Job Description

Job Title: Graduate Student Experience Specialist
Department: Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs
Reports To: Manager, Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Experience
Jobs Reporting: None
Salary Grade: USG 7
Effective Date: April 2019

Primary Purpose
The Graduate Student Experience Specialist is responsible for the development, coordination, implementation and evaluation of programs and services related to the graduate student experience at the University of Waterloo. S/he plays a leading role in supporting initiatives related to academic programming (in partnership with the Faculties), to funding, to managing scholarly and supervisory relationships, to professional development. The incumbent serves as a main resource and the primary point of contact for students, staff and faculty on matters related to graduate student experience. The incumbent acts as the liaison between campus partners as programming is being conceived, revised and/or evaluated, and is responsible for monitoring program/service quality and ensuring a positive, intellectually rigorous, and professionally valuable graduate student experience.

Key Accountabilities

Student engagement and communications
- Implements university-wide student engagement/communication plans for graduate studies
- Coordinates, develops and promotes programs and services aimed at enhancing the graduate student experience
- Consults regularly with students, as well as stakeholders in the graduate student experience: student groups (e.g. GSA), faculty and staff
- Mentors graduate student leaders/volunteers and encourages student engagement in activities that promote intellectual, personal and professional development

Evaluation/Program assessment
- Evaluates student engagement and satisfaction through the development and implementation of qualitative and quantitative data gathering/analysis
- Conducts ongoing assessment of program and services to provide recommendations for improvement and optimization
- Use assessment and evaluation data to increase cross-campus support for improvements to the graduate student experience
- Makes recommendations based on research and data to improve graduate student experience
- Involved in graduate studies data projects (e.g. CGPSS)
- Consults/interviews key campus stakeholders in the development of new initiatives

Relationship management/liaison
- Works with campus partners and students to recommend program/service revisions that would promote a positive graduate student experience
- Serves as GSPA’s liaison for student experience initiatives – for students, staff and faculty members
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- Acts as the primary point of contact for student concerns or questions about the graduate student experience (e.g. housing, access to emergency funds, job opportunities, professional development access)
- Advises campus partners on aspects that are unique to the graduate student experience (e.g. accessibility needs)
- Acts as a point of contact for campus partners to ensure graduate student opportunities (e.g. events, volunteer/job opportunities) are publicized/promoted

### Program Administration

- Ensures smooth day-to-day operation of GSPA programs and services for students through effective communications
- Creates infrastructure to support new programming and improve existing programming
- Works in collaboration with campus partners to develop and implement successful student transition programming
- Participates in evaluation of events/programs, providing recommendations and creating best practice guidelines
- Works in collaboration with university stakeholders to facilitate opportunities for graduate student events that enhance social and professional development opportunities
- Develops and facilitates workshops/seminars on specialized graduate student focused topics

### Special projects

- Coordinates GSPA presentations at departmental/faculty orientations/events for graduate students and graduate studies stakeholders (e.g. graduate faculty Officers, graduate coordinators)
- Coordinates the administration of graduate professional development funds
- Supports program improvement and program evaluation projects

*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 and/or equivalent work experience; master’s degree preferred

#### Experience
- Experience working with student groups, supporting student staff, and developing programming for students in a post-secondary sector
- Experience engaging in research, and an ability to engage in data analysis/assessment and to make data-informed recommendations

#### Knowledge/Skills/Abilities
- Demonstrated ability to adapt to a changing environment and interact effectively with students, staff, and faculty.
- Demonstrated knowledge of best practices supporting the graduate student experience
- Proven aptitude for detail and accuracy and ability to manage multiple demands, priorities and projects
- Strong critical thinking, judgement and decision-making skills
- Demonstrated ability to work individually and collaboratively as part of a dynamic team
- Intermediate proficiency in Microsoft Office-Word/Excel/PowerPoint
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Nature and Scope

- **Contacts**: Internal contacts: The Specialist works closely with other staff in GSPA to ensure a coordinated approach to program and service development and delivery, and communications. In addition, the specialist also works closely with academic support units such as Centre for Teaching Excellence, Writing and Communication Centre, Centre for Career Action, Library, Co-operative Education, Housing and Residences, Waterloo International, and all Faculties and Affiliated University Colleges.

- **Level of Responsibility**: The position has institution wide impact, specialized work with minimal supervision

- **Decision-Making Authority**: The Specialist will make decisions in collaboration with others but may from time to time be required to make independent decisions related to the administration of the graduate student experience programs in the absence of a direct Manager.

- **Physical and Sensory Demands**: typical of an administrative support position within an academic office environment

- **Working Environment**: Minimal travel, regular work hours, some evening/weekend work required.