

Job Description

Job Title:	Communications and Media Relations Manager
Department:	Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association (WUSA)
Reports To:	Director of Marketing, Communications and Outreach
Jobs Reporting:	Communications Specialist (FT), Communications Assistants (PT)
Salary Grade:	USG 8
Effective Date:	January 2019

Primary Purpose

The Communications and Media Relations Manager will create, develop, enhance and monitor the organization's overall communication strategy. In conjunction with the Director of Marketing, Communications and Outreach, this position will drive the strategic development and tactical implementation of a robust, consistent, trusted and engaging communications strategy. This includes identifying, developing, implementing and measuring unique, engaging and collaborative communication plans, channels, and tools to cater to our different audience needs.

The incumbent will support WUSA's media and public relations efforts and broader outreach agenda, as well as supporting issues/crisis management activities, working both proactively and reactively, to ensure a positive reputation and outcome for the organization.

Key Accountabilities

Plans, develops, and evaluates communication initiatives

- Under the direction of the Director, Marketing, Communications and Outreach, develop a yearly communications plan that reflects and supports the strategic goals of WUSA.
- Integrates communications strategies into all media, including web and printed pieces.
- Monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of communications plans by using tools such as evaluation forms, questionnaires, surveys, focus groups, and by leading virtual and face-to-face feedback forums.
- Manages a budget that covers digital promotions, part-time staff salaries, memberships, and equipment.
- Collaborates with the Communications Specialist to ensure digital communications efforts meet the goals of the strategic communications plan.
- Recommends progressive improvements and initiatives to keep communications strategies fresh and competitive.
- Works closely with Marketing Specialists to develop key messages for marketing communication materials.
- Ensures that WUSA's brand identity, messaging and style guidelines are consistent in all organizational marketing and communication materials.
- Develops key messaging for use in all online and print media communications.
- Writes, edits and proofreads communications aimed at students including email, web and other informative and promotional content.
- Writes, edits and produces high-quality and engaging print materials and web communications that reflect well on the organization and encourage readership.
- Reviews and provides edits to web pages, both existing and proposed.

Manages WUSA's reputation and identifies opportunities for media engagement in alignment with stated goals, the communications calendar and WUSA priorities

- Creates and implements a termly media relations plan.
- Manages all aspects of day-to-day media relations activities including providing excellence and responsive service to the media with a full understanding of deadline pressures.
- Creates, develops, and executes training sessions for staff and students on how to work with the media.
- Recommends appropriate organizational spokesperson for emerging media opportunities.
- Drafts key messaging and provides training support to student executives who respond to media requests and speak on behalf of the organization.
- Write press releases and pitch stories to media outlets.
- Performs media outreach by initiating, developing and maintaining superior working relationships with media reporters, editors and producers.
- Collaborates on media relations activities with a broad range of internal university partners when required.
- Responsible for taking lead on image and issues/crisis management, in conjunction with the Director of Marketing, Communications and Outreach, to enhance the profile, image and reputation of WUSA in the media, with students and among the general public.

Collaborates with internal marketing staff, key campus partners, students, and other key stakeholders

- Responsible for establishing strong professional working relationships with all WUSA staff, service coordinators, and other on and off-campus partners to maximize effectiveness of communication efforts and identify PR opportunities.
- Manages the Communications Specialist role to ensure the strategic scheduling and creation of engaging digital content to maximize online efforts to connect with students.
- Works with the Marketing Specialists to ensure integration of their overall marketing and promotional plans with communication efforts.
- Coordinates with the Web Design Specialist to support the implementation of the annual website plan and collaborate on plans for content.
- Hires, trains and manages Communications Specialist role and team of part time staff to assist with the creation and execution of communications content.
- Partners with other on campus departments to develop communications plans for joint efforts and support other on-campus initiatives.
- Collaborates with other marketing professionals on and off campus to ensure best practice development, which includes attending regular Communications Council meetings.
- Communicates organizational updates and initiatives to departments across campus to ensure shared content re: WUSA is accurate, comprehensive and up-to-date.

Support management with internal communications

- Conducts outreach and provides feedback on channels for effective internal communications.
- Develops regular internal communications to update staff on organizational priorities and departmental efforts in conjunction with management.
- Suggests strategy and messaging parameters for key internal communication efforts.
- Drafts and provides feedback on email communications being sent out organization wide by management.

Provide communications support

- Actively provides communications support, as required, to all WUSA departments.

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- Works with students' council, societies and student-run services to support their student outreach goals.
- Proofreads all external communications.
- Works closely with peers to ensure an integrated and consolidated approach to content development and delivery, as well as alignment within the department.

**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

- Completion of a Bachelor's degree in communications, public relations, journalism, English, Marketing or related post-secondary degree with equivalent experience.

Experience

- Minimum of 5 years' experience within a communications role
- Minimum of 2 years' experience supervising, evaluating and developing employees
- Minimum of 2 years' experience conceptualizing, planning, implementing and tracking successful social media strategies
- Minimum 2 years media relations experience with extensive experience in successfully managing complex and highly charged issues on behalf of a publicly visible organization
- Project management experience
- Experience building strong relationships with internal and external parties
- Experience writing and curating content for web

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Advanced: MS Office suite of products (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) or Mac equivalent
- Advanced written and verbal communication skills; excellent editing skills
- Intermediate: email marketing campaign and distribution platforms (MailChimp)
- Knowledge of Canadian Press Style
- Critical thinking and excellent analytical skills to enable immediate and appropriate assessment of complex issues of concern to stakeholders including among others, the media, the public, and funders
- A service mind-set and a team approach to working with colleagues and media partners.
- Strong organizational skills with the ability to multi-task and meet strict deadlines
- Experience within a student environment is an asset

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Internally, interacts with most employees and across all WUSA departments to develop and maintain all internal and external communications. Able to succeed in high risk, pressure situations with public and campus scrutiny and potential for impact on WUSA. The incumbent will be required to work collaboratively with the University's central communications team and campus wide marketing and communications colleagues to ensure consistency of messaging when appropriate and management of WUSA's image and reputation through paid and earned media, public relations initiatives and issues/crisis management.
- **Level of Responsibility:** The position is responsible for specific results of the communications and media relations program against specified goals. The position will be involved in emergency, crisis and

issues management situations. The position demonstrates a broad understanding of the news media and its needs and will have a sensitivity to the political, cultural and social contexts in which the university operates and those affecting the campus community. The position is expected to bring innovative approaches and new concepts and models to media relations programs. The incumbent may be required to complete additional tasks in relation to their position as assigned by the Director of Marketing and Communications.

- **Decision-Making Authority:** This position is responsible for establishing the communication priorities of the organization in consultation with the Director of Marketing and Communications and Executives, and assigning resources and funds accordingly. This position will be responsible for making timely decisions that ensure no opportunities are missed to spread the word about WUSA events, services and initiatives.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Minimal demands typical of a knowledge worker position operating within an office environment.
- **Working Environment:** Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a position exposed to stress and pressure associated with management responsibilities. Work outside the normal operating hours of the institution, including some weekends, can be expected in this role. WUSA is a student-driven organization with elected student Executive that change on an annual basis. Further, the political landscape is a diverse and dynamic environment. As such, this position will need to be sensitive and adaptable to change and be comfortable with changing deadlines and projects as needed.