

Job Description

Job Title:	Director, Teaching Assessment Processes
Department:	Office of the Associate Vice President, Academic
Reports To:	Associate Vice-President, Academic
Jobs Reporting:	None
Salary Grade:	USG 12
Effective Date:	May 2021

Primary Purpose

The Director, Teaching Assessment Processes is accountable to the Associate Vice-President, Academic for strategic leadership for the ongoing development, and logistical and organization details involved in the successful implementation, of the University's various mechanisms for assessment of teaching. These methods include (but are not limited to) Student Course Perception surveys and complementary assessment methods such as Peer Review of Teaching. The University intends its methods of assessment to be fair, supported by research, evidence-based, grounded in the University's instructional priorities, and generally recognized as valuable by the instructors and administrators involved in the teaching assessment processes. The Director, Teaching Assessment Processes, leads the University's continuous improvement efforts with respect to teaching assessment. The role includes:

- engaging in extensive consultation and communication with stakeholders, including faculty members and their association (FAUW), other instructors, students, and staff about the rationales, design, and delivery of the teaching assessment processes
- designing and coordinating the implementation of research that will inform the ongoing development of assessment processes (e.g., longitudinal investigation of SCP results to answer questions about ways in which results may be influenced by factors not relevant to teaching quality);
- leading ongoing communication efforts about the legitimacy and limitations of the assessment processes, in order to maintain the confidence of the campus community
- liaising with Faculty representatives and relevant Academic Support Units (ASU) to facilitate the smooth operation of the administrative aspects of the processes

Assessment of teaching plays an important role in many university decisions around curriculum, teaching assignments, hiring, performance review, and tenure and promotion of faculty members, and therefore is a subject of keen interest to, and sometimes controversy within, the campus community. As such, the role requires significant diplomatic and communication skills, and sufficient research credentials to carry out and discuss research credibly in a scholarly community. The role involves significant strategic thinking, change management, process management, and direction of research projects.

Key Accountabilities

Leadership and strategic direction in assessment of teaching

- Provide leadership and strategic guidance, to the AVPA, and via the AVPA to the VPA, Deans' Council, the Faculty Relations Committee, and Senate for the implementation and continuing development of the Waterloo Student Course Perception (SCP) process. This will include advice with respect to the ongoing refinement of the cascaded instrument, on the appropriate interpretation of SCP results in curricular, hiring, and promotion and tenure decisions.
 - Design and lead ongoing research (e.g. with respect to questions of observable associations between WSCP results and variables like instructor gender, class size, etc.) that will allow fairer and more appropriate use of WSCP results in the assessment of teaching
- When the role is first established, lead a process, involving appropriate consultation with stakeholders and consideration of existing research literature, to design methods for the appropriate integration of assessment results from SCP surveys, complementary teaching assessment practices such as peer reviews of teaching, teaching dossiers, and methods for evaluation of graduate supervision. Thereafter, coordinating the initial implementation of these holistic implementation practices, including working with Faculties and Academic Support Units to ensure necessary training of assessors takes place. Once the methods are established, be responsible for a process of continuous monitoring and improvement of this process.
- Maintain and update guidance to the campus community about the appropriate application and use of the various teaching assessment processes, including "users' guides" for the correct interpretation of the results of various teaching assessment tools
- Serve the campus community by responding to concerns and questions that arise about teaching assessment processes
- Design and work with campus partners, including student groups and instructors, to implement strategies to increase participation rates in the SCP surveys. Design, implement, and continue to refine communications materials aimed at students with respect to the value and importance to SCP surveys, and on the sorts of responses to open ended questions that are appropriate and impactful
- Lead ongoing communications with the campus community about assessment of teaching, with the twin goals of being responsive to legitimate concerns (including using them as guides to further enhance the tools over time) and educating the campus on the value and limitations of the various tools
- Serve as a source of expert advice to relevant committees (e.g., Faculty Relations, Deans' Council, policy review committees, etc.) and support units (e.g., IST, CTE, CEL), and provide training (for instance on appropriate interpretation of results for assessment committee members) as appropriate
- Collaborate with the Quality Assurance office and IAP to ensure that appropriate and useful aggregate teaching assessment results are available to programs as part of the cyclical review process

Evaluation and Research

- Maintaining a strong understanding of the current research literature on the assessment of teaching, and work to clarify relevant information about this literature to the campus community
- Design and oversee the appropriate implementation of research into the various teaching assessment processes at the University, including ensuring that appropriate ethics clearances are received, analysis of evidence and data, and communication of results internal and, as appropriate, external audiences

Management and Administration

Job Description



- Collaborate with key staff, and where appropriate Associate Deans or other academic administrators, to ensure the smooth operation of the various teaching assessment processes across campus
- Oversee the Teaching Assessment Processes budgets within the AVPA office
- Manage any contract employees and Co-op students hired to carry out projects related to the ongoing development and improvement of teaching assessment processes
- Support the AVPA in discussions with senior University Administrators (e.g. the VPA&P, AVPGSPA, Deans) about the appropriate implementation of teaching assessment practices
- Work with IST, the software solution team, and others, to ensure that the technical aspects of teaching assessment processes work smoothly and efficiently, and work with IST and others to develop recommendations for any new investments in technical supports as appropriate

**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

- PhD in a relevant discipline; expertise in social science research methodology

Experience

- A minimum of 3 years' experience in designing and executing research and/or evaluation projects, as well as disseminating their results
- Proficient in quantitative and qualitative research design and analytical research methods
- Experience managing complex, multi-stakeholder projects that involve change management
- Extensive knowledge of the research literature on student evaluations and other methods of teaching assessment, and experience communicating about it to a non-specialist audience
- Close involvement with an institutional course evaluation change management project is a significant asset

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Qualitative and quantitative data analysis software (e.g. nVivo, SPSS)
- Intermediate skill with Microsoft Office tools (in particular, Word, Excel, Powerpoint, and Outlook)
- Strong communication skills, both orally and in writing, for a broad range of audiences
- Knowledge of web authoring and content management tools
- Working knowledge of online systems for course evaluations

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** This position will have significant contacts with a broad range of University stakeholders (senior administrators, faculty members and leaders, technical and administrative staff, and students) and will liaise with colleagues with similar responsibilities at other universities. Competencies include oral and written communication skills, facilitation skills, project management, and working both independently and collaboratively with guidance from multiple project team members.
- **Level of Responsibility:** The position is responsible for leading, planning and executing complex, multi-stakeholder, research-based projects, and for managing processes, that are critical to the University.

Job Description



- **Decision-Making Authority:** Responsible and accountable for proposing, planning and executing assigned projects, in conjunction with the AVP-Academic or designate(s).
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Minimal demands typical of an administrative position operating within an office environment.
- **Working Environment:** Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of an administrative position; some exposure to stakeholders with strong viewpoints that may cause stress.