

## Job Description



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<b>Job Title:</b>	Graduate and Postdoctoral Programming Specialist
<b>Department:</b>	Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs (GSPA)
<b>Reports To:</b>	Manager, Graduate and Postdoctoral Experience
<b>Jobs Reporting:</b>	Part-time/contract staff and student staff, budget permitting
<b>Salary Grade:</b>	USG 9
<b>Effective Date:</b>	May 2021

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### **Primary Purpose**

Reporting to Manager, Graduate and Postdoctoral Experience, the primary purpose of the Specialist is to develop and implement educational programming for GSPA, focusing primarily on projects and initiatives that support and promote the academic experience and professional development of graduate students and postdoctoral scholars at the University of Waterloo. Some examples of ongoing programming include PhD candidacy and thesis defence programming; research communication; and professional skills training. This role has three main areas of responsibility: 1) researching, planning, developing and assessing programming 2) facilitating workshops, consultations and events for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars, and 3) liaising and building relationships among GSPA, other academic support units, students, staff and faculty that result in recommendations, best practices, and expertise for graduate and professional development programming at the faculty, department and course levels.

### **Key Accountabilities**

#### **Program planning, development and execution**

- Develops and delivers workshops and other programming tailored to graduate students and postdoctoral scholars.
- Reviews, on an ongoing basis, the content and structure of GSPA workshops and professional development offerings for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars and makes appropriate adjustments to programming based on student/postdoctoral fellow feedback.
- Collaborates with Faculties, departments and schools on the development and implementation of programming for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars.
- Hires, trains and supervises Graduate Professional Skills Program Specialists, as required.
- Updates GSPA's online content for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars (including defence preparation resources, professional development supports), and oversees development of new resources.
- Assists Manager, Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Experience, with planning, implementation and periodic reviews of GSPA programs and services for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars.

#### **Program facilitation**

- Facilitates workshops and consultations for GSPA's professional development program(s).
- Assesses and provides individualized feedback on graduate student submissions for GSPA professional development programs.
- Consults with graduate students and postdoctoral scholars on the development of individual professional development plans.
- Provides ongoing support and consultation to graduate students and postdocs engaged in GSPA's programs.

### **Academic and professional development support**

- Supports discipline-based professional development and student experience programming at the course, Faculty, department and school levels.
- Consults with various academic and academic support units as needed on various aspects of graduate student professional development, encouraging the incorporation of professional and academic skills in the classroom and in research.
- Provides support, mentorship and guidance to graduate students and postdoctoral scholars across the University in the area of professional development.
- Develops and delivers activities to support student engagement with WIL (through collaboration with campus partners).
- Works in close collaboration with campus partners (including the Writing and Communication Centre, Centre for Teaching Excellence, Centre for Career Action) to develop general and discipline-specific resources to support professional and academic skill development of graduate students and postdoctoral scholars.

### **Research, dissemination and external initiatives**

- Leads assessment of GSPA student experience and professional development programming, writing reports, sharing findings and making scholarly contributions as appropriate.
- Liaises and builds relationships with partners across campus who support graduate students and postdoctoral scholars.
- Works with the Manager, Communications to design and disseminate communications about graduate and postdoctoral experience and/or professional development.
- Represents GSPA on internal and external committees as required.
- Participates in strategic initiatives focused on graduate student and postdoctoral experience and/or professional development.
- Networks with colleagues supporting graduate students and postdoctoral scholars at other institutions.
- Seeks opportunities to deliver GSPA workshops or programming for internal and external stakeholder groups, as appropriate.

### **Administration and events**

- Manages additional assigned projects to support the strategic directions of GSPA.
- Oversees the recruitment, training, and mentoring of volunteers, co-op and graduate students for facilitation assistance and educational projects, as needed.
- Supports the planning and execution of educational events, conferences, and speakers, including registration, catering and other logistics, as needed.
- Communicates discretely and tactfully, especially when dealing with confidential information and sensitive topics.

*\*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**

- Minimum of a Master's degree; PhD an asset.

### **Experience**

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- 3-5 years of experience working with graduate students and postdoctoral scholars in a higher education institution
- Proven experience developing programs, facilitating workshops or trainings, and engaging in individual consultations with students
- 2 years year of teaching experience and/or group facilitation experience strongly preferred

### **Knowledge/Skills/Abilities**

- Knowledge of current research and evidence-based strategies that support student and/or postdoctoral fellow experience and professional development
- Highly developed strategic, analytical and communication skills
- Exceptional capacity to navigate complex University dynamics and interpersonal skills to nurture relationships with a range of stakeholders across the University
- Diplomacy and tact in working with both internal and external partners
- Demonstrated strong understanding of equity, intersectionality, anti-racism, decolonization, inclusion, anti-oppression, and an ability to apply these principles to communications, program development and program execution
- Excellent written and oral presentation skills, with ability to consult one-on-one as well as deliver programming and presentations to large groups and varied audiences.
- Strong collaboration skills including the ability to present ideas and provide constructive feedback

### **Nature and Scope**

- **Contacts:** Able to build collaborative working relationships across the university campus. The Specialist will be required to lead their co-workers and campus partners in understanding the graduate student and postdoctoral fellow experience. Teamwork skills are crucial as is consensus building and strategic leadership.
- **Level of Responsibility:** The role fills a senior consultative role within GSPA in terms of developing department-wide strategies and initiatives. Staff in the GSPA will look to the Specialist for direction on appropriate courses of action for engaging students and postdoctoral scholars, and for best practices and guidance on programming or initiatives intended to improve the student or postdoc experience. He/she is responsible for building collaboration and consensus with internal and external partners, and is responsible for implementing collaboratively planned campus-wide and departmental events and programs.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** The Specialist contribute to decisions in collaboration with others about the strategic priorities relating to GSPA and initiatives relating to enhancing student and postdoc success and experience. He/she determines the optimum course of action to solve problems and to exert a positive influence on other stakeholders on behalf of GSPA.
- **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:** Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions, typical of a position where it is occasionally necessary to convey negative or unwelcome information to students or staff. Occasional stress from meeting multiple and/or tight deadlines. May be required to work after regular working hours for events and special projects.