

Job Description

Job Title:	Director, Internal and Leadership Communications
Department:	University Communications
Reports To:	Associate Vice-President, Communications
Jobs Reporting:	Associate Director, Internal and Leadership Communications Manager, Internal and Leadership Communications
Salary Grade:	USG 14
Effective Date:	December 2022

Primary Purpose

The Director, Internal and Leadership Communications is responsible for developing breakthrough strategic internal communications plans directly in support of the Vice-President, Academic & Provost, and building relationships with senior stakeholders to help them maximise the impact and alignment of key messaging to executive and internal audiences.

Under the direction of the Associate Vice-President, Communications, the role leads to the University's internal and leadership communications strategy to foster campus engagement and visionary leadership by creating consistent, high-quality materials that reinforce University strategic plans and objectives as well as generating a sense of shared identity across campus groups.

The Director exercises an organization-wide leadership role by providing counsel, stakeholder relationship management expertise, and politically astute strategic communications support to the Vice-President, Academic and Provost and senior leadership. They lead the internal and leadership communications team covering communications planning and delivery, employee and student engagement and channel management.

The role is responsible for overseeing, developing and delivering a consistent, measurable, strategic and creative internal communications and engagement plans for key internal audience groups and for positioning senior administrators at the University as institutional and sector thought leaders. These approaches will be built on past successes and should introduce new creative ways that will begin to position University of Waterloo internal and leadership communications as a sector leader.

The role covers a broad set of responsibilities requiring expertise in employee communications, strategic storytelling, speechwriting, marketing and working knowledge of website best practices, social media and digital marketing, as well as communications design, development and execution.

Key Accountabilities

Strategy and implementation

- Lead the development of multi-year pan-University Internal Communications Strategy.
- Develop an annual editorial plan for University leadership communications, speeches and engagements to assist in the positioning of University senior administrators as sector thought leaders and internal champions.

- Oversee and contribute to the development of messaging, speeches, reports, presentations and other materials for a variety of University leaders and specifically those within the Vice-President, Academic and Provost portfolio.
- Demonstrate a robust knowledge of internal communications best practice. Draw on this expertise to provide recommendations to University senior leaders on communicating the business/change agenda.
- Ensure the organisational infrastructure (tools, channels and processes) is in place to deliver high-quality and creative internal communications.
- Overall accountability and publisher responsibility for University-wide internal communications channels while investigating new and agile channels – including but not exclusively social media and digital – to improve the service delivered by internal and leadership communication.
- Support the Emergency Communications Team in the delivery of the Emergency Response Plan as required and develop/manage plans for handling internal communications at times of crisis; advise senior leaders on all aspects of internal communications at such times; create and deliver any necessary internal communications and engagement plans following a crisis.
- Lead the production of complex multi-media communications campaigns.
- Recommend and initiate new channels for internal and leadership communications.
- Collaborate with campus senior administrators in the delivery of internal communications.
- Coach leaders on their communications style and on how to engage and build dialogue with campus.
- Ensure consistency of voice and message across all internal channels.
- Manage budget and finance processes for the Internal and Leadership Communication team in line with University practices.

Insights and understanding

- Anticipate economic, social, political, environmental and technological developments to keep activity relevant and targeted.
- Bring together views and perspectives of stakeholders to gain a wider picture of the landscape surrounding activities and policies.
- Define and develop a strong understanding of different internal audiences. Use this knowledge to ensure the tone, language and format of internal communications is easily accessible to and read by a range of campus groups.
- Draw on organisational insights to advise leaders on targeted employee communications strategies and actions to improve campus engagement.
- Develop tools and vehicles to generate sources of data to inform internal and leadership communications.
- Implements changes to messaging or communication approach based on insights gathered from a range of sources.

Measurement and impact

- Develop and use a range of data sources to advise leaders on the overall internal communications approach.
- Establish metrics to assess the effectiveness of internal communications and act on feedback to ensure communication is timely, relevant and meets the needs of the University and internal audiences.

Leading or managing people

- Supervise and lead the internal and leadership communications team to deliver high level, impactful internal and leadership communications.
- Ensure the internal and leadership communications team meets deadlines and targets for effective delivery of communication channels.

Job Description



- Provide effective leadership to leaders and communicators on campus to realize internal and leadership communications campaigns and plans.
- Responsible for fostering and maintaining a work environment that encourages, recognizes and rewards creativity, innovation, excellence and personal accountability.
- Has a direct and positive impact on the Office of the Vice-President, University Relations department and all lines of communication activity.

**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

- University degree in English, political science, public relations, marketing or a communications-related field.

Experience

- 10+ years knowledge, understanding and experience of internal communications and engagement and especially its application to large-scale organizational change and continuous improvement programs in a complex, fast-moving and diverse corporate environment is essential.
- Several years of progressive experience performing duties related to the Key Accountabilities listed above.
- Proven experience of working in an organization with a high-profile reputation, often in the media spotlight.
- Experience of working with senior executives and leaders and demonstrating advanced influencing and negotiation skills.
- Demonstrable track record of leading, line managing and developing teams of professional staff and of balancing conflicting and pressing demands.
- Experience of developing organizational objectives into material for targeted communications and engagement activities across a range of different channels and media, including face-to-face engagement.
- Experience of working with people with no direct or negative experience of 'professional' communications and ensuring their expectations/input/requirements from communication are effectively aligned and managed.
- Significant experience in writing, proofing and editing material (including speeches), and of presenting proposals and plans to senior/board level executives.
- Evidence of being a persuasive and dynamic leader with highly developed communications and interpersonal skills, who is outgoing and comfortable with networking, influencing and persuading at the highest level.
- Evidence of a highly collaborative style and an ability to react quickly to changing circumstances

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Thorough command of the technology associated with social media and the digital world (from the evolving social web to mobile tools and trends), sophisticated client service and digital communications skills, and high level of energy and passion with respect to this area of rapid change and innovation.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Excellent editing skills.

Job Description



- 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.
- The role covers a broad set of responsibilities requiring expertise in strategic storytelling, communications, marketing and working knowledge of website best practices, digital and content marketing, as well as communications design, development and execution.
- Strong organizational skills coupled with proven ability to effectively document work, handle multiple tasks, and excel in a fast-paced environment characterized by changing priorities and short deadlines.
- Flexibility to adapt to unexpected and time sensitive demands.
- Highly developed people management and leadership skills with demonstrated ability to develop and support a professional, service and continuous improvement focused workplace culture.
- Ability to think and act strategically, creatively and dynamically in a high-pressure work environment.
- Ability to manage confidential and sensitive materials and situations with the utmost discretion.
- Ability to deal professionally with tension and conflicts.
- Must be confident, organized and an accomplished problem solver.
- Ability to make decisions with good judgment and with acute sensitivity to the political environment and to the reputation of the University.

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** President, Provost, Vice-Presidents, deans and other senior administrators.
- **Level of Responsibility:** This position is responsible for direct supervision of others. Accountable to University Relations leadership and other executive leaders in the University. Manage budget and finance processes for the internal and leadership communications team in line with University practices.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** This position will routinely be involved in problem solving issues that affect the reputation of the University in conjunction with leaders in University Relations and across the senior administration. Responsible for making recommendations of strategy for internal and leadership communications and on wider reputation management issues.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Minimal demands typical of a position operating within an office environment; periods of extensive sitting and concentrated use of visual senses. 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.
- **Working Environment:** Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a position exposed to stress and pressure associated with management level responsibilities. Responsiveness is critical to the role. Work outside the normal operating hours of the University can be expected in this role.