

Job Description

Job Title:	Academic Advisor, Programs Specialist
Department:	Science Undergraduate Office
Reports To:	Manager, Academic Advising
Jobs Reporting:	None
Salary Grade:	8
Effective Date:	October 2017

Primary Purpose

This position is responsible for the academic advising for students in a number of Science programs and student cohorts – Honours Science, Science & Aviation, Science/Psychology, non-China program transfer students, and incoming and outgoing exchange students. The incumbent also serves as a resource to and support for administrators and members of the Science Undergraduate Office (SUO).

Key Accountabilities

List the major responsibilities of the job, divided into 3 to 5 broad categories. These should reflect 80 - 90% of “what” the job does not the “how”. Insert a category heading and in bullet form below, state specific responsibilities.

Academic advising principles applied to all programs and SUO activities:

- Provide academic advice, by maintaining in-depth and current knowledge of Science, regarding:
 - o undergraduate curriculum and academic requirements for all programs
 - o admissions regulations and practices
 - o regulations and University policies of particular relevance to student issues
 - o disciplines that are relevant to Science students
 - o support resources that are available to students, both within and outside the Faculty/University
- Provide tertiary back-up to front line service in the Science Undergraduate Office
- Register verification of illness forms (VIFs) in Student Accountability System (SAS)
- Enter appropriate ASIS (Advising Student Information System, or equivalent) notes when providing any form of academic advice, whether by phone, email, or in-person
- Participate, in conjunction with the Science Undergraduate Office advising team, in the first-year block enrolment process

Program specialty #1 – Honours Science (steady state approx. 700 students):

- Co-ordinate the additional first-year course selection and block enrolment activity to meet the differing student course goals, needs, and interests (June and July)
- Review the academic progression reports (1B-level and above) after each term (January, May, September)
- Review the advisement/graduation reports (May and September)
- Maintain the advisement templates
- Contribute to Orientation Week programming (September)
- Support academic program review activity
- Design outreach and engagement activities, both online and in-person, to ensure awareness of opportunities and program requirements
- Engage with colleagues in School of Pharmacy and meet with Conditional Admission to Pharmacy (CAP) during their two years before studies in Pharmacy commence

Program specialty #2 – Science & Aviation program (steady state approx. 40 students):

- Provide supplementary academic advice by maintaining in-depth and current knowledge of the Science and Aviation program regarding:
 - o academic requirements for all specializations
 - o flight training and various license requirements
 - o admissions regulations, practices, and contacts at the Waterloo-Wellington Flight Centre (WWFC)
 - o financial, time, scheduling constraints, and other issues unique to program
- Contribute to Orientation Week programming for Aviation students (September)
- Review course conflict combinations and bring any course scheduling concerns to the SUO administrative services co-ordinator during the scheduling cycle
- Block enrol, all levels, into their required courses
- Co-ordinate activities, including special event planning, with the program director, associate director, and colleagues in Geography and Environmental Management
- Maintain the advisement templates
- Support academic program review activity

Program specialty #3 – Psychology program (steady state approx. 40 students):

- Co-ordinate the additional first-year transition activity because students can only register in the program after completing all the year-one requirements with satisfactory averages
- Review the academic progression reports (1B-level and above) after each term (January, May, September)
- Review the advisement/graduation reports for science requirements (May, September)
- Maintain the advisement templates
- Contribute to Orientation Week programming (September)
- Support program review activity
- Design outreach and engagement activities, both online and in-person, to ensure awareness of opportunities and program requirements
- Maintain the advisement templates

Program transfer students:

- Assist University (excluding China partner programs) and college transfer students:
- Liaise with admissions officers in Registrar's Office (RO) to identify incoming cohorts; largest arrives in Fall term
- Review transfer credits for fit with program and engage with RO on any necessary or possible corrections
- Engage with faculty relations manager and Co-operative Education and Career Action (CECA) staff on appropriate work/study sequence for students admitted to co-op program
- Block enroll students into best possible required courses; the bulk of this activity will be for Fall term in June and July
- Communicate next steps for their transition to Waterloo, e.g. making contact with their program advisor to discuss their program and future course planning and transfer student orientation activities

Science academic and recruitment activities:

- Participates as a voting member of the Science Undergraduate Studies Committee (SUSC)
- Contributes relevant data to the Science Recruitment Team on student engagement (e.g. NSSE) and participates in recruitment events: Ontario Universities' Fair (OUF); Fall Open House; March Break Open House; and You @ Waterloo Day
- Manages webpages for the activities covered in this job description

Required Qualifications

If hiring today, what would be the required education, experience, knowledge, skills and abilities?

Education <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bachelor's degree (preferably Science) or equivalent education and experience
Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5 years' or more of undergraduate academic advising work in an academic setting providing advice on academic policy
Knowledge/Skills/Abilities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proficient with university and Science rules and regulations, undergraduate curriculum, and admissions requirements• Demonstrated ability to make independent decisions and solve problems• Excellent strategic thinking, sound judgment, tact, diplomacy, ability to manage confidential and sensitive issues, interpersonal, organizational and communication skills• Proficient with the needs and concerns of students and commitment to student engagement and success• Proven ability to manage a large volume of work, conflicting priorities, and deadlines• Proficient with MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Waterloo Inquiry, Quest, LEARN, WCMS, ASIS/OAT, SAS

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Communicates with Science students, staff, faculty and associate deans as well as colleagues in SUO and academic support units such as the RO, CECA, SSO. Uses strong communication skills (written and oral), which are required, including clarity, diplomacy and tact. Possesses the ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- **Level of Responsibility:** The position has defined duties and responsibilities and is expected to work with minimal supervision and provide guidance to others, including academic advice to students.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Makes independent decisions regarding student advice and academic progression. Has signing authority for approval of academic program changes, course changes, petitions, and recommendations to graduate.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Demands are typical of an administrative position that functions within office and meeting environments. Exposure to a fast-paced service oriented environment with deadlines, changing priorities, and large volumes at various times (normally January, May, and September) throughout the year.
- **Working Environment:** Exposure to conditions typical of office work and meetings; expectation of periodic travel within Ontario, annually, for Ontario Universities' Fair. Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of an academic advisor and one where it is necessary to convey negative or unwelcome information to students. Participation in some evening and weekend events. Interactions with people who are upset or angry; with people who have mental health conditions.