

Job Description

Job Title:	Associate University Secretary
Department:	Secretariat
Reports To:	University Secretary
Jobs Reporting:	None
Salary Grade:	14/15
Effective Date:	April 2023

Primary Purpose

Reporting to the University Secretary (US) the Associate University Secretary acts as a neutral and objective resource providing procedural advice and support to three functional areas within the Secretariat:

- the Board of Governors and its committees;
- the Senate and its committees and councils; and po
- policy development and renewal, employee and student relations committees and quasi-judicial processes as captured in university policies and agreements.

The Associate University Secretary will be assigned work by the US predominantly in one or two areas with the expectation of cross-training to allow continuity of support in times of overload, vacation or illness. This may change from time to time as determined by the US.

Key Accountabilities

Management of Board and Senate Operations

- Overall responsibility for the work of the committees/councils the associate is assigned to serve
- Thorough understanding of the mandates of assigned committees/councils and a familiarity with the mandates of all such bodies supported by the Secretariat
- Thorough knowledge of developments in areas related to a committee's mandate, briefing chairs and responsible executives and coordinating the preparation for and follow-up to meetings, including agendas and supporting material, reports to senior governance bodies, and the written record of the meetings
- Ability to understand and appreciate diverse points of view about complex and often inter-related issues in a variety of contexts, such that the written record of a meeting can be captured succinctly, with clarity and precision
- Ability to apply principles to factual situations and work in a highly-confidential environment at the executive level
- Preservation of corporate memory with respect to the Board, Senate and assigned committees
- Capacity to develop an in-depth knowledge of the structure and composition of the governing bodies and their committees and a good political sense of the configuration of membership which enable committees to function optimally
- Thorough familiarity with university policies and procedures and with governance processes described in the *The University of Waterloo Act, 1972*, and related Board and Senate bylaws
- Maintain governance records, advise on governance matters, act as a governance liaison between the board and management and stakeholders

- Support the US with respect to the strategic direction, planning, and overall delivery of a suite of governance programs, structures and initiatives supporting the good governance of the University as a whole
- Support the US with Board succession planning and renewal, Board and Senate orientation, Committee and Committee Chair orientation, ongoing education sessions, effectiveness surveys, retreats, research and best practice implementation
- Coordinate approaches to implementing leading governance practices across the Board and Senate with formalized procedures and standard operating practices
- Liaison between governance bodies and the constituencies affected by their work, which often entails advising chairs and executives on the appropriate procedures and processes to follow in submitting material for approval
- Leads special projects of particular significance to the Board of Governors, Senate related to *The University of Waterloo Act, 1972*, the bylaws and related governance processes of the Board, and the highest level of rules and procedures for the operation of the Senate and its committees and councils as assigned
- Provides advice to executive sponsors on governance matters
- Maintains productive working relationships with people at all levels, both internally and externally
- Undertake research on various issues, assembling background material related to a committee's work from a variety of sources
- Ability to apply knowledge of people and practices to improve established processes, with depth of knowledge inspiring confidence among constituencies and among executives with respect to governance practices and processes
- Act as a liaison between the Secretariat and the Executive Director Group (EDEX) by participating on and providing plans, reports, and updates to that group as required including the coordination of Board and Senate materials
- Works with the President's office to manage meetings and agendas, plan and executive governing body retreats, and work to ensure a seamless flow of information between administration and governing bodies
- Liaison with governance machinery residing outside the Secretariat, including in Faculties (ie. Faculty councils)
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Policy Development and Employee and Student Relations Committee Support

- Management of the process for policy development including proactive responsibility for the regular renewal pursuant to the terms of Policy 1
- Provide direction and advice regarding introduction and revision to policy
- Administer the annual work plan and activities with respect to University policy renewal including authority for official Policy Library
- Organize Policy Drafting Committees (PDCs) including drafting Terms of Reference, membership, developing agendas for meetings and booking same, creating a record of discussions, and advising on process for approval.
- Develop plans and timelines for PDCs which usually involve facilitating collegial governance and large amounts of consultation.
- Update senior administration on the work of PDCs and other policy work as requested and where confidentiality requirements do not prevent the same.
- Understand the origin and reasoning behind key policies, practices and procedures and can explain their purpose to others in way that are easy to understand
- Ability to write and speak clearly, and effectively while maintaining a neutral position

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- Act as secretary for Staff Relations, Faculty Relations, Student Relations Committees and other committees as assigned, providing support for developing agendas for meetings and booking same, creating a record of discussions

Management of Quasi-Judicial Processes

- Responsible for the execution and delivery of the quasi-judicial responsibilities of the Secretariat as captured in various University policies and agreements, including those relating to faculty, staff and students, all in a manner consistent with those policies and agreements, the rules of natural justice, and institutional practice.
- Scheduling hearings, composing panels to adjudicate hearings, assisting panel members on procedural matters, acting as hearing secretary and publishing decisions made by panel members following hearings
- For clarity, the Associate Secretary does not provide advice on the rights of any party or advocate on behalf of any party

Duties within the Secretariat

- Support other Associate University Secretaries for Board and Senate governance-related matters, policy development and process advice, quasi-judicial processes and other activities as may be required
- May be required to provide notary services on behalf of the University for University matters
- The US may assign to the Associate responsibility for supervising administrative support staff
- Provide functional direction to Governance Officers with respect to committee responsibilities
- The US may assign the Associate Secretary to specific areas within the Secretariat which may change from time to time

**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

- Undergraduate degree in a relevant field of study, a postgraduate degree and or a GPC.D., ICD.D or C.Dir designation considered an asset

Experience

- At least 8 years' experience related to the specified responsibilities above. Related experience in governance, public administration, and a strong understanding of the bicameral governance structure of Canadian public universities.

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Proven ability to leverage knowledge of parliamentary rules of procedure (Bourinot's, Robert's) to guide complex meetings. Exceptional attention to detail and experience operationalizing best practices in governance, policy development and quasi-judicial matters. Comprehensive understanding of the administrative, academic, and governance structures of a university, as well as university regulations and policies. Significant professional experience in support of the administration of a decentralized complex environment. Knowledge of administrative law and the principles of natural justice gained through education or experience.
- Advanced Microsoft Office Skills

- Knowledge and experience with governance portals

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Internal contact with members of the community, Board of Governors, Senators, the general public
- **Level of Responsibility:** The Associate University Secretary represents a key relationship within the university community in the responsible exercise of university power as assigned by the *The University of Waterloo Act, 1972* as well as by the various by-laws of the Board of Governors and Senate. The Associate is responsible and accountable to the US for the aspects of the university's governance function assigned to the associate. The committees and councils assigned depend on the work of the Associate to be able to carry out the operational business and academic mission of the university. Directly supports and guides the governance, of the University by providing timely information and advice on policies, precedents, procedures, guidelines, and protocol to committee members and particularly committee chairs.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Reporting to the University Secretary, the Associate University Secretary uses discretionary authority to use good judgment to make sound decisions and provide strategic advice on all matters relating to their portfolio which includes exercise of judgment and discretion consistent with the range of responsibilities and accountabilities outlined above. The Associate University Secretary provides advice regarding governance and deliberative processes to a variety of senior administrators and with experience, comes to be relied upon as a trusted advisor by these individuals. In all aspects of their work, the incumbent will identify and recommend procedures and practices to protect the University from undue reputational and regulatory risks. At all times, the incumbent is responsible for maintaining the integrity of the work of the Secretariat remembering that its work is public, high profile and subject to scrutiny meaning that at all times, the very highest standards shall be applied to all aspects of work by an Associate.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** This position requires routine physical activity most of the time. The incumbent is frequently required to sit for extended periods of time at a desk and on the computer while preparing reports, documents and minutes. Manual dexterity is required for extended periods of computer work. This position requires regular mental and visual concentration while working on the computer, writing and reviewing documents for details and accuracy. Visual strain may result from these activities. Listening concentration is required to respond to requests for information or take minutes of meetings.
- **Working Environment:** Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a position exposed to stress and pressure in a fast-paced work environment. In this position, the schedule and pace of work is cyclical to correspond with the governance year, including peak period when the incumbent is required to increase the pace of work and prioritize tasks in order to meet more urgent demands. On campus presence will be required for governance, polic and quasi-judicial activities as determined by the University Secretary.