

Job Description

Job Title:	Director, Strategic Initiatives
Department:	Office of Advancement
Reports To:	Vice-President, Advancement
Jobs Reporting:	Administrative Manager Events & Special Projects Officer
Salary Grade:	USG 13
Effective Date:	July 2023

Primary Purpose

Reporting to the Vice-President, Advancement (VPA), the Director, Strategic Initiatives (DSI) ensures that each unit within the portfolio supports the effective and impactful delivery of the VPA's strategic goals. The Director is responsible for overall business operations, administrative infrastructure and the advancement of strategic and operational initiatives within the office of the VPA. The Director provides strategic and operational advice to the VPA, manages the staff, business functions and priorities for the VP's Office by undertaking key process, communication, structure, core activities, and improvement-focused projects. This position provides leadership, project management and support on special projects and strategic initiatives to the Vice-President, Advancement and senior leadership team. The Director develops and implements short- and long-term plans and ensures effective delivery of service to high priority stakeholders internal and external to the University.

Key Accountabilities

Strategic Initiatives & Project Management

- Works closely with the Vice-President in the planning and implementation of key initiatives; recommending required focus areas and prioritization of objectives
- Conducts in-depth research and analysis in support of operational initiatives, ensuring active participation of and collaboration with key stakeholders including Advancement-wide leadership
- Provide advice, critical analysis and reporting to the Vice-President, senior administration and internal/external stakeholders on issues impacting the university's Advancement activities and the achievement of the VP's priorities
- Ensures that the Vice-President and team members are fully informed with regard to emerging issues of importance/sensitivity
- Undertakes special initiatives and projects as determined by the VP, , being sure to liaise and coordinate with stakeholders to ensure roles are clear and actions are executed effectively
- Monitors assigned project schedules and timelines and is accountable for timely completion of objectives and key results, while managing risks that may jeopardize success of the outcomes
- Collaborates with the VP's direct reports and decision makers for outcomes achievement with respect to the strategic mandate and goals of Advancement activity, identifying and tracking KPIs.
- Evaluates emerging and longer-term opportunities and threats to achievement of the VP's priorities and critical success factors for Advancement
- Supports the VP in the achievement of annual and campaign priorities including monitoring, tracking, and reporting on progress
- Supports the VP by overseeing the coordination of meetings and agendas, initiates annual plans and executive retreats, prepares or secures suitable materials to assist team deliberations

- Identifies areas of concern, tracks the progress of the issue at critical points, disseminates and coordinates information regarding the issue, ensuring that progress is made, and provides update to the Vice-President

Administrative Leadership

- Develops and manages a workplan for the VP's office .
- Monitors administrative operations to identify opportunities for improvement and implements business processes, while developing and implementing strategic administrative plans, and managing the allocation of financial, human and physical resources within the VPA's office
- Ensures the VP receives important policy documents, strategic reports, and prepares the same as required
- Attends meetings with or on behalf of the VP to ensure that appropriate follow-up occurs and that the VP is briefed on issues and outcomes
- Undertakes research and analysis to assist the VP with correspondence, reports, policy documents and presentations
- Oversees the development of meeting agendas for meetings initiated through the VP's office, collaborating with others on pre-reads and related materials as required
- Oversees the timetable and preparation of key documents required for PVP/Board/Senate and leadership committees
- Creates and executes project plans and revises as needed to meet the changing needs and requirements of the VPA's portfolio initiatives, always ensuring that roles are clear, and actions are executed effectively
- Plans, implements, and evaluates all projects against the strategic priorities of the VP
- Maintains, adjusting as required, all project timelines, milestones and deliverables using appropriate methodologies and techniques
- Develops mechanisms for tracking project progress and provides regular reports to stakeholders in a variety of mediums – i.e., presentations, concept papers, memos and email
- Develops, proposes, and manages budgets as required
- Ensures that the VP and team members are fully informed about emerging issues of importance/sensitivity
- Maintains oversight on administrative function within central Advancement team with an eye on creating efficient and effective admin processes

Communication

- Communicates on the VPAF's behalf with various members of the PVP, Deans and VP's direct reports as required
- Oversees key written communications to ensure that they accurately reflect the VP's priorities and can be executed in a time-sensitive manner
- In collaboration with the Director, Marketing & Communications, the DSI ensures the internal communications plan for Advancement allows for the successful implementation of the VP's priorities
- Work with Advancement leaders to incorporate vision, mission and values planning and execution into annual plans; identify other opportunities for inclusion
- Support and/ or lead in the collection, development and coordination of fundraising planning resources and materials as required
- Integrate unit level reports into university wide reports for VP as required
- Oversees records and information management within the Office of the
- Vice-President in accordance with University records management and retention policies, guidelines, and legislated requirements

Relationship Management

- Supports the work of the VP's senior leadership team by identifying linkages, emerging issues and opportunities between administrative portfolios and by making recommendations that enhance systems/ processes/ programs that support the priorities of the VP
- Maintains a strong knowledge base of current Advancement programs, policies, resources, and services, developing strong relationships with senior leadership to effectively liaise, anticipate issues and identify opportunities
- Supports the Associate Vice-Presidents on Advancement initiatives, providing project management support or advice as required
- Works collaboratively and consultatively with the senior administrative leaders across the President/Vice-President portfolios in support of a wide variety of activities and projects
- Fulfills a primary liaison role within the Office of the Vice-President, Advancement and is responsible for coordinating with internal stakeholders such as: Office of the President, University Relations, Provost, the Office of Research, Registrar's Office, Secretariat, Administration and Finance, and other campus partners
- Works closely and collaboratively with the Vice-President and direct reports in the development and implementation of strategic and fundraising goals of the Vice-President and Advancement units

Human Resources

- Supports the process of all senior leadership onboarding. Develops, processes, and coordinates in consultation with the Vice-President, the annual work plans, goals, and performance assessment process for all direct reports to the Vice-President
- Responsible for all aspects of human resource management, development and staff relations for the individuals reporting into this role, including hiring, managing performance, disciplining and/or terminating employment as required; assigning and directing work; monitoring and aligning activity levels; coaching, mentoring and providing training and growth opportunities.
- Responsible for the development of an annual work plan for the Office of the Vice-President, identifying and addressing issues to achieving the plan and measuring progress
- Engages with Human Resources on issues involved in the hiring and reviewing of the Vice-President's team, ensures appropriate monitoring and reporting is completed in regard to performance evaluation process

**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 or equivalent education or experience

Experience

- Considerable administrative experience (5-7 years) implementing innovative administrative processes with the ability to provide strategic, administrative, and operational management at a senior level in a large institution or corporation.
- Experience with process and project development with an eye to continuous improvement after implementation
- Ability to quickly assimilate information, analyze data and be able to provide advice, guidance and to make sound decisions

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- Proven experience providing communication and project management support and leadership in progressive roles
- Experience in fundraising or donor relations roles – drafting proposals, gift agreements and donor reports an asset
- Must demonstrate outstanding leadership and management skills and be an accomplished problem solver, demonstrating the ability to make independent decisions
- Proven experience in collating and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data and information in order to draft reports, provide briefing materials and recommendations to a range of audiences including senior leadership

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Must be confident, organized, and an accomplished problem solver. Tact, judgment, and diplomacy are essential.
- Ability to think and act strategically, creatively, and dynamically in a high-pressure work environment.
- Must be able to quickly assimilate information, analyze data and be able to provide strategic advice, guidance, and decisions on behalf of the Office of the Vice-President.
- Skilled at strategic thinking/planning and organization with strong analytical skills
- Highly developed people management and leadership skills with the demonstrated ability to develop and support a professional, service, and continuous improvement focused workplace culture.
- Strong project management skills and demonstrated ability to manage multiple varied matters, conflicting priorities, and competing deadlines utilizing outstanding organizational, analytical, and problem-solving skills, exceptional time-management skills, and meticulous attention to detail
- Verbal and written communication skills and an ability to clearly express ideas in an objective and discretionary manner
- Demonstrated competency and ability to take initiative, to work independently, and follow through on work assignments within tight timeframes
- Proven ability to build strong relationships and influence individuals at all levels of an organization, as well as external constituents.
- Collaborative team player comfortable executing and taking constructive input from multiple sources
- High ethical standards with a strong commitment to maintain confidentiality and treat sensitive information with discretion
- Reflect a positive attitude by engaging, listening, and seeking to understand the needs of all stakeholders
- Demonstrate flexibility and adapt readily and effectively to changing and urgent demands
- Strong technical aptitude and proficiency in a Microsoft Office Environment

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Internally – communicates with staff and senior leadership in Advancement and across campus to build constructive, collaborative, and strategic relationships that will move Advancement's goals forward. Must be able to influence and motivate others and to deal with matters important to the University. Externally, this position will have contact with donors, alumni, and suppliers.
- **Level of Responsibility:** Reports directly to the VPA and has a significant level of responsibility and accountability to support the priorities of the VPF and the Advancement portfolio. 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 VPA.

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- **Decision-Making Authority:** Works with confidential and sensitive issues on behalf of the VP. The role has a mix of defined, specialized, routine, and non-routine tasks and requires sound judgment, tact, and discretion in managing and fulfilling these responsibilities. Must be capable of making decisions independently and knowing when to escalate matters to the VPA or designate, and of contributing positively and creatively to discussions around strategic decisions to be made by the VPA. Supports the decisions regarding the internal messaging and communications being delivered from the VPA office.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Minimal demands typical of a position operating within an office environment. The position requires outstanding customer service, sound judgment, a strong work ethic, ability to work under challenging time constraints and competing priorities.
- **Working Environment:** Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of an administrative position exposed to stress and pressure associated with senior level responsibilities.