support to the president and senior executives while working in concert with the president's advisors, direct reports, and governance structures.

Key Accountabilities

Building the university community

- Establishes and delivers institutional-level communications priorities as they pertain to the president's role as the leader of the community. This includes leading integrated cross-platform communications plans to position the president as an instrument of both leadership and organizational identity and cohesion to domestic constituencies. This is especially true as it pertains to advancing key administration and institutional priorities such as the Strategic Plan.

Representing the university community

- Establishes and delivers public communications priorities that position the president in his/her role as an institutional and sector thought leader by leading strategic communications campaigns across multiple platforms over time. These platforms include international conferences, high-profile comment pieces in national-level media publications, and speeches to various sectoral, regional, national, and international audiences.
- Maintains deep expertise in the areas of the post-secondary education sector in Ontario, in Canada, and globally, as well as the political environments and challenges, institutional partnerships, public policy priorities, and emerging educational trends.
- The role will also support messaging for senior executives as required.

Governance of the university community

- Provides direct and sustained advice and assistance to the president and senior executives with respect to engagement and communication with the university's institutions of governance.
- Influences enterprise-wide communication plans with respect to governance achievements and developments such as strategic plans, major appointments, internationalization efforts and other significant opportunities and challenges.

Shaping university, presidential policies and priorities

- Builds and sustains a high-value network of senior university officials and stakeholders to develop a sophisticated sense of where presidential and senior executive sponsorship and communications support would advance key University priorities. Examples could include gender equity, student health and welfare, and other significant opportunities and challenges.

Crisis communications

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Works closely with University Relations colleagues, particularly the director of media relations and issues management, to support the development statements, comments, and overall messaging with respect to tragedies and crises in and around campus.• Member of the Emergency Communication Team in support of the Emergency Response Plan.
Communications competencies <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides vision and management of appropriate communications strategies to support the president's agenda. Exercises overall responsibility for the president's digital presence, including setting content strategy for the office of the president website, ensuring content and messaging consistency with broader university communications activities, and coordinating with University Relations colleagues to ensure effective distribution of presidential-level communications across digital and traditional platforms.
Strategic planning <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates deep expertise in developing strategic business and communications plans, overseeing their implementation, and integrating operational activities with broader institutional actions and objectives. This includes collaboration across all reporting lines to the president.
Managing and leading people <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lead or liaise campus communications professionals for projects as required.
Collaboration and outreach <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides senior leadership for the development of positive relationships with key stakeholders relating to the Office of the President. Identifies opportunities for internal collaboration and consultation with faculties, colleges and departments on communications and administration leadership projects, and executes or supports co-developed plans.• Builds and maintains strong relationships with university colleagues involved with presidential and institutional-level communications planning and activities.• Serves as a senior-level representative of University Relations, Communications as well as of the Office of President on a broad range of activities and platforms, specifically those relating to the Strategic Plan and governance commitments.
Managing the university's role and reputation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In collaboration with the AVP, Communications and the Vice-President, University Relations, plays a key role in the development and management of the presidential communications strategy in support of the overall internal and external image and reputation of the University and the Office of President. This involves regular consultation and interaction with University Relations leaders, and with senior Waterloo leadership such as the President, Provost and executive council members. Consultation with key departments includes Waterloo International, Office of Advancement and Office of Research.

Required Qualifications

Education <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bachelor's degree in English, political science or communications-related field.
Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none">• At least 7 to 10 years of C-level institutional communications experience with a proven track record in a complex, fast-paced environment.
Knowledge/Skills/Abilities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extensive experience using social media and new media tools, social networking sites, video sharing sites, blogs and Wiki.• Comprehensive understanding of administrative, academic and governance structures of a university.

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- Solid understanding of the external environment for universities within Canada and the Province (COU, UC, U15, federal and provincial ministries, etc.).
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Critical thinking and excellent analytical skills to enable immediate and appropriate assessment of complex issues of concern to stakeholders including among others, the media, the public, and funders.
- Thorough command of the technology associated with social media and the digital world (from the evolving social web to mobile tools and trends), sophisticated client service and digital communications skills, and high level of energy and passion with respect to this area of rapid change and innovation.
- Expertise in strategic storytelling, communications, marketing and working knowledge of website best practices, digital and content marketing, as well as communications design, development and execution.
- Strong organizational skills coupled with proven ability to effectively document work, handle multiple tasks, and excel in a fast-paced environment characterized by changing priorities and short deadlines.
- Flexibility to adapt to unexpected and time sensitive demands.
- Excellent editing skills.
- Extensive interviewing and researching skills.
- Highly developed people management and leadership skills with demonstrated ability to develop and support a professional, service and continuous improvement focused workplace culture.
- Ability to think and act strategically, creatively and dynamically in a high-pressure work environment.
- Ability to manage confidential and sensitive materials and situations with the utmost discretion.
- Must be able to quickly assimilate information, analyze data and provide strategic advice, guidance and decisions on behalf of the Office of the President or the President as required.
- Must be confident, organized and an accomplished problem solver.
- Expert knowledge of social media trends, analytics and technology.
- Ability to make decisions with good judgment and with acute sensitivity to the political environment and to the reputation of the University.
- A service mind-set and a team approach to working with colleagues and media partners.
- Actively engaged in social media.
- Advanced MS Word, Excel and PowerPoint.
- Technical skills to include basic HTML, basic Web UI/UX and social media management tools (i.e., web, social, print, video, email).

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Also reporting to the Associate Vice-President, communications: Director, Integrated Communications; Director, Media Relations and Issues Management; and Associate Director, Internal Communications.
- **Level of Responsibility:** Significant level of responsibility and accountability to support the priorities of the President and the vision of the University.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Must be able to quickly assimilate information, analyze data and provide strategic advice, guidance and decisions.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Minimal demands typical of a position operating within an office environment. This position requires outstanding customer service, sound judgment, a strong work ethic, calm demeanor, ability to work under very challenging time constraints, constant interruptions and competing priorities.

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- **Working Environment:** Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a position exposed to stress and pressure associated with management level responsibilities. Work outside the normal operating hours of UWaterloo can be expected in this role.