

Job Description

Job Title:	Manager, Student Experience
Department:	Student Success Office
Reports To:	Associate Director, Student Transition and Learning Services
Jobs Reporting:	New Student Transition Specialist, Coordinator, Peer Mentorship, Coordinator, Student Leadership Program
Salary Grade:	USG 10
Effective Date:	December 2019

Primary Purpose

The Manager, Student Experience will play a key leadership role in establishing strategic initiatives and direction for the Student Success Office (SSO) in the leadership, management and coordination of programs and initiatives that shape an engaging and supportive experience for all students. This includes orientation and transition, leadership and skill development and the ongoing development and delivery of peer support programs. The Manager will be expected to ensure integration and coordination of any new programs and services with those currently offered by the SSO and campus and Faculty partners. This includes working closely with staff across the SSO and staff/faculty across campus.

Key Accountabilities

Provide leadership and strategic direction on the student experience

- Responsible for creation and implementation of strategic plan for the Student Experience portfolio so that it complements and supports the SSO Strategic plan, the University of Waterloo strategic plan and Faculty-specific strategic plans.
- Consults on the areas of student transition, student development, and student success. This includes consultation and leadership on program development and initiatives outside of the immediate programs and services offered by the SSO.
- Leads student experience team, setting clear and reasonable expectations, providing ongoing feedback and establishing a strong foundation for performance through comprehensive training.
- Consults on the needs of students attending post-secondary institutions including best practices at other institutions, current trends, and forecasting future developments in strategies to enhance the student experience.
- Provide leadership and direction for the office as it relates to the student experience portfolio. This leadership will be informed by a solid understanding of the student experience based on research, literature and best practice knowledge related to student retention, engagement and development.
- He/she works closely with the leadership team to ensure programs and strategies complement one another and, when appropriate are consistent in delivery and outcomes for all students.
- Responsible for leading the creation and delivery of strategies and initiatives designed to enhance the student experience for all students with ability to build capacity in programming for supporting priority populations including graduate, international, transfer, exchange and first year students.
- He/she works to ensure programs currently offered by the SSO are well integrated and seamless for students – this includes the student leadership program, peer mentorship program, and training and development for student leaders and transition programs.

Develop and maintain strong cross-campus relationships

- Establish a network of relationships with campus partners and external organizations (CACUSS, etc.) to remain up to date on new research, strategies and initiatives and to disseminate this to the broader campus community and within the office as appropriate.
- Develops and maintains excellent working relationships with faculty, staff, and campus partners to foster an environment for the transferring of ideas, skills, and/or resources around the student experience.
- Manages collaboration and partnerships with services and departments on campus with the goal of enhancing and streamlining the student experience; including but not limited to Food Services, Campus Wellness, Marketing and Undergraduate Recruitment, Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association, Graduate Students Association, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs, Athletics, Housing and Residences, etc.).
- Engages campus partners in meaningful conversations about factors that contribute to student success, retention and student engagement.
- Represents the SSO at committees and meetings related to the student experience.
- Consults with the leadership team to ensure programs and initiatives designed and maintained are meeting the needs of our Faculty and campus partners.

Develop and implement strategies for integrated programming

- Responsible for the design, delivery and evaluation of programs for students that are part of an overall student success strategy.
- Works to integrate the student leadership program, peer mentorship program, pre-arrival and orientation programs to shape the student experience. He/she works closely with the faculty relations managers and academic development team to ensure full integration of these programs with faculty programs and initiatives
- Responsible for overseeing all student experience programs offered by the SSO including peer mentorship programs, new student transition programs and student leadership programs. He/she maintains strategic oversight of these programs to ensure they are evolving to meet the needs of the students, campus and faculty partners.

Maintain a strong understanding of current trends and best practices around the student experience in higher education

- Highly knowledgeable of the unique needs of Waterloo students particularly in the areas of student transition, student retention and student development.
- Works with the leadership team to summarize and disseminate key research related to student experiences, factors that contribute to student success and university readiness, best practices at other institutions, developing and delivering intentional and engaging programs for students as well as students, staff and Faculty training and development as appropriate.
- Knowledgeable and up to date on current Waterloo surveys including the orientation survey, Faculty specific surveys and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Incoming Student Survey (ISS), Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC) etc.. He/she works with the leadership team to ensure this information is responded to and considered in the development of new programs and initiatives and the evaluation of current programs.

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- Uses current research to design intentional, proactive and responsive programs that are in line with the needs of our campus community.
- Works closely with SSO Data Analyst to ensure appropriate information related to retention and factors that contribute to student success are made available and interpreted appropriately.
- Works closely with Data Analyst to create an outcomes based model for program assessment. Establishes performance indicators and assessment methods to measure achievement in all areas of responsibility including learning outcomes, program goals and objectives and individual program success.

**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

- University degree required; Master's or equivalent in a related field (e.g., Leadership, Higher Education, Student Development) strongly preferred.

Experience

- 5+ years of experience in an student experience/student affairs role required
- 2+ years of experience managing/leading professional staff within a student service required
- Experience developing, delivery and evaluating large scale student experience/student success strategies at post-secondary institutions strongly preferred.
- Program/project management experience is an asset.
- Proven ability to take initiative and be both creative and flexible.
- Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively, build consensus and be sensitive to the needs and interests of various stakeholders.
- Demonstrated ability to contribute to and thrive in a collaborative environment and to apply a positive team approach to working with colleagues.
- Demonstrated ability to use and interpret data to make decisions, and communicate results effectively to various stakeholders.
- Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of priority populations including graduate, international, first year, transfer and exchange students.

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Leverages a continuous improvement mindset with a demonstrated ability to work effectively with others, as both a team player and a team leader
- Advanced: MS Office suite of products (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
- Strong organizational and time management skills
- Strong communication skills – oral and written
- Demonstrated ability to use data and information to make decisions

Nature and Scope

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- **Contacts:** Able to build collaborative working relationships across the university campus. The Manager will be required to lead their co-workers and campus partners in understanding the student experience. Team work skills are crucial as is consensus building and strategic leadership.
- **Level of Responsibility:** He/she is responsible for managing the day to day operations of the Student Experience team, setting priorities and managing internal and external expectations of this area. The Manager is responsible for ongoing performance management and yearly performance appraisals.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** The Manager will make decisions in collaboration with others about the strategic priorities relating to SSO and initiatives relating to enhancing student success. He/she determines the optimum course of action to solve problems and to exert a positive influence on other stakeholders on behalf of the SSO.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Minimal demands typical of a position operating within a fast-paced service oriented office environment; extensive periods of sitting and concentrated use of visual senses. Requires close attention to detail, thoroughness, and accuracy.
- **Working Environment:** Located in a comfortable indoor area, although location can change. Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a supervisory position, one where it is occasionally necessary to convey negative or unwelcome information to students or staff.