

Job Description

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| Job Title: | Graduate Program Manager |
| Department: | Recreation and Leisure Studies |
| Reports To: | Administrative Officer |
| Jobs Reporting: | None |
| Salary Grade: | USG 7 |
| Effective Date: | July 2023 |

Primary Purpose

The Graduate Program Manager provides executive leadership for all graduate programs in the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies (RLS) and is responsible for the smooth and efficient operation of the graduate programs in a manner consistent with the department's goals and objectives. The scope of the position encompasses operational leadership and program management, graduate academic counselling and advising, graduate calendar changes, scholarships and funding, student communications, and serves as the primary point of contact for prospective and current graduate students during their studies. This position reports to the Administrative Officer and is also accountable to the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies (ACG).

This position ensures consistency and continuity of service as academic leadership changes every 3-6 years. The Manager serves as the communication and record keeping center for all RLS graduate program operations. The incumbent is expected to develop, implement, and maintain processes relating to graduate academic policies and procedures consistent with UW and faculty policies, procedures and practices and is the central resource for interpretation of UW policies and procedures related to graduate studies.

The position also provides support to the Undergraduate Studies committee and is lead coordinator for all departmental events.

Key Accountabilities

Graduate program planning and administration

- Provide strategic counsel and direction to the ACG to ensure full operation of the RLS graduate programs in compliance with UW policies and procedures.
- Provide consistent and accurate academic advice on UW policies and procedures related to graduate studies to students, faculty, and staff.
- Active member of the RLS Graduate Studies Committee as a consultant and resource, providing strong leadership and knowledgeable guidance for agenda items, optimizing the effective delivery of the RLS graduate programs, and facilitating the implementation of new programs and processes compliant with UW policies and procedures. Maintains records and minutes of meetings and motions. Monitor motions through all levels of approvals. Gather background information as needed to support decision-making and graduate program initiatives.
- Active member of the Faculty of Health Graduate Studies Committee (Associate Dean Graduate Studies, Associate Chairs/Directors Graduate, and other department/school graduate program managers/coordinators) responsible for review, implementation and optimization of the business practices related to graduate studies including recruitment, outreach, engagement, and retention of students.

- Responsible for ensuring the UW Graduate Calendar reflects accurate information on department programs, plans and courses, coordinating changes with the ACG, Faculty of Health office and other academic units as needed.
- Manage content on departmental graduate web pages and Graduate Studies Learn group, including all departmental graduate forms, ensuring they are regularly reviewed and updated. Leads content management for GARLS website, coordinating with student content maintainers when available.
- Responsible for the structure and content of the departmental graduate student database.
- Responsible for ongoing development and evaluation of appropriate procedures for managing admissions, enrollment, program/plan changes, grade submissions, milestone completions, graduate student annual reports, degree completion approvals, and other processes related to graduate students and program activities.
- Provide strategic input to Department executive for course offerings, course scheduling considerations, enrolment projections, enrolment anomalies, and any other statistical reporting and general advice as needed for senior department administrators and relevant committees.
- Coordinate with the Administrative Officer all requests for adjunct appointments, cross-appointments, and ADDS status for graduate student supervision and committees.
- Serve as graduate program representative as needed on special projects and committees.
- Develop, nurture and maintain partnerships with various academic support units and student groups and programs across campus to support student transition and success.

Academic and Advising Services

- Responsible for the organization, implementation, and management of all academic services for all RLS graduate students from applicant inquiries through program completion.
- Lead graduate student admissions processes including reviewing applications for completeness, ensuring minimum admission requirements are met, coordinating Graduate Committee and supervisor review, completing offer recommendations and offer letter statements for approval by Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs. Determine entrance scholarship offers with Associate Chair for Graduate Studies.
- Responsible for processing and record keeping of all graduate student funding to ensure funding commitments are met.
- Advise prospective grad students on admission requirements, application procedures, alternative programs or preparation required to meet eligibility requirements.
- Advise graduate students regarding course selection, exam regulations, academic deadlines, program status, deadlines and/or thesis submission and defenses.
- Advise on and assist with academic appeals.
- Leadership of TA/RA assignments each term, surveying students and instructors on needs and preferences then matching students to positions based on funding commitments owed and best fit with course needs following Policy 30 requirements. Prepare TA/RA letters of appointment and agreements, submit GEA and GRS awards, and complete student hiring processes on Workday. Monitor scholarship acceptances and ensure department matching funds are provided through GTA/GRA/GRS funding.
- Responsible for the coordination and support of all graduate scholarship applications for tri-council and other competitive awards (SSHRC, OGS, QEII). This includes notifying students of scholarship and award opportunities as applicable within and external to the University/Faculty/Department, advising on application requirements, and organizing and administering transcript requests, average calculations, application review and rankings.
- Responsible for the review of academic standing, course requirements, and milestone completions for student progress toward degree completion.

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- Coordinate MA proposal and thesis defenses, PhD comprehensive examinations, and PhD proposal defenses according to departmental and university procedures.
- Full approval authority for official graduate student documents as required for thesis submission and degree completion processes.

Event management

- Plan, manage, and implement all department-initiated annual and student engagement events. Annual events include the Shaw-Mannell Award Lecture, Sport Management Case Competition, Therapeutic Recreation Awareness Month, and Graduate Leisure Research Symposium. Other events may include guest lectures by alumni, visiting scholars, or community partners, or other one-time events.
- Coordinate with Faculty of Health staff as needed for event management, such as for Lyle S. Hallman Professorial Endowment funded lectures.
- Recruit volunteers as needed for each event.
- Manage department visitor experiences, including transportation, accommodation, parking, and hospitality arrangements are made in accordance with University of Waterloo and Faculty of Health policies and procedures. Assist visitors with expense reimbursement claims as needed.
- Manage PCard expenses to support events and submit monthly reconciliation statements for approval.
- Create a summary report for each event for future reference.

Course support

- Liaison with Bookstore for textbook and courseware orders, reserve readings through Library; ordering desk copies from publishers
- Collect course outlines for all undergraduate and graduate courses each term for the department's archive storage.
- Collect course assignments and exams for required minimum storage. Manage confidential shredding disposal after the storage period.

Staff support and collaborations

- Provide backup support for Administrative Officer absences as needed, including department meeting minutes and other processes as deemed appropriate.
- Collaborate with Community Outreach and Communications Specialist to support joint events that have an experiential learning or classroom component. Provide content for social media and other communications for event promotions.
- Attend RLS department meetings.

**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, preferably in Recreation and Leisure Studies, or equivalent education and/or work experience. Master's degree an asset.

Experience

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- Demonstrated experience in graduate student program management, including experience in and commitment to providing academic support and counselling for graduate education and training.
- Demonstrated experience mentoring students for success.
- Excellent knowledge of and demonstrated experience interpreting University of Waterloo policies and procedures as they relate to graduate programs.
- Experience in dealing with conflict resolution and the ability to proactively anticipate potential challenges and take the initiative to rectify situations.
- Experience with planning, managing, and implementing special events.

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Ability to work both independently and collaboratively, develop and maintain effective working relationships.
- Excellent leadership/mentorship and interpersonal skills to present as a friendly, professional advocate for the department and its activities.
- Proven listening, oral and written communication skills to foster good working relationships with a variety of clients including students, staff, and faculty.
- Excellent knowledge of university policies and procedures related to graduate academic programs.
- In-depth and current knowledge of the RLS graduate curriculum, academic requirements, policies, procedures, and best practices
- Superior analytical and problem-solving skills
- Proven ability to communicate with graduate students, including distressed and academically struggling students, and the ability to deal professionally and discreetly with confidential information.
- Excellent organizational skills and strong attention to detail to independently manage multiple priorities in a high-pressure environment with changing deadlines and large volumes while maintaining detailed record documentation.
- Excellent computer skills including working knowledge of Microsoft Office 365, Sharepoint, Adobe Acrobat fillable forms, virtual meeting platforms such as Teams, Zoom, and UW specific programs such as OnBase, Learn, Quest and WCMS web content management is an asset.
- Ability to conduct background research and information-gathering, including surveys and focus groups, data analysis, and prepare summary reports for committee decision-making.

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** This position deals professionally with students, faculty, and staff within the department, the Faculty of Health Associate Dean Graduate Studies, the Administrator Faculty Graduate Studies, the Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs Office, and other academic and academic support units across campus. External contacts include prospective students, alumni, and occasionally contacts at other universities or community organizations as part of information gathering for committee decision-making.
- **Level of Responsibility:** This position is expected to operate within established policies and procedures and to demonstrate sound judgment and consultative skills to maintain a collaborative environment. The position works closely with the Associate Chair for graduate programs, Community Outreach and Communications Specialist, and Administrative Officer. There are opportunities for independent work and opportunities to show initiative within the collaborative team environment.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** This position is expected to use sound judgment to make independent decisions based on existing policies and procedures. Extraordinary issues are dealt with in consultation with the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies with recommendations for solution or action. The individual will have autonomy for managing their multiple priorities.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** There is a frequent need to give close attention to written and verbal detailed information while maintaining thoroughness and accuracy. The incumbent requires the

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ability to prioritize multiple simultaneous demands with tight deadlines. Minimal psychological risk may result from exposure to disagreeable situations/conversations or the requirement to enforce a policy. Some interactions may be with clients who are demanding, emotional, angry, or may have mental health conditions. Some physical effort required for set-up and take-down of event locations including portable banners and other event-related tools, and rearranging tables and chairs.

- **Working Environment:** The role is primarily office based with regular working hours, however there will be extended and/or non-traditional hours to set up, oversee, and take down events. These requirements are typically planned in advance.