

## Job Description

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| <b>Job Title:</b>      | Research Analyst                                  |
| <b>Department:</b>     | Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association (WUSA) |
| <b>Reports To:</b>     | Manager, Advocacy and Stakeholder Relations       |
| <b>Jobs Reporting:</b> | Research Coordinator                              |
| <b>Salary Grade:</b>   | USG 9   |
| <b>Effective Date:</b> | November 2022                                     |

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### **Primary Purpose**

Representing over 33,000 students, the Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association advocates for the needs of its members to make their end-to-end post-secondary career a meaningful and positive experience through intentional connections. As WUSA continues to expand its scope for supporting students, the importance of making decisions and policy stances need to be through intentional and quality research. The Research Analyst is responsible for leading strategy and planning for all research activities to assist the organization's Board and senior leaders in evidence-based decision making. The Research Analyst is accountable to the Manager, Advocacy and Stakeholder Relations for leading research projects and supporting data analysis which inform operational and strategic evidence-based planning, evaluation, assessment, communications, and decision-making for the purpose of assuring the department's mission and vision attainment.

### **Key Accountabilities**

#### **Supporting the development and implementation of WUSA's Long Range Plan**

- Helps to produce planning documents and facilitates the presentation of data that forms the foundation for monitoring plan outcomes.
- Supports and advises WUSA's leadership team with respect to any new or evolving research strategies, opportunities, and results.
- Develops and employs metrics for assessing the effectiveness of activities that support WUSA's Strategic Plan.
- Evaluates available data for strategic analysis purposes with the goal of identifying institutional strengths and potential, trends in student association research, and emerging areas that might require support.
- Creating research processes and developing strategic termly and yearly research plans based on organizational priorities.

#### **Project conceptualization, implementation, and analysis**

- Develop and maintain a sustainable and accessible repository of information regarding WUSA's research strengths, outputs, impacts, advocacy activity and commercialization activity
- Gather and maintain data on the participation of underrepresented groups within WUSA's research community, in support of the organization's strategic EDI objectives.
- Manage WUSA's data collection with the assistance from IT department to adhere to ethical practice in research
- Investigate, recommend, and implement innovative, enhanced methods of reporting research impact.
- Manage the Representative Survey Platform (recruitment and sampling, overall strategy)

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- Conceptualize and design sophisticated research projects based on organizational strategic priorities
- Carry out quantitative and qualitative research projects through interviews, surveys, focus groups, literature reviews

### **Synthesizing data and developing research insights for the purposes of effective communication**

- Uses research data and findings from surveys, interviews, literature reviews, and other primary sources for the purpose of informing operational effectiveness.
- Develops reports and relevant data visualizations (including dashboards, graphs, presentations, and web applications) and conveys in an easily understandable manner to inform evidence-based decision-making at WUSA.
- Makes formal and informal presentations to individuals and groups, both internally and externally, to generate awareness of research results and to inform practice and decision-making.
- Effectively communicates any limitations of the data to avoid misinterpretation of the results.
- Responsible for provincial and federal research to inform briefs, policies, and prep for meetings
- Develops recommendations from research results
- Works closely with Stakeholder Relationships Officer and Advocacy and Stakeholder Relations Manager to communicate research with government leaders and campus partners

### **Collaboration and Consultation**

- Serves as a resource for on-campus groups with respect to acquiring and interpreting information about the research impact of specific disciplines.
- Contributes to relevant committees and groups and represents at university-wide meetings (as an ongoing need basis), proactively providing expertise and insight with respect to research data analysis issues.
- Collaborates with IAP, Office of Research, and other departments to further analyze data from large student population surveys (e.g. Town and Gown, OUSA) and develop complementary inquiries that focus on specific needs and services.

### **Supervision**

- Assists with coaching, and training for research coordinator's development to assure growth.
- Hires and supervises permanent staff and contract staff as needed.
- Provides staff with training and education opportunities in survey research.
- Delivers regular updates to manager about progress on efforts.

*\*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**

- Bachelors degree; research-based or other relevant masters, preferred from a social science field, emphasizing research and evaluation and/or assessment, such as psychology, social psychology, sociology, higher education, student affairs or related degree.

### **Experience**

- At least 4 years of experience in a data analysis and/or research role, preferably in an educational setting.

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- Working knowledge of social science research methods, and their application
- Quantitative and qualitative data analysis and interpretation skills
- Proven ability to translate statistical concepts into simple language or visual schematics to facilitate understanding by colleagues and high-level decision makers
- Demonstrated experience working with large and complex data sets.
- Excellent written and verbal skills for procedural documentation and demonstrated experience with report writing
- Knowledge of emerging trends in university student populations.
- Demonstrated ability to thrive in and contribute to an integrated and collaborative team environment and to apply a positive team approach to working with colleagues
- Strong organizational and interpersonal skills coupled with the ability to work independently, handle multiple tasks, meet deadlines, and excel in a fast-paced environment characterized by changing priorities
- Essential: ability to take initiative, create opportunities, develop effective partnerships, and motivate others

### **Knowledge/Skills/Abilities**

- Data management, manipulation, interpretation, and analysis skills.
- Excellent communication skills: ability to converse articulately with university administrators and other campus stakeholders
- Develops, writes, and follows appropriate process documentation
- Project management, leading teams and delegating to achieve results through teamwork.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team; ability to take initiative and be proactive
- Advanced: MS Word, Excel, Qualtrics
- Proficient: PowerPoint, Power BI or equivalent
- Other: Relational Databases, SharePoint/Office 365 Suite

### **Nature and Scope**

- **Contacts:** Internally to WUSA, communicates with all employees in all groups and departments and at all levels in order to execute and integrate a variety of research strategies and to educate and inform stakeholders about the results. Externally to UWaterloo and some government relations, communicates with a wide variety of audiences to deal with, influence, and motivate others to provide the research information.
- **Level of Responsibility:** This position is responsible for all of the accountabilities listed above.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** Continually makes decisions about the most effective methods of investigating pertinent success factors and of obtaining and communicating results that meet the needs of WUSA's strategic decision makers, including the development and execution of all research instruments, the reporting of results in an easily accessible format, personal interactions and collaboration, work flow, consultation, and other key accountabilities; determines the optimum course of action to solve problems and to exert a positive influence on other stakeholders.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** The responsibilities of this role occur primarily in an office setting and require frequent use of a computer. Some infrequent duties require moderate physical demands resulting in slight fatigue, strain, or risk of injury.
- **Working Environment:** Regular working hours, some evening/weekend work required. Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions. The role involves some exposure to stress as a result of pressures associated with handling multiple ongoing demands, time management, and priority setting. There may be unusual hours or schedules, multiple and/or tight deadlines beyond one's control and constant interruptions (i.e. phone calls, emails and unplanned but urgent requests) that are impacted

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by varying student volumes at different times of year resulting from working within a student residential environment.