#### Trent University LogoEXEMPT JOB DESCRIPTION

**Job Title:** Communications Officer, Philanthropy & Alumni Engagement

**Job Number:** X-329 | VIP: 130

**Band:** EXEMPT- 5

**Department:** Alumni Engagement & Services

**Supervisor Title:** Senior Integrated Engagement Manager

**Last Reviewed:**  May 18, 2016

#### **Job Purpose:**

With primary and overall reporting to the Senior Integrated Engagement Manager, the Communications Officer will provide coordination and support for alumni and philanthropy communications. Under the direction of the Senior Integrated Engagement Manager, the Communications Officer will be responsible for supporting alumni engagement and services, as well as the university’s overall fundraising communications, including the current comprehensive campaign. The Communications Officer will also collaborate with colleagues within Philanthropy, Alumni Engagement & Services, Community Relations, and Communications to ensure key messages are strategically used in University communications. Providing inspiring communications is the key mandate of this position, levering excellent writing and production skills to create and deliver content of the highest quality across a broad range of topics and in formats appropriate to a range of audiences. Typical assignments include project coordination, research with content experts, writing, photography, videography or arranging of audio-visual production, webpage development, social media and material production. This position deals with highly confidential alumni and donor information and requires tactful communication around potentially sensitive issues.

#### Key Activities:

##### Develop Engagement Communications, Materials & Publications

* Under the direction of the Senior Integrated Engagement Manager, contribute significantly to developing, updating, and implementing an annualized communications plan that will assist in successfully achieving the University's philanthropic and alumni engagement goals and objectives.
* Prepare appropriate materials for internal and external target audiences, including prospective and current donors, board, faculty, staff, alumni, volunteers, and community members.
* Communications materials will include regular campaign and alumni progress updates, high-quality proposals, special and regular annual fund appeals, speeches, media releases, articles for the Trent Magazine, website and e-newsletters, presentations, web and social media content, video and photography, and special event programs and invitations as needed.
* Support the Alumni Engagement & Services Coordinator in the development and implementation of affinity program marketing strategies
* Ensure consistency among print, electronic and audio-visual materials to reflect campaign and university branding.

##### Ensure a strong Web presence and e-Communications for Alumni & Philanthropy

* Work closely with colleagues in Alumni & Philanthropy to coordinate and strengthen online and electronic messages and communication efforts.
* Regularly update campaign and Development-related webpages, highlighting campaign news, fundraising progress, and opportunities, as well as donor recognition stories, impact and opportunities.
* Regularly update alumni specific webpages, highlighting alumni news, profiles, events and benefits
* With support of manager, plan, draft content and project manage monthly e-newsletters, Alma Matters and Philanthropy Matters.
* With support of manager, be responsible for day-to-day execution and monitoring of Trent Alumni social media channels. Including developing compelling written and visual content and populating a social media calendar. Lead publishing of accurate content and development of social media reports that review metrics.
* In collaboration with the Director, Portfolio Operations & Digital Philanthropic Strategies, as well as Communications, ensure effective and efficient navigation of webpages and content within and among Net Community, Drupal and Contribute platforms.
* Implement creative approaches to integrate and synergize written and digital content, including the use of web, video, and social media.

##### Prepare daily news stories, news releases, gift announcements & media releases

* Work closely with the Senior Integrated Engagement Manager, Communications and the Manager, Philanthropic Stewardship in preparing, planning and distributing alumni profiles and stories, as well as major announcements and campaign updates.

##### Other

* Deal with highly confidential and sensitive information related to Alumni profiles, donor gifts, agreements and support from the highest levels of donors, including Board of Governors, senior administration, senior volunteers, faculty and staff, alumni and the community.

#### Education Required:

* General University Degree (3 year) in a related discipline complemented by a Post-Graduate Certificate or Diploma in Marketing, Communications, or Public Relations; Honours Degree in Marketing, Communications, Journalism or a related discipline preferred.
* A Trent University Degree is considered an asset.

#### Experience/Qualifications Required:

* Minimum of four (4) years’ relevant work experience in progressive communications planning, writing, editing, audio-visual and material design and production, with a proven track record of creating compelling, persuasive, and attractive individualized and corporate communications for target audiences. Experience working in education and/or in the charitable sector preferred.
* Ability to create inspiring and high-quality alumni and fundraising communications: profiles, proposals, annual appeals, campaign impact reports, etc.
* Demonstrated knowledge and experience in understanding and marketing to target audiences.
* Demonstrated excellence in written and verbal communications.
* Experience in proof-reading, editing and in managing publication projects.
* Experience with planning and executing social media content. Utilizing reporting, management and analysis tools, such as Hootsuite, Sprout Social or Agora Pulse.
* Intermediate-level skills and experience, or demonstrated aptitude, in design and layout, photography and video production are essential.
* Strong project management skills, and ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously.
* Experience and competence in meeting deadlines, and able to work well in a fast paced, dynamic environment.
* Ability to exercise discretion, diplomacy, tact and appropriate judgement with sensitive situations and information.
* Strong sense of issues management, and an understanding of complex stakeholder groups and diverse audiences.
* Excellent interpersonal strengths, conceptual skills, and the ability to collaborate creatively with others.
* Excellent customer service approach.

**Job Evaluation Factors:**

##### Responsibility for the Work of Others

Direct Responsibility for the Work of Others:

N/A

Indirect Responsibility for the Work of Others:

1. This position often acts as the first point of contact in the department with contracted suppliers, including freelance writers, designers, photographers and videographers, printers, etc.

* Contracted suppliers – manage work of freelance writers, photographers, videographers, etc.; arrange contracts, assign stories, review, and edit materials, provide feedback and act as mentor/provide direction for future pieces.
* Designers – seek quotes on publications and projects, manage relationships with multiple designers, provide design direction on projects (in consideration of the Trent brand and identity), etc.
* Printers – seek quotes on publications and projects, manage relationships with multiple print houses, ensure work is distributed equally, etc.

1. Student employees – provide direction to student employees on projects/tasks to be undertaken in particular with regards to social and web content.

##### Communication

The Communications Officer is a direct point of contact for both internal and external communities. Communication involves the ability to clarify ideas and messages, to summarize or synthesize the information according to the audience’s needs, to use judgment in discussing problems, presenting information, and making recommendations. Communication requires consulting on issues. Lack of judgment and discretion in communicating messages could result in damage to the organization’s image or potential loss of a large donation. Job responsibilities require communication with very diverse contacts, both inside and outside of the organization, including senior officials in the University, the community, and the public.

Internal Contacts:

As related to any alumni, fundraising and engagement priorities and campaign progress updates

* University administration – President’s Office, Vice Presidents, Board of Governors, Deans, etc. (institutional messaging, speech, and letter writing, briefing and background documents, internal memos/updates, press materials, etc.)
* Academic department heads, faculty and administrative assistants – all departments/programs, including undergraduate, graduate and professional programs.
* Administrative department directors and senior staff – all offices (i.e. Advancement, Alumni, TIP, Registrar, Liaison, Centre for Teaching & Learning, Library, etc.)
* Students – undergraduate and graduate – regular contact with current students and alumni for profiles, press materials, online marketing/web content, events promotion, etc.
* Ancillary operations (Athletics, Conferences, etc.)

External Contacts:

* Alumni, high-end donors and senior volunteers with regards to proposal preparation, major gift announcements, regular communications.
* Suppliers, vendors (freelance writers, designers, printers, etc.) – arrange “contracts” with vendors (RFPs, quotes, etc.),
* General public – indirect contact through development of stories and messages for press releases, website stories and text, etc.; occasionally respond to direct inquiries from the public.
* Counterparts or contacts at other universities or academic institutions – consult on best practices; work with them on various events and/or announcements.

##### Motor/ Sensory Skills

Job duties include keyboarding throughout the day and require dexterity involving speed and accuracy. Attention to visual detail is also required (reviewing/providing direction on designed materials, etc.). Sight is also an important factor in regards to photography and video.

Motor Skills:

Skill Type Job Requiring

Keyboarding Much time spent on the computer, using keyboarding skills and writing, researching – speed and accuracy are required (due to large workload and tight timelines).

Handwriting Required to capture notes from interviews (in person or on the phone) quickly and accurately.

Sensory Skills:

Skill Type Job Requiring

Visual/Sight Photography/video – best angles/lighting/best set-up for various purposes; review of designed marketing materials – accuracy in colour, fit with Trent and Campaign/fundraising brands/identity.

Hearing/Verbal Excellent verbal communication skills; pick up on verbal cues in interviews (in person, on the phone and through e-mail); communicate effectively with all audiences (internal and external)

##### Effort

Mental Effort:

Description Job Tasks Required

Sustained concentration Ability to maintain concentration on projects to ensure their completion in an accurate and timely manner.

Multi-tasking/competing

demands Ability to manage multiple and diverse projects with competing timelines; ability to adapt schedule for new priorities.

Listening Understanding of complex stakeholder groups and diverse audiences; listen and work with constructive feedback; take direction; good customer service approach.

Diplomacy Appropriate judgement, tact and discretion in dealing with highly confidential, restricted and sensitive information as well as various audiences and constituents.

Physical Effort

Description Job Tasks Required

Keyboarding Extended periods of time spent keyboarding; speed and accuracy required.

Visual demand Working on computers, writing, reviewing visual materials, etc.; photography skills.

Duration Working on computer and in office for sustained periods of time.

Lifting/Carrying Limited lifting and carrying – publication mailings, etc.

Walking/Standing event coverage and photography; travel/walking to various places on campus and throughout community to cover events and activities, conduct interviews, etc.; standing for longer periods of time for photography, etc.

##### Working Conditions

Psychological Conditions:

Condition Condition Description

Competing/conflicting demands Multiple and diverse projects with competing timelines and work priorities

Changing deadlines/time

pressures Ability to adapt to shifting timelines; ability to work under time pressures and produce accurate materials/information in short time frame

Physical Conditions:

Condition Condition Description

Duration Extended hours sometimes required – covering events/activities, meeting deadlines, etc.

##### Analytical Reasoning

Logical and critical thinking is often required to define problems, develop alternatives, propose, plan and implement solutions.

*Example:*

The Communications Officer is responsible for contributing to the creation and implementation of a multi-faceted Communications Plan for Alumni & Philanthropic Engagement, incorporating print and electronic media, web content, highly personalized proposal development, and other forms of communications. Strong analytical reasoning is required to research university programs and initiatives and distill them in an accessible and compelling fashion to the target audiences, ranging from the transformational donor to broad-based engagement appeals. Communications should be well thought out and of the highest quality, supporting the broader department objectives while meeting tight timelines. This position needs to respond to competing priorities and requires flexibility to assess and adapt to last minute additions/revisions as priorities shift and needs change.

##### Decision Making

The Communications Officer, under the general guidance of the Senior Integrated Engagement Manager, is responsible for implementation of most aspects of the Alumni & Philanthropic Engagement Communications Plan, including developing timelines for production, managing relationships with suppliers, designers, and printers (including completing RFPs, if required), identifying and writing content, managing freelancers, and editing articles, photographs, videos, etc. Their work must reflect sound judgement in order to appropriately and effectively convey University priorities and branding, balanced with campaign and donor imperatives.

##### Impact

The Communications Officer makes recommendations for regular communications, announcements, news releases, website content, social media, and internal portal (myTrent). Their work will also include preparing campaign and event-related public remarks for senior administration and volunteers. Creative ideas and personalized proposals will be approved by the Senior Integrated Engagement Manager and before communications are made public, they will generally be approved by the Director and possibly the Vice-President, External Relations & Development. However, given the volume of communications and the challenge of timelines and limited oversight, the work of this position will have an important impact upon the reputation and success of the university in the eyes of donors, volunteers, alumni and the community.