

Job Description

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| Job Title: | Manager, Student Communications |
| Department: | Student Service Centre |
| Reports To: | Director, Student Service Centre |
| Jobs Reporting: | None |
| Salary Grade: | USG 10 |
| Effective Date: | June 2023 |

Primary Purpose

The Manager, Student Communications leads student communications efforts within the Student Service Centre (The Centre) working collaboratively with our Tier 2 campus partners which include the Registrar's Office (Student Awards & Financial Aid, Enrolment Services, Admissions), Graduate Studies & Postdoctoral Affairs, Student Financial Services, WatCard, and the Student Success Office.

The Manager integrates student communications needs of The Centre and our campus partners to provide a seamless digital 'one stop' experience for students. The Manager provides strategic leadership and direction and is a key subject matter expert on administrative communications to undergraduate and graduate students while developing and upholding our reputation and improving the student experience of our current students. They plan, develop, and implement diverse, integrated marketing and communications strategies. The efforts of the Manager are driven by the needs of the students and is conducted in a coordinated, partnership-focused manner with multiple and intersecting communications professionals across campus, in particular our Tier 2 partners, UWaterloo Life and University Communications.

The Manager uses current communications platforms and adapts early to emerging tools. The Manager creates, implements, and constantly adapts a multi-layer student communications approach based on youth-driven consumption preferences, emerging technology, and student feedback. They are responsible for using a research-based approach to conduct the successful execution of The Centre's communications needs. They seek consensus across campus while developing communication strategies, and ensure that strategies align with the support needs of students.

Key Accountabilities

Provide strategic leadership and direction for student engagement and strategic communications

- Leads the creation and implementation of The Centre's collaborative communications strategy and timelines
- Plays a crucial leadership role in integrating and aligning the undergraduate and graduate non-academic support service needs, collaboratively working with other cross campus communications teams to ensure effective student experience outcomes, based on communications expertise
- Ensures that all strategies align with the University's Strategic Plan
- Leverages technology to achieve the objectives of the communication strategies using a variety of communications platforms to engage with students
- Ensures that Waterloo branding, visual identity, messaging, and style guidelines are applied consistently to all strategies (e.g., web, digital, print, and social media). Works to ensure consistent messaging and voice of The Centre and the University in all communications plans

Marketing and Communications

- Creates and maintains content of The Centre websites ensuring a cohesive user journey that provides the highest level of student experience through the digital one-stop experience. Ensures all digital content, including web and social media content, complies with applicable legislation (i.e., Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL) and upholds privacy and confidentiality of student information as per Policy 46
- Creates and advises on copy content, editorial direction, and best practices for content across all platforms including content shared through University of Waterloo social media channels and through mass email communication to the student population
- Develops and implements targeted marketing campaigns and communications plans to promote services offered in The Centre
- Anticipates upcoming important dates, relevant and/or emerging issues that affect students, and builds student community, to drive content within social media, the ChatBot, web pages and email communications
- Utilizes video and video screens, campus fairs, and print media to create content that helps students navigate their non-academic student experience and promotes the services offered in The Centre and on behalf of our campus partners
- Establishes criteria to measure effectiveness of communication plans to enhance and inform decision-making, strategy development, messaging, and budget to meet strategic goals

Understands and applies current trends, relevant market research and institutional knowledge for communicating with student audiences

- Maintains a strong understanding of the student audience, both undergraduate and graduate, and the diversity of the student population and their needs
- Uses a collaborative, research-driven approach to direct student web presence. Assesses user needs, preferences, trends and usability as it relates to the student experience through ongoing and in-depth discussions with students, Student Service Specialists, and campus partners
- Formulates strategy and develops effective communication to answer emerging student questions and issues
- Maintains an understanding of how the timing, tactics and nature of communication with students can influence the student experience and of new and developing strategies for effective communication
- Knowledgeable of processes and timelines of the services delivered by The Centre, on topics including admission, official documents, official student record, course enrolment, student financial account, financial aid, graduation, and specialty services

Collaborates, advises, consults, educates, and builds consensus

- Partners with communications professionals across campus, to ensure students can easily navigate their administrative needs
- Represents The Centre on a variety of cross-campus committees
- Works collaboratively with key stakeholders including Student Service Specialists and Tier 2 partners that provide knowledge critical to be communicated and understood by students. The ability to work productively with our Tier 2 partners is critical to the success of this role and to building an integrated digital one-stop to meet students' needs.
- Acts in accordance with The Centre's and the University's values regarding student service, diversity, accessibility, and inclusion.

**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 completing 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

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| Education <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bachelor's degree and/or equivalent work experience in a communications field• Master's degree preferred |
| Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrated ability to communicate to a high standard of excellence using multiple platforms• 5+ years of experience in a communications field• 3+ years of experience in a leadership capacity• Experience in a role supporting post-secondary student communications is preferred |
| Knowledge/Skills/Abilities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including writing SEO content for the web• Experience and knowledge of accessibility requirements (AODA) and Canadian Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL)• Excellent relationship building, interpersonal and problem-solving skills• Demonstrated aptitude and knowledge of the needs of post-secondary students including best practices at other institutions, current trends and forecasting future development in strategies to engage students• Strong organizational skills• Demonstrated ability to edit HTML in order to format web and email content• Proven attention to detail• Critical thinking and excellent analytical skills to assess issues quickly and appropriately• Ability to absorb large amounts of diverse information and details and then clearly and accurately condense and relay this information to multiple audiences• Command of the technology associated with the digital world and social media (i.e., social media management software (Emplifi, etc.), content management systems, Google Analytics, email marketing systems)• Knowledge of web information architecture and content best practices• Intermediate to advanced use of current digital management tools• Self-motivated, able to work independently, and as part of a team |

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** The incumbent works closely and regularly with The Centre team, Registrar's Office (Student Awards & Financial Aid, Enrolment Services, Admissions), Graduate Studies & Postdoctoral Affairs, Student Financial Services, WatCard and the Student Success Office. Secondly, they interact with communications professionals in UWaterloo Life, University Communications, faculty undergraduate and graduate offices, Campus Housing, AccessAbility Services, Campus Wellness, WUSA (Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association) and GSA (Graduate Student Association).
- **Level of Responsibility:** This position has influence and leadership of the effective delivery of programs within the portfolio. The incumbent will be the subject matter expert of The Centre's service supports and will represent The Centre at various University committees. This role requires minimal supervision and provides training and guidance to others.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** This role continually makes decisions about content creation and communications strategies. Daily decision-making for initiatives within the responsibilities of the role.

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- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** There are extensive periods of sitting and concentrated use of visual senses using a laptop and monitor. Moderate demands typical of a supervisory position requiring concentration and attention to detail operating within a very busy student-focused office environment with constant interruptions and competing priorities.
 - **Working Environment:** The Centre operates in an open-office environment. There is minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a position exposed to stress and pressure associated with management-level responsibilities, intermittent work outside the normal operating hours of the institution.