Job Description

Job Title:	Director, Student Decision and Policy Support
Department:	Associate Provost, Students
Reports To:	Associate Provost, Students
Jobs Reporting:	/
Salary Grade:	16
Effective Date:	October 2024

Primary Purpose

Reporting to the Associate Provost, Students the Director, Student Decision and Policy Support acts as a resource to University administration, advising on best practices, risk mitigation, and providing direction and support on cases, including complex cases that are student related. This role conceptualizes, researches, develops, and recommends policy options, including assisting with the development of new policies, procedures, and guidelines, to address emerging areas of concern. The Director, Student Decision and Policy Support uses their awareness of University and societal concerns and their expertise in policy interpretation, to ensure that University decision-makers are supported to make effective, appropriate decisions. This role acts as a central point of contact in coordinating the University's response to the emerging needs of students requiring complex care, including both academic and non-academic needs. To accomplish this, they will convene and lead meetings of working group(s) to manage and monitor the University's response as necessary.

Key Accountabilities

Advising Decision-Makers

- With a sound knowledge of University policies and procedures, as well as administrative law and the principles of natural justice, this position provides advice and/or step-by-step guidance to University decision-makers as requested, including the Associate Provost, Students, Deans, Associate Deans, Department Chairs and Directors and other delegated University decision-makers on policy-based and quasi-judicial decisions related to student conduct.
- Consider arising issues on cases, including complex cases, jurisdictional issues, simultaneous processes, external influences, confidentiality, and the sharing of information as well as advise on procedural options with a mind to developing coordinated and consistent approaches for future cases.
- Aid decision-makers in considering the impacts of decisions across campus departments, assessing risks, organizing responses, keeping stakeholders informed of outcomes and liaising with University units to provide coordinated supports.
- Demonstrate an ability to interpret and advise on the following:
    - Policy 30 – Employment of Graduate Student Teaching Assistants
    - Policy 33 – Ethical Behaviour
    - Policy 34 – Health, Safety and Environment (particularly allegations of workplace harassment)
    - Policy 42 – Prevention of and Response to Sexual Violence and Protocol and Procedures
    - Policy 70 – Student Petitions and Grievances
    - Policy 71 – Student Discipline
    - Policy 72 – Student Appeals

- Manage student discipline decisions under Policy 71, Appendix C on behalf of the Vice-President, Academic and Provost (or delegate). Assist with the drafting of correspondence and official documents related to complex cases.
- Ensure that decision-makers have access to and utilize specialized resources on campus related to campus community concerns (i.e., sexual violence, racism, trauma-informed processes). Facilitate and encourage communication amongst departments.
- Receive feedback from University administrators on gaps in policy, and concerns related to existing policies, procedures, guidelines, and practices, making informed recommendations on paths towards improvement.
- Respond to requests from senior administration to review cases and provide status updates where appropriate.
- Report on specific concerns indicative of high risk through the chain of authority.
- Work closely with Legal & Immigration Services on issues and matters through the decision-making process.
- Recommend and assist with the development of training for decision-makers on due diligence and best practices.

Policy Planning and Renewal on Behalf of Administration for Student-Related Policies

- Assist in the development or amendment of University policies related to students, including the review of draft policies and policy revisions prepared by Policy Drafting Committees (PDCs), drawing attention to inconsistencies, areas of risk, areas that require further discussion, areas that will require operationalization, and connection to other existing policies.
- Combine environmental knowledge with contextual awareness of policy dynamics to support policy development.
- Develop and evaluate policy requirements, determining their potential impact and providing recommendations to senior management.
- Investigate areas of concern as raised by senior administration and report on findings.
- Attend meetings as required to support senior administration on policy work, receiving input from University community members and preparing senior administration to respond.
- Provide advice to faculties and academic support units on their own policies, procedures, and practice to ensure that they are consistent with best practices across the University.
- Keep abreast of new legislation, regulations with Legal & Immigration Services.
- Attend student-related committee meetings as required by the Associate Provost, Students and assist with policy-related work arising from those meetings.
- Meet with representatives of the Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association and the Graduate Student Association as required by the Associate Provost, Students.

Miscellaneous

- May be called upon to provide support to special projects as assigned by the Associate Provost, Students.

Required Qualifications

Education

- Undergraduate degree required.
- Graduate degree or other professional designation preferred.

Experience

- At least 8 years' experience demonstrating knowledge of policy development, implementation and interpretation, analytical abilities to research complex issues, and the ability to evaluate and recommend policy options.
- Experience in an academic setting is preferred.

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Thorough knowledge of University policies and procedures.
- Thorough understanding of the principles of natural justice and administrative law requirements.
- Demonstrated experience with policy development.
- Demonstrated ability to manage highly confidential and sensitive personal information with the utmost discretion.
- Proven ability to manage large volumes of work, conflicting priorities and competing deadlines.
- Must be an exceptional communicator, both orally and in writing.
- Must have a clear focus on relationship management and must be particularly sensitive to relationship management when dealing with senior administration and complex casework.
- Proven ability to take initiative and be both creative and flexible.
- Strong organizational and time management skills, and sound judgment.
- Demonstrated research, analytical and problem-solving skills.
- Ability to consider the needs of diverse communities, building consensus on contentious/complex issues.
- Ability to effectively lead and collaborate across departments, establishing priorities.
- Experience in the use and application of conflict resolution mechanisms and alternative dispute resolution mechanisms.
- Demonstrated awareness and understanding of equity, diversity, inclusiveness, intersectionality, racism, colonialism, ablism, marginalization and imbalance of power.
- Demonstrated ability to exercise mature judgment, diplomacy and discretion.

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Internally communicate with senior university administrators and their staff. Communicate with students as required. Maintains effective working relationships in a sensitive environment where discretion and confidentiality are necessary.

- **Level of Responsibility:** The incumbent will be involved in the development of recommendations to settle sometimes highly sensitive and confidential matters at the University.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** This position uses discretionary authority to use good judgment to make sound decisions and provide strategic advice on all matters relating to their portfolio which includes exercise of judgment and discretion consistent with the range of responsibilities and accountabilities outlined above.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands**: This position requires routine physical activity most of the time. The incumbent is frequently required to sit for extended periods of time at a desk and on the computer while preparing reports, documents, and minutes. Manual dexterity is required for extended periods of computer work. This position requires regular mental and visual concentration while working on the computer, writing, and reviewing documents for details and accuracy. Visual strain may result from these activities. Listening concentration is required to respond to requests for information.
- **Working Environment:** Exposure to disagreeable conditions based on sensitive matters with respect to faculty, students, and staff.

**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.*