Job Description

Job Title:	Executive Director
Department:	Office of the Vice-President, Academic and Provost
Reports To:	Vice-President Academic and Provost
Jobs Reporting:	Associate Director, Strategic Initiatives Administrative Officer Administrative Assistant Technical Support Assistant Possibility of over staff overtime
Salary Grade:	USG 15
Effective Date:	December 2024

Primary Purpose

Working directly with the Vice-President, Academic and Provost and other senior academic leaders, the Executive Director is responsible for providing strategic oversight and direction to the Office of the Vice-President, Academic and Provost, and leadership for the development, planning, execution, and sustainment of strategic initiatives in the Office of the Vice President Academic and Provost, and for cross-institutional strategic initiatives with accountability to the Provost.

The Executive Director is accountable for providing strategic administrative leadership, and for advising on projects, to ensure that the Office of the Vice-President, Academic and Provost is effective in achieving its goals, enabling the Provost to work most effectively. The Executive Director works closely with the Provost on operational matters, strategic and operational priorities, and initiatives of critical importance to the University. The Executive Director is a key liaison with other offices under the Vice-President Academic & Provost and has regular engagement with Deans, VPs, Associate Provosts, AVPs, and senior staff across VP portfolios.

The Executive Director interacts with other senior administrators to facilitate a seamless flow of information to ensure strong communication between and amongst offices. The Executive Director identifies and mitigates any issues arising, together with senior leaders assigned by the Provost. The Executive Director coordinates highly sensitive special projects and provides leadership for the effective planning of various committees and meetings.

Key Accountabilities

Vision and Leadership

- Provide strategic and integrated leadership to support the advancement of strategic and operational initiatives of the University with accountability to the Provost, while articulating a clear vision enabling the success of the Office of the Vice-President, Academic and Provost
- Participate in strategic and tactical planning with research, collection and analysis of various forms of information and facilitates implementation, in collaboration with the Provost
- Manage and implement sensitive special projects that require expertise in all areas of project execution, management and successful delivery
- Work with senior academic leadership to develop project plans to implement new initiatives for the University with accountability to the Provost

- Maintain consistent communication with the Provost, providing briefs on key issues, maintaining a high level of confidentiality
- From a strategic planning and priority perspective, oversee the Provost's calendar, provide briefing notes as necessary and ensure that the daily activities of the Provost properly reflect, reinforce, and complement the Provost's goals and priorities
- Foster strong and positive relations with all constituencies of the University

Advancement of Institutional Projects and Initiatives

- Work to support the Provost, identifying priorities on an annual basis, reporting on achievements and successes, and keeping the focus of the Provost's Office on key priorities.
- Lead projects and tasks as directed by the Provost, working collaboratively with the senior leaders to support and advance the execution of priorities.
- Anticipate potential points of resistance in the implementation of the Provost's priorities and projects and works to proactively resolve associated issues or areas of concern.
- Acts as the Provost's key support on specific institutional issues including personnel matters, and other sensitive and complex issues of institutional importance.
- Responsible for the activities/deliverables of the Provost in the formal proceedings of Senate and the Board of Governors and their committees, including preparing and overseeing written documentation for items presented by the Provost, preparing briefing notes, reviewing agenda packages and related documentation, and providing advice and assistance to the Secretariat.
- Employs expert level Project Management approaches, also ensuring that equity and anti-racism lenses are integrated into the effective management of projects, including monitoring of information, logistics and progress, and reporting on project deliverables

Advising and Consulting

- Advise and assist the Provost in prioritizing key issues and enabling the Provost to advance their strategic and personal goals
- Provide critical analysis and advice on issues impacting the University, with accountability to the Provost
- Function as a strategic advisor to the Provost and senior leaders regarding key initiatives with accountability to the Provost, along with organizational and management issues
- Provide strategic advice and recommendations to the Provost on opportunities and concerns raised by members of the University community, and help to mobilize the community around specific objectives and priorities

Management of the Office of the Vice-President, Academic and Provost

- Responsible to ensure a professional, knowledgeable, and welcoming operation and work environment that fosters optimal co-ordination and encourages individual initiative and creativity
- Manage the Office of the VPAP, including oversight and management of financial resources and human resource activities in accordance with policies and guidelines
- Implement appropriate business processes, policies and monitors their effectiveness
- Work with staff to ensure success and encourage collaboration and networking across all faculties and support units
- Supervise office staff and oversee the operations of the Office, including the allocation of work, the provision of services, and the overall administration of the Office
- Act as a mentor to all staff, providing support, advice, and guidance as required
- Establish objectives, formally assess performance, and effectively manage any performance issues that may arise
- Accountable for record-keeping practices in the Office, creating and updating protocols as needed

Communications and Issues Management

- Work closely with Units/faculties reporting to the Provost, and with Units working on initiatives with accountability to the Provost to manage issues and areas of concern, offering guidance and advice, tracking issues and helping to manage response.
- Review executive communications created for the Provost, liaise with Communications to ensure that all communications from the Provost accurately reflect the voice and tone of the Provost and values of the University.
- Review incoming communications ensures appropriate responses on behalf of the Provost.
- Develops and maintains a strong cross-campus network of senior administration providing visibility to institutional and Provostial initiatives and leveraging the support of campus communications channels.

Internal Administrative and Governance Bodies

- Serve as support to the Provost for PVP.
- Participating member of Executive Council.
- Act as a lead support for Deans Council (plus), Info Group, and Council of Academic Leaders. Accountable for the preparation of the agendas, circulation of materials, provide advice and guidance and tracks issues that arise, arrange appropriate follow-up, and manage implementation of decisions.
- Participating member of the Executive Director Exchange Group which oversees planning and support for cross-portfolio initiatives, governance deliverables, contentious issues. Contributes on behalf of the Provost Office in the Privacy Advisory Committee and Legislative Compliance Committee.
- Facilitate a productive working relationship between the Provost's Office and other offices and units across the University and ensure a coordinated flow of decision-making between the Provost's Office and other offices, departments, and units with accountability to the Provost.
- Maintains current awareness and knowledge of University's administrative priorities, including decisions made at the Board of Governors/Committees and follow-up actions required or being taken because of these decisions.
- Acts as a liaison with stakeholders for strategic projects to ensure roles are clear and actions are executed effectively, with appropriate risk mitigation strategies in place.
- Supports the development and review of written materials/presentations for governance bodies for the Provost. Attends Senate, SEC, SLRP and Board as a support to the Provost.
- Lead support for Dean Nominating Committees, including lead support for the engagement and recruiting process, manage working relationships with external search consultants, and provide strategic advice and support to the Provost on all Dean searches Chaired by the Provost.
- Coordinate portfolio reviews for Units reporting to the Provost, as needed, including scoping activity with external consultants.
- Support the Provost in reviewing and finalizing the terms of direct report contracts and renewals, working closely with Human Resources and the Office of Legal & Immigration Services to ensure that appropriate advice is received and that any legal or procedural issues are addressed
- Support the Provost in undertaking the annual performance review process, preparing material and briefing notes, and assisting in the finalization of performance objectives and documentation, ensuring that performance objectives are aligned with the institutional priorities

**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

- Master's degree required and PhD preferred, or equivalent education and experience in related field
- Significant professional experience in support of a complex executive environment
- Comprehensive understanding of the administrative, academic and governance structures of the University
- Solid understanding of the external environment for universities within Canada and the Province (COU, UC, U15, Federal and Provincial Ministries, etc.)

Experience

- Minimum 10 years of progressively responsible experience in strategic planning, strategic management, project management and administration
- Minimum 5 years of professional experience providing strategic, administrative and management in the office of a C-level executive or a large post-secondary institution Applicants must have experience in roles of progressive responsibility and senior administrative experience.
- Demonstrated experience in supporting executive level planning, communications, and management
- Proven experience of working in an organization with a high-profile reputation.
- Ability to handle complex multiple assignments at the same time and with competing demands and deadlines while maintaining a calm demeanour is essential
- Advanced oral and written communications skills including the ability to write and edit quickly, accurately, and creatively
- Advanced influencing, negotiating, mediation, communication, and relationship management skills including an ability to influence, negotiate and build productive working relationships with key stakeholders, senior UW management and partners are essential to achieve the required outcomes
- Highly developed people management, relationship building and leadership skills with the demonstrated ability to develop and support a professional, service, and continuous improvement focused workplace culture
- Ability to form relationships with stakeholders across all levels to serve the mission of the University
- Ability to think and act strategically, creatively, and dynamically in a high-pressure work environment
- Ability to make difficult and complex decisions with good judgement and with acute sensitivity to the environment and reputation of the University
- Significant experience in writing, proofing, and editing material and of presenting proposals and plans to senior/board level executives
- Evidence of being a persuasive and dynamic leader with highly developed communication and interpersonal skills, who is comfortable with networking, influencing, and persuading at the highest level

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Must be able to quickly assimilate information, analyze data and be able to provide strategic advice, guidance and execute decisions and actions that the Provost's has directed.
- Ability to maintain the highest ethical standards.
- Extensive knowledge of the University's policies, procedures and operating requirements, and the academic culture on campus.
- Must be confident, organized, and an accomplished problem solver. Tact, judgment and diplomacy are essential.
- Advanced mediation, communication and relationship management skills including an ability to influence, negotiate and build productive working relationships with key stakeholders, senior university management and external partners to achieve required outcomes.

- Outstanding oral and written communication skills including the ability to write and edit documents professionally and constructively and present ideas fluently and logically.
- Ability to identify opportunities and areas for improvement and initiate, lead and implement administrative and process reviews to achieve efficiency and service improvements.
- Outstanding problem-solving and issues management skills, with the ability to analyze problems and issues, suggest solutions and develop and implement appropriate strategies to manage contentious issues.
- Highly developed people management and leadership skills with the demonstrated ability to develop and support a professional, service-based and continuous improvement focused workplace culture.
- Ability to think and act strategically, creatively and dynamically in a high- pressure work environment.
- Ability to form relationships at senior levels of the University (Deans and Vice-Presidents) to serve the mission of the University.
- Ability to make difficult and complex decisions with good judgment and with acute sensitivity to the political environment and to the reputation of the Office of the VPAP.
- Ability to manage confidential and sensitive materials and situations with the utmost discretion.
- Thorough knowledge of the University, its policies, procedures and governance structures.
- Demonstrated understanding of human rights and equity issues; and ability to interpret and communicate human rights and equity concepts.

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** President and Vice-Presidents, Board and Senate members, Deans, and other Executive Council Members. Oversees staff within the Office of the Vice-President, Academic and Provost, and works closely with ASU leads and Deans reporting to the Vice- President Academic and Provost.
- **Level of Responsibility:** The position is responsible for leading the implementation and management of operational and strategic matters with accountability to the Provost.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** The Director Strategic Initiatives is expected to be self-directed, independently sourcing and analyzing internal and external information and data to support the mandate of the Office of the Vice-President Academic and Provost. Reports directly to the Provost. Significant level of responsibility and accountability to support the priorities of the Provost. Often manages highly confidential issues for the Provost. VPAP Office staff report directly to the ED, but the ED also works very closely with all of the Provost's direct reports. The Executive Director has primary responsibility for the operating budget of the Office of the Vice-President, Academic and Provost. Activity has to be creatively managed by the ED as generally each initiative or issue is new and unusual. Very little of the work is routine in nature. The ED takes decisions related to operational, human resources, financial and communication activities of the Office of the Vice-President, Academic and Provost. The ED provides guidance and problem-solving support to the Provost and leaders reporting to the Provost on a wide range of issues involving strategic and operational matters, which may include interpretation of policies and procedures, or which may require decisions for which no known precedent exists. The EC is responsible for determining what issues require the Provost's time and what issues can be resolved by others. The ED manages initiatives on behalf of the Provost and advises the Provost and other senior leaders on matters related to programs, issues, and policy with accountability to the Provost. The ED is required to execute decisions and actions directed by the Provost, and serve as a liaison with campus leaders and community members.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands**: This position requires outstanding customer service, sound judgment, a strong work ethic, calm demeanor, ability to work under very challenging time constraints, constant interruptions and competing priorities. Ability to connect issues and resolve matters with speed, diplomacy and accuracy. Extended time at a computer

- **Working Environment:** Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a manager level position, exposed to stress and pressure associated with responsibilities.