

Job Description

Job Title:	Specialist, Communications Design
Department:	Registrar's Office, Marketing & Undergraduate Recruitment
Reports To:	Manager, Marketing & Communications Strategy
Jobs Reporting:	None
Salary Grade:	USG 9
Effective Date:	October 2017

Primary Purpose

Specialist, Communications Design is responsible for in-house creative direction and production of visual solutions for Marketing & Undergraduate Recruitment's traditional and digital strategies (e.g., print, social media, digital advertising, websites, emails, blogs, etc.). Based on research and audience insights, this role proactively recommends the most effective visual solutions to communicate MUR's messages to future students and their key influencers. As the team's brand and visual identity steward, ensures MUR's traditional and digital strategies align with Waterloo's visual identity and brand guidelines.

As a key member of the MUR integrated marketing and communications team, this role requires a superior eye for design and in-depth experience with Adobe Creative Suite software. Reporting to the Manager, Marketing & Communications Strategy, and in collaboration with colleagues in the Registrar's Office (RO), MUR and campus partners, designs engaging visual solutions for campaigns that position Waterloo as a leader in the higher education.

Key Accountabilities

Conceives, strategizes, and executes visual design direction for traditional and digital strategies

- Proactively conceptualizes, renders, and produces original, creative, and appropriate designs for MUR/RO print materials, including but not limited to posters, newsletters, invitations, advertisements, flyers, postcards, guides, special event collateral, and swag artwork.
- Creates, executes, and monitors the visual design elements for digital communications, including but not limited to the prospective student website, email communications, videos, social media, and digital design initiatives such as digital presentations and slide shows.
- Renders design solutions using suitable effective design software applications for traditional and digital strategies, with adherence to accessibility standards.
- Creates illustrations, infographics and rough sketch images as appropriate.
- Participates in the creation of videos for use in MUR strategies.

Manages photography and videography initiatives and resources

- In partnership with MUR colleagues, develops an annual photography and videography plan and budget, based on recognition of the critical role of photography and videography in communicating key messages and the substantial financial investment required for high-quality assets.
- Co-ordinates and art directs photo and video shoots.
- Develops, organizes, and maintains an effective catalogued photo and video archive and retrieval system.
- Leads photography, digital artwork (e.g., illustrations, infographics, etc.) and video production for the team, which includes liaising with third parties, creating briefs, securing models and props, and managing MUR's asset library and its tagging conventions.

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- Project manages third party designers, illustrators, etc., creating briefs, securing models and props, and managing MUR's asset library and its tagging conventions.

Collaborates, advises, and consults

- Works closely with the entire MUR team to ensure the accuracy, cohesiveness, consistency, and integration of visual messaging.
- Provides leadership and advice with respect to the role of graphic design elements in the integrated marketing strategy approach that informs MUR initiatives.
- Provides design, advertising, and marketing advice and feedback to the Manager, Marketing & Communications Strategy, and other members of the MUR.
- Contributes expertise to creative brainstorming and concept development sessions.
- Liaises with Creative Services, New Media Services, and Retail Services to supervise and coordinate the production process for marketing strategies produced in-house.
- Acts as an expert resource for front-end visual design and art direction for a variety of other departments on campus.
- Proactively shares knowledge so that all MUR team members can incorporate new information and techniques into their initiatives.
- Embraces supportive mentorship, professional quality, respectful communication, creativity, positive energy, and synergy in his/her work

Researches, recommends, and monitors visual communication solutions and applies institutional knowledge

- Keeps fully informed and knowledgeable about all aspects of programs, admissions, student life, visual identity and branding, success after graduation, and other issues related to enrolment management, including all relevant research, communications, recruitment initiatives, and how any changes impact the strategies for which s/he is responsible.
- Researches and explores a variety of conceptual approaches, especially with respect to current trends in visual storytelling (e.g., illustrations, infographics, video production, photography creation), focusing on generational characteristics, the needs of all audiences at different stages throughout the enrolment funnel, and the specific communication and design expectations of a wide variety of savvy international and domestic MUR audiences.
- Translates research into tactics and recommends design strategies and production methods that will most effectively facilitate the achievement of university goals and enhance the success of MUR marketing strategies.
- Monitors and consults in order to maintain design consistency that adheres to the university's visual identity, design policies, and standards.

Manages work flow and production

- Assumes project management responsibilities for all initiatives that s/he implements, including personnel, resources, time, and budget, ensuring proper control of expenditures for the initiatives for which s/he is responsible.
- Applies creative innovation to define design parameters so that a project entails minimum cost and time.
- Manages and maintains graphic and video files, including logos and artwork.
- Collaborates with the MUR colleagues to develop and maintain consistent documentation and recording methods across all communications projects (e.g., job numbers, design requests, photo/video assets).
- Develops, writes, and follows Marketing Action Plans that accurately document all components of each particular marketing initiative for which s/he is responsible, and contributes appropriate updates to the overall MUR tactics document using MUR tools (i.e., Smartsheet).

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Other

- Participate in MUR recruitment events and in the administration of specific RO department-wide responsibilities, including other general and specific duties as may from time to time be determined.

Required Qualifications

Education

- Bachelor's degree in related discipline, diploma in graphic and multimedia design, or related experience

Experience

- 3+ years of graphic design experience using Adobe Creative Suite (e.g., InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop)
- Experience in video editing using Adobe Premier Pro
- 3+ years of experience in project management.
- 2+ years of experience in technology platforms for social media, web, user interface, video and email strategies.
- Preferred: Experience with photography, videography, illustration and infographic creation

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Proven ability and extensive experience in design principles related to marketing strategies within a highly complex institution and competitive marketplace.
- An eye for effective design, graphic balance, and the impact of layout and messaging in marketing strategies.
- Knowledge of new and emerging design trends, especially for younger audiences and how they can be integrated with an overall traditional and digital communications plan.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to articulate the rationale for a specific design choice.
- Strong organizational skills coupled with the ability to handle multiple tasks, meet deadlines, and excel in a fast-paced environment characterized by changing priorities.
- 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.
- Intermediate to advanced use of the following tools:
 - Adobe Creative Suite (e.g., InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop, Premier Pro, Adobe Acrobat)
 - Content Management systems (e.g., Drupal) and web user interface (UI) design
 - Blast email campaign software (e.g., MailChimp)
 - Social Media (e.g., Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat) // Hootsuite Enterprise
 - Project Management Software (Smartsheet)
 - Slack/Mattermost
 - Apple Pages // Microsoft Word
 - Apple Numbers // Microsoft Excel
 - Apple Keynote // Microsoft PowerPoint

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Internally, communicates with employees in a wide range of groups and departments and at all levels to deal with, influence, and motivate others in order to execute and integrate the visual component of a variety of communications strategies.
- **Level of Responsibility:** Specialized work with minimal supervision and provides guidance to others; significant influence on the successful outcome of MUR and university undergraduate enrolment management strategies that incorporate graphic design to convey messaging; acts as a resource for

other areas on campus and provides the MUR and RO team with expert advice related to effective visual design.

- **Decision-Making Authority:** Makes problem-solving decisions related to design creation and production, organization of resources, personal interactions and collaboration, workflow, consultation, and other key accountabilities.
- **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.
- **Working Environment:** Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a position exposed to stress and pressure associated with management-level responsibilities; intermittent work outside the normal operating hours of the institution and occasional travel.