Job Description

Job Title:	Marketing and Communications Specialist
Department:	Student Success Office
Reports To:	Manager, Marketing and Communications
Jobs Reporting:	None
Salary Grade:	USG 8
Effective Date:	September 2022

Primary Purpose

The Marketing and Communications Specialist develops, supports, and executes communications and marketing initiatives for incoming and current domestic undergraduate and graduate students (including international student populations), parents, staff, and faculty on behalf of all units within the Student Success Office and our partners. They must demonstrate a strong aptitude for traditional and emerging digital technologies, stakeholder engagement and collaboration. The Specialist must demonstrate and champion an equity and anti-racist informed approach to their work – particularly as it relates to marketing and communication initiatives for a diverse audience.

The Marketing and Communications Specialist has three primary areas of focus:

1) Develop effective marketing and communications plans to meet the goals of the Student Success Office, which includes but is not limited to driving student satisfaction; building community and stakeholder engagement; engaging a diverse student population including international, undergraduate, graduate students; and promoting student retention at the University of Waterloo.
2) Develop compelling content for Student Success Office marketing and communications vehicles, including web, email and social media and print.
3) Responds to current trends and best practices for communicating with target audiences. Leverage SSO, university, and industry data to inform and improve marketing and communications strategies and tactics.

Key Accountabilities

Develop effective marketing and communications plans to meet the goals of the Student Success Office, which includes but is not limited to driving student satisfaction; building community and stakeholder engagement; engaging a diverse student population including international, undergraduate, graduate students; and promoting student retention at the University of Waterloo.

- Support the development of the SSO digital presence, working collaboratively to develop crisp, compelling copy to meet various stakeholder/audience requirements current and emerging digital platforms and ensuring digital tactics are part of all integrated marketing and communications plans.
- Develop, research, and write stories, scripts, and key messages for all marketing and communication materials in all media formats – print, web, social media, videos, digital screens, etc.
- Utilize campus-wide tools to make informed content creation decisions.
- Develop and execute termly marketing and communications plans to support units within the SSO portfolio.

- Works closely with peers to ensure an integrated approach to content delivery, in alignment with SSO and Waterloo brand standards.
- Contributes to the development of innovative ways of working with stakeholders, colleagues, and peers to ensure constructive and collaborative work dynamics.
- Represents the SSO during meetings with Faculty and department stakeholders, as appropriate.
- Utilizing University of Waterloo and industry resources to ensure all SSO marketing and communications plans are inclusive, accessible, and incorporate anti-racist values.
- Manage direct reports (co-op students) and ensure the delivery of results in support of SSO priorities.
- Monitor unofficial online UWaterloo communities (i.e., Reddit, Discord) for emerging trends.
- Participate in maintaining an accurate and up-to-date content calendar for social media and other digital marketing initiatives.

Develop compelling content for Student Success Office marketing and communications vehicles, including web, email and social media and print.

Web

- Create and edit content for SSO web presence (SSO, Student Success Office Resources, Advisor Resources, Welcome Warriors, International Student Guide etc.) in conjunction with colleagues, providing leadership and guiding SSO web maintenance and updates.
- Collaborate with stakeholders to determine when emerging projects and services within the SSO portfolio require a digital presence. Develop information architecture and SEO rich web copy used to promote and support the goals of the project.
- Maintain and evolve the SSO web presence through content planning and audits to ensure content and information architecture supports achievement of SSO's strategic goals.
- Utilize campus-wide tools, including Google's Universal Analytics to make informed content creation decisions.
- Work with the Communications Design Specialist to develop compelling, accessible, and branded graphics when needed.

Email

- Coordinate, develop, write, and distribute compelling email campaigns for incoming and current student audiences, parents/ supporters, staff, and faculty.
- Ensure email campaigns adhere to Waterloo's visual identity and style guide.
- Maintain an organized calendar of email campaigns including tracking lists, audiences, A/B testing, links, key messages, and analytics.
- Maintain, in collaboration with the Manager, Marketing and Communications, an email approval process to ensure accurate emails, proper send lists, and tracking.
- Collaborate with subject matter experts to research, write, edit and review email content, design/templates, and strategy with a focus on student audience preferences and needs.
- Work with the Communications Design Specialist to develop compelling, accessible, and branded graphics when needed.

Social media

- Craft promotional organic and paid social media content that integrates into marketing and communications plans.
- Maintain an understanding of current and emerging platforms and content best practices.
- Review and track content performance to inform future planning.

- Work closely with campus partners to schedule content and maintain an accurate and up-to-date content calendar for social media and other digital marketing initiatives.
- Work with the Communications Design Specialist to develop compelling, accessible, and branded graphics when needed.

Print

- Write and adapt copy that is concise and impactful
- Project manage print production process, working closely with the Communications Design Specialist to develop relevant and timely pieces that respond to audience needs. Ensure deliverables are produced in line with project schedules.

Responds to current trends and best practices for communicating with target audiences. Leverage SSO, university, and industry data to inform and improve marketing and communications strategies and tactics.

- Maintains clear understanding of audience technologies, trends and communication preferences with respect to receiving and sharing information and translate into tactics for enhancing just-in-time message delivery.
- Provides expert student communications design and student experience knowledge in relation to advancing SSO strategic priorities
- Assess the success of these plans using key metrics and industry research.
- Has a strong understanding of student services and student programs that enhance the academic, health/wellness and social development of students on campus.
- Maintains awareness of current department and campus-wide initiatives, best practices at other universities and current research
- Recommends progressive improvements to existing and emerging communications and marketing strategies to keep them fresh relevant to target audiences.
- Compiles and reviews web, social, and email analytics, with input from the Data Analyst, and report to key SSO stakeholders to help drive campaign content and strategy.

**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 in related discipline (i.e. GBDA, Business Admin, Marketing, Communications, English)
- Equivalent combination of education and/or experience will be considered

Experience

- 5 years of experience in in a communications role, preferably in an educational setting, including:
  - 3 years' experience in writing dynamic, creative copy for varying platforms, as well as experience writing for multiple audiences, adapting content across different platforms required.
  - 2 years' experience in working with web content management systems
  - 1-2 years' experience in writing and sending mass email communications.
  - 1 year experience in social media content development or management
- A record of and commitment to participating in ongoing learning and engagement in the areas of equity, diversity, inclusion, anti-racism and accessibility. Demonstrated experience applying this learning to their communications and/or marketing work.
- Demonstrated knowledge of barriers to student success (systematic, historic, issues of access)for underrepresented or non-traditional students and students who are academically at risk.
- Strong understanding of the communications needs of Waterloo students including priority populations including first year students, international, transfer and exchange students, students who are academically at risk and traditionally underrepresented student populations.
- Exceptional communication and relationship-building skills.
- Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively, build consensus and be sensitive to the needs and interests of various stakeholders, and contribute to the functioning of a diverse team both within the department and across the institution.
- Demonstrated ability to contribute to and thrive in a collaborative environment and to apply a
- positive team approach when working with colleagues.

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Advanced understanding of social media and web communications
- Advanced web content management skills – preferably Drupal
- Intermediate to advanced skill level with MS Office (especially Word, Outlook)
- Intermediate level of experience with online tools including, but not limited to: MailChimp (email marketing tool), Smartsheet (project management tool), Adobe Creative Cloud (publishing tool)
- Intermediate level skills with social media monitoring and scheduling tools
- Excellent communications skills – written and oral
- Excellent organizational and time management skills: able to manage multiple tasks, meet deadlines, and negotiate changes in priorities as required
- Strong presentation skills, the proven ability to be persuasive and to effect positive change while building strong relationships
- Collaborative, positive, and professional approach to working with teams and colleagues

Nature and Scope

- Contacts: Internally, communicates with campus colleagues and students, to motivate others, manage digital communication projects for campus-wide programs and projects; provides leadership on digital engagement strategies and vehicles to colleagues; and develops strategies to engage student audiences
- Level of Responsibility: Manages creative projects that are available to campus-wide audience and targeted groups, works and leads projects while working collaboratively with the Manager, Marketing and Communications and decision-makers within the Student Success Office and across campus

- Decision-Making Authority: Makes daily decisions on marketing and communications projects, directing the focus and scope of projects; determines the optimal course of action to solve problems, and exerts a positive and at times persuasive influence on campus stakeholders
- Physical and Sensory Demands: Minimal demands typical of an office position; extensive sitting and concentrated use of visual sense.
- Working Environment: There are deadline pressures, while at the same time there is a demand for thoroughness and accuracy. On occasion, work outside of normal business hours may be required.