Job Description

Job Title:	Director, Strategy and Operations
Department:	Office of the Vice-President Finance and Administration
Reports To:	Vice-President Administration and Finance
Jobs Reporting:	Administrative Officer; Manager, Project Management; Change Management Advisor
Salary Grade:	USG
Effective Date:	February 2024

Primary Purpose

Reporting to the Vice-President Administration and Finance (VPAF), the Director, Strategy and Operations (DSO) is a strategic leader and advisor, ensuring that each unit within the portfolio supports the effective and impactful delivery of the VPAF's strategic goals. The DSO is responsible for overall business operations, administrative infrastructure, and the advancement of strategic and operational initiatives within the Office of the VPAF. The DSO coordinates and communicates between the various units within the portfolio; monitors, manages, measures, and tracks the execution of various projects, change management initiatives and progress towards goals; coordinates governance and steering structures including internal administrative bodies, Board of Governors, Senate and works with the AVPs to implement portfolio objectives. Supports the work of the VPAF Senior Leadership Team (SLT) (Finance, Facilities, HR, IST, Safety, Special Constable Service, Sustainability, Risk Management & Compliance, Real Estate & R+T Park), Faculty Executive Officers, Deans, and President/Vice-President (PVP) by identifying opportunities to enhance systems/processes/programs that support the priorities of the VPAF portfolio. The DSO ensures effective communications and decision-making between and within the Office of the VPAF and other executive offices, and constituencies and is accountable for the development of the VPAF's reporting on achievements, priorities, initiatives, and actions. The DSO also provides administration leadership in the areas of communications, and issues management.

Key Accountabilities

Strategic Initiatives and Administrative Leadership

- Supports the process of all senior leadership hires, including development of mandate letters and facilitation of performance reviews
- Develops and manages a workplan for the Office of the VPAF, and coordinates workplans for the VPAF SLT
- Identifies, researches, and implements, in conjunction with other members of the VPAF SLT, strategic initiatives for advancing the key priorities of the Office of the VPAF
- Conducts background research, develops reports and provides advice on strategic priorities and objectives of the VPAF and, more generally, of the Office of the VPAF
- Gathers intelligence and maintains environmental scans for major initiatives and developments, both on campus and externally that are relevant to the VPAF's mandate
- Leads the multi-year workplans and detailed current year operating plan, including measurement and evaluation of the workplan initiatives
- Maintain a strong knowledge base of current UW programs, projects, procedures, policies, resources and services; develop strong relationships with senior leadership to effectively liaise, anticipate issues and opportunities and identify trends
- Supports the VPAF and the VPAF portfolio leads as required.

Project and Change Management

- Develops and implements project management strategies and change management solutions that align with the overall goals and objectives of the Office of the VPAF
- Creates and oversees project plans, change management initiatives, and revises as appropriate over time to meet the changing needs and requirements of various institutional and portfolio initiatives
- Liaises with and coordinates actions with stakeholders for strategic projects to ensure role are clear and actions are executed effectively
- Monitors assigned project schedules and timelines and is accountable for timely completion of objectives and key results
- Identifies and manages risks associated with projects and change management initiatives that might jeopardize the success of the outcomes
- Employs project management approaches and change management solutions to ensure that equity approaches are integrated into the effective management of projects including monitoring of information, logistics and reporting on project deliverables

Relationship Management

- Develops and fosters effective liaising with key stakeholders to successfully achieve institutional and portfolio initiatives
- Develops positive relationships within and among VP portfolios and staff, and identifies opportunities for internal collaboration and consultation with faculties, colleges, institutes, and departments
- Develops and maintains a strong cross-campus network of senior administration providing visibility to institutional and portfolio initiatives and leveraging the support of campus communications channels
- Ensures effective communications and decision-making between the VPAF SLT and constituencies (Board of Governors, Senate, Deans, PVP, AVPs, Directors)
- Works on behalf of the Office of the VPAF to develop or follow up on governance matters for the Board/Senate/Committees and internal administrative committees and councils
- Oversees both the timetable and preparation of key documents required for Board/Senate and committee meetings for the VPAF
- Works collaboratively and consultatively with the senior administrative leaders across the PVP portfolios in support of a wide variety of activities and projects

Issues Management

- On behalf of the VPAF, triage issues of reputational significance to the University and work with the various SLTs or them designates including communications and government relations to manage issues of a broad nature proactively and reactively
- Evaluates emerging and longer-term opportunities and threats to achievement of the VPAF's priorities and critical success factors of the University
- Identifies a portfolio which will have carriage of issues, tracks the progress of the issue at critical points, disseminates and coordinates information regarding the issue, ensuring that progress is made, and updates provided to the VPAF
- Monitors campus activities and briefs the VPAF as needed, with attention to implications from the standpoint of both internal and external stakeholders
- Communicates on the VPAF's behalf with various members of the PVP, Deans, VPAF SLTs as required
- Responds to and meets with broad range of internal and external individuals and groups, frequently related to matters of immediate concern, and coordinates responses, solutions, and follow-up with the VPAF and other appropriate university officers

Office of VPAF Administration

- As an administrative leader in the unit, the DSO will monitor administrative operations to identify opportunities for improvement and implement business processes to support the management of financial, operational, and legal risk to the unit, while developing and implementing strategic administrative plans, and manage the allocation of financial, human and physical resources
- The DSO will create and present reports regarding the Office of the VPAF challenges and successes and develop recommendations for administrative strategies to enable the unit to achieve its goals
- Oversees high-level communications or briefing materials for dissemination to target audiences in collaboration with other units in the University, as appropriate, to advance the profile and reputation of the University's finance and administration portfolio
- Provides leadership, writing and advice on responses to inquiries from internal and external stakeholders
- Reviews key communications with respect to issues to be published over the VPAF's signature
- Monitors budget development and financial reporting in VPAF units

Staff Management

- Directs the work, initiatives and priorities that strategically aligns decisions with the Office of the VPAF's vision, values, and goals
- Fosters the development of others, contributes to the creation of a healthy work environment, encourages the open exchange of information and ideas, and facilitates cooperation and collaboration
- Manages performance through both formal (Annual Performance Planning and Review process) and informal methods such as providing regular feedback, coaching and one-on-one meetings
- Instills a high-performance culture and respectful work environment that attracts, retains, and inspires the best

**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

- Post-graduate degree in a related field (e.g. Public Policy, Business, Administration) or equivalent combination of training and experience

Experience

- Minimum ten (10) years' in progressively responsible roles in post-secondary leadership with an emphasis in strategic planning, execution, communications, and governance reporting
- 7 years' experience supporting a team to implement new operational and administrative procedures
- At least three years' experience of managing staff and leading diverse teams
- Experience in strategic planning, implementation, and operationalization
- Proven track record of providing strategic advice to advance the goals and objectives of an organization, taking account of priorities, mandates, and stakeholder needs and aspirations
- Proven experience in collating and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data and information to draft reports, provide briefing materials and recommendations to a range of audiences including senior leadership

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Extensive knowledge of the University's policies, procedures and operating guidelines and the academic culture on campus is an asset
- Must be confident, organized and an accomplished problem solver
- Ability to handle complex multiple assignments at the same time and with competing demands and deadlines while maintain a calm demeanor 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 to build productive working relationships with key stakeholders, senior UW management and partners are essential to achieve the required outcomes
- Highly developed people management, and leadership skills with the demonstrated ability to develop and support a professional, service, and continuous improvement focused workplace culture
- Ability to make difficult and complex decisions with good judgement and with acute sensitivity to the environment and reputation of the University
- Openness to recognize when change is necessary, and to develop, implement and lead effective change management strategies
- Ability to collaborate across internal and external boundaries to meet common objectives, improve outcomes and support work beyond one's own unit
- Ability to manage confidential and sensitive materials and situations with the utmost discretion
- Experience planning for and managing interrelated, complex projects and coordinating and collaborating with cross-functional team members to deliver quality results within the project deadlines
- Advanced computer skills in Microsoft Office Suite

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Broadly based, often at a very senior level, both within and external to the University
- **Level of Responsibility:** Reports directly to the VPAF and has a significant level of responsibility and accountability to support the priorities of the VPAF and the vision of the University's finance and administration portfolios. High-level oversight and organizational responsibility for discussions and events; integral involvement in strategizing on issues of utmost importance to the Institution. More generally, contributing in a professional and timely manner to the management of a multitude of issues in a fast-paced, multifaceted environment. Often manages highly confidential issues for the VPAF. Required to act on behalf of the VPAF and serve as a liaison with campus leaders, internal and external community members
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Must be capable of making decisions independently and knowing when to escalate matters to the VPAF or one of the VPAF SLT, and of contributing positively and creatively to discussions around strategic decision to be made by the VPAF. Decisions with respect to allocation of VPAF's time as well as determining what issues require the VPAF's time and what issues can be resolved by others. Makes decisions regarding the external and internal messaging and communications being delivered from the Office of the VPAF.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands**: Minimal, typical for an administrative position in an office environment. Strain from focused visual concentration or focused listening for periods of time. Working at a keyboard daily for several hours
- **Working Environment:** Regular working hours with some evening/weekend work as required in emergency situations or in peak periods**.** Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a position exposed to stress and pressure associated with conditions typical of a C-level office