

Job Description

Job Title:	Faculty Financial Officer
Department:	Dean of Environment Office
Reports To:	Executive Officer
Jobs Reporting:	Administrator Graduate Studies
Salary Grade:	USG 11
Effective Date:	August 2019

Primary Purpose

The Faculty Financial Officer is accountable to the Executive Officer for ensuring that all financial activity in the Faculty of Environment is properly accounted for and that available financial management tools are effectively applied. This position oversees all financial transactions for the Faculty of Environment. This position provides strategic advice, information and support to the Faculty leadership and senior administrators and acts as a leader to the departmental administrative staff and faculty for general and financial administration.

Key Accountabilities

Financial Strategy and Strategic Planning including but not limited to:

- Prepares multi-year projections of the Faculty's position, identifying concerns and potential solutions to bridge funding gaps;
- Provides financial decision support and strategic advice to the Dean, Executive Officer, Unit Chairs, Associate Deans and other senior level staff;
- Prepares financial documentation and reports to Unit Chairs/Directors to facilitate effective strategic decision making. Reports include value added analysis of current performance against budget, projections of future performance, and commentaries presented in a form that aids Faculty management to understand and control the Faculty activities;
- Provides strategic guidance through the preparation of detailed and complex financial reports and analyses in support of current and long-range planning decision-making and performance-measurement processes;
- Participates in and supports the development and implementation of budget models and other changes to financial management;
- Co-ordinates and directs the set-up of original financial structures to ensure financial results are properly reported and managed through its duration;
- Develops financial plans and funding models for strategic initiatives, and is a key player in long-term planning decisions and strategies of the Faculty of Environment.

Financial Planning, Management and Control including but not limited to:

- Prepares an overall picture of the financial status of the Faculty of Environment's operating, research, trust and endowment funds; identifies potential problems and proposes solutions to the Dean, Associate Deans, Executive Officer and other senior level staff as appropriate;
- Plans, manages, and coordinates the development of the Faculty's annual operating budget;
- Exercises signing authority on all operating, trust and endowment accounts in the Faculty;
- Administers the operating budget and expenses in the Office of the Dean, in conjunction with the Executive Officer; This includes monitoring of scholarships awarded by the Faculty;
- Manages organizational change in the Faculty; actively manages the implementation plan of new systems, procedural and policy changes in the Faculty;

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- Reviews financial reports for each department/school in the faculty on a regular basis and conducts meetings with necessary administrative staff to discuss potential issues;
- Meets regularly with administrative staff responsible for budget and provides training, coaching and assistance on financial issues;
- Develops, improves and promotes strong internal financial controls;
- Conducts periodic audit of salary budgets; reviews and reconciles Faculty budgets and ensures funding has been received and allocated as appropriate;
- Administers the allocation of special funding as appropriate, e.g. Graduate Funding, Indirect Costs, Strategic Initiatives;
- In consultation with the Executive Officer, provides financial data, enrolment data, faculty and staff data, alumni data, and other data to stakeholders as required; Prepares analyses, reports, graphic illustrations and presentations;
- Meets with supporting service areas within the Faculty of Environment (Environment Computing, Ecology Labs), and functional units in the Dean's Office (Recruitment, Development and Alumni, Communications, etc) to review past performance and develop an annual budget plan;
- Nurtures collaborative and productive working relationships with administrative staff across the Faculty.

Staff Management, Training and Development including but not limited to:

- Responsible for the recruitment, training, professional development and performance management of direct reports
- Provides surrogate support to the Executive Officer role, acting as the senior staff person in their absence;
- Meets regularly with the administrative managers in each department to support effective financial planning, management and internal control and to encourage the sharing of best practices throughout the Faculty;
- Reviews financial procedures in the Faculty of Environment to ensure strong internal controls and efficient and effective financial accountability;
- Responsible for ensuring that accounting methodology and procedures are well understood across the Faculty and that these procedures are followed consistently;
- Develops and delivers financial training modules and tools, providing onboarding support to new Dean's office staff, research Centre managers and academic unit administrative Managers; focuses on work simplification and streamlining of procedures to ensure tasks are done efficiently and effectively;
- Provides one on one guidance to department administrative managers on various approaches to monitoring of operating and research accounts;
- Documents processes and procedures within the Faculty to ensure transparency and compliance;
- Provides financial leadership and direction to Dean's office staff.

Management and Control of Trust and Endowment Accounts including but not limited to:

- Administers and monitors the Faculty's trust and endowment accounts;
- Provides guidance on project management plans for trust accounts to ensure compliance with the trust agreement, uW policy and government regulation;
- Monitors and forecasts the investment potential of endowments to support decision making and provides strategic advice;
- Reviews scholarships awarded by the Faculty to ensure the appropriate accounts are credited;
- Provides guidance to Advancement team on the structure of trust and endowment accounts; Reviews agreements to ensure financial plans are in line with University policy;
- Ex-officio board member on the Waterloo Environment Students Endowment Fund;

Management and Control of Research Finance Accounts including but not limited to:

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- Oversees the monitoring and control of research grants throughout the Faculty;
- Collaborates with Research Finance relating to communication and training regarding Research Finance Policies and procedures and compliance with sponsor guidelines; ensures that research activity is in compliance with university policies and procedures;
- Liaises with the Associate Dean and Office of Research at the institutional level on the provision of Faculty-wide research support;
- Collaborates with Research Finance to ensure research grant activity is in compliance with the research sponsor requirements;
- Provides final compliance eligibility rulings on research grants with respect to interpretation of University policy;
- Ensures that sufficient financial training and support is provided to researchers and administrative staff to allow them to manage and review research accounts;
- Identifies the reporting requirements of researchers and works with Finance to provide input on the development of new financial reports.

Management and Collaboration at University Level including but not limited to:

- Provides guidance and insight into University processes and issues;
- Participates in and provides guidance on task forces as necessary;
- Participates in external University audits as required;
- Provides financial support and direction to the Sustainability Office;
- Communicates and supports the internal auditors with respect to the effectiveness of internal controls in order to mitigate risks;
- Develops productive working relationships across the University with academic support units as required;
- Collaborates with Finance to ensure accounting policies and procedures are adequately documented and communicated within the Faculty;
- Collaborates with Provost, Deputy Provost and IAP to ensure income funding models are clear and fairly administered;
- Collaborates with Office of Research to ensure faculty reporting needs are met and processes are clearly communicated and documented;
- Collaborates with other service departments to ensure procedures are clearly communicated and understood within the faculty and that any issues are addressed satisfactorily.

**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 required, preferably BBA, BCom or equivalent
- CPA designation required

Experience

- Extensive accounting experience including auditing and internal controls
- Experience in an academic environment strongly preferred

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Proven skills in the development and recommendation of financial management strategies

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- Possesses an excellent understanding of generally accepted accounting principles and practices as they relate to fund accounting and in-depth knowledge of the accounting requirements and financial business of the University
- Demonstrated ability to make decisions and/or provide guidance and recommendations based on principles
- Must possess the ability to build excellent working relationships with key persons both inside and outside the Faculty
- Excellent interpersonal skills are required to provide professional advice on accounting and process issues within Faculty departments
- Proven ability to successfully manage a large volume of work, conflicting priorities and deadlines
- Possesses an excellent understanding of university policy and procedures as well as the guidelines from funding agencies
- Superior leadership, written and oral communication skills, including the ability to communicate accounting principles to non-financial members of the university community
- Intermediate level experience with Microsoft Word, Outlook and PowerPoint
- Advanced level experience with Microsoft Excel, including use of pivot tables and templates
- Experience with WBM, Unit4, Concur, Workday or equivalent systems
- Strong analytical and problem solving skills are essential
- Demonstrated planning, teamwork and organizational skills
- Sound judgement, tact, diplomacy and an ability to negotiate
- Demonstrated ability to work independently

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Within the Faculty of Environment, these include: Dean of Environment, Associate Deans, Executive Officer, Director of Advancement, Communications Officer, Administrative Staff, Researchers and Faculty. Within the University, the Faculty Financial Officer is the liaison between the Faculty of Environment and academic support units at the University of Waterloo, including: Provost's Office, Finance Office, Human Resources, Office of Research, Information Analysis and Planning, Graduate Studies and Post-Doctoral Affairs Office, Undergraduate Awards Office, Procurement, Administrative staff in other Faculties. Significant external relationships include Contractors and Suppliers, External funding sources, and Auditors.
- **Level of Responsibility:** Functional direction and guidance are provided to the designated financial administrators within each of the Academic units and Centre's. Development and implementation of the Faculty budget and related analyses and reporting. Errors will have significant, negative impact to the reputation of the Faculty of Environment's leadership. Responsibility for this position has signing authority on all financial accounts within the Dean's Office of the Faculty of Environment.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Financial transactions at the University of Waterloo are governed by both external and internal policies and procedures. The university has several unique and separate funds within its accounting structure; a highly complex set of accounting rules are in place to determine how activity is tracked in each of these funds. The Faculty Financial Officer role has a mix of defined, specialized, routine, and non-routine tasks and requires sound judgement, tact, and discretion in juggling and executing these responsibilities. The incumbent makes recommendations to the Executive Officer and senior leadership of the Faculty of Environment regarding the execution of duties.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Minimal demands typical of a position operating within an office environment. This position works independently and collaboratively and requires sound judgement, a strong work ethic and an ability to work under very challenging time constraints with competing priorities. Thoroughness, accuracy, attention to detail, initiative and professionalism are required.

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- **Working Environment:** The Dean of Environment Office is a busy team environment. The office responds to requests from faculty and students to assist them with their teaching, learning, research and related activities, as well as to questions and requires from staff within the Faculty and across campus. May experience high volume of work and multiple and/or tight deadlines.