**Department of Human Resources**

**Exempt Job Description**

**Job Title:** Communications & Media Relations Officer (Current Students)

**Job Number:** X-386

**Band:** 5

**NOC:** 1221

**Department:** Marketing & Communications

**Supervisor Title:** Manager, Communications

**Last Reviewed:**  September 8, 2020

**Job Purpose**

Reporting to the Manager of Communications, the Communications & Media Relations Officer (Current Students) is a key member of the Communications & Enrolment portfolio, which is responsible for University communications as well as managing Trent’s reputation. This position oversees the planning and development of all current student communications across both campuses through collaborating with all student-related departments, including but not limited to, the Colleges, Student Affairs, Student Wellness, Housing and Careerspace – with an overall goal of unifying current student communications for the institution. In line with the institution’s positioning and branding, this position also takes a lead role in dimensionalizing the Trent student story across all media platforms and in the digital realm, including the new mobile app. Working with a high calibre team of marketing and brand journalism experts, the successful candidate will contribute media and social media expertise to all plans, meetings, and discussions, also overseeing various aspects of materials, publications, presentations and e-communications, and is a key member of the University’s Integrated Communications Committee.

## Key Activities

### Media Relations

1. Proactively seek out, plan, manage, pitch and execute media opportunities and coverage, and create content for producing/coordinating communications material and events in support of the strategic Marketing & Communications goals to build reputation and awareness of Trent University.
2. Conduct daily media scans, proactively identifying and acting on risks and opportunities and working with VP, manager and senior administration on responses as required.
3. Respond to media calls and inquiries and prepare detailed reports on media issues with the potential for impact on University reputation for the Manager, Communications; prepare and update key messaging for issues arising, news releases, backgrounders, fact sheets, bios; create and support related internal communication strategies; craft backgrounders, presentations, briefing notes, and proposals.
4. Create and maintain relationships with members of the media (local, national and international) related to Trent’s key focus areas and actively pursue a match for media needs for content and experts with Trent’s faculty, students and alumni.
5. Meet with senior administration, academic and administrative department heads to effectively and strategically identify expertise, faculty, student and alumni successes, opportunities for commentary on topical issues, features and profiles – and activate use in media relations and current student materials.
6. Act as the main contact for the Colleges and Office of Student Affairs to identify media opportunities, ensure timely announcements of success stories.
7. Maintain an awareness and understanding of media trends, innovations and opportunities and act as departmental expert on media, both traditional and new (e.g. social)

### Marketing & Communications

1. Lead development of a current student communications plan and strategy, including calendar of key touchpoints throughout the academic year with an eye to streamlining and unifying communications across the University.
2. Coordinate communications across the Colleges as well as Student Affairs (including Housing & Residence Life, Student Wellness, Retention Programs and the Office of the AVP Students). This includes regularly meeting with and working with team members across departments to enhance ensure a balance of communications.
3. Serve as the lead on all communications related to the new university app, including collecting, composing, and publishing content in keeping with overall strategies and plans.
4. Plan, write, oversee writers/designers and edit materials for all mediums directed at current students and their supporters. Materials include, but are not limited to: web material, online marketing, eCommunications, brochures and publications, interactive presentations, video, and media materials.
5. Explore and implement creative ways to integrate written content with digital content, including video.
6. Produce quality content and effective delivery of Trent student stories using a brand journalism approach and through a robust contribution to the publications plan and e-delivery strategy leveraging student events and success stories.
7. As a lead on social media content, compose, strategize and monitor content across the University’s social channels (including Colleges); track and identify any issues requiring response; ensure a high level of social media activity through involvement and attendance at student Trent events, announcements, occasions and celebrations.
8. Drive innovation by researching best practices, media trends, new digital strategies in using both new and traditional forms of communication to effectively engage with current students.
9. Compose content, edit, and maintain timely and effective information and messaging student-facing websites and webpages. Provide writing and editing support for department staff on developing individual webpages.
10. Assist with digital and other photography/video/podcasts to support current student materials and initiatives. Contributes to and leverages the Trent University digital asset management system to access photos/videos.
11. Update the MyTrent portal, digital signage and events/activities calendars with information pertinent to current students.
12. Plan publications and e-projects, write, edit, proofread and coordinate suppliers from concept to completion.
13. Provide support and back-up as required to other communications and marketing functions related to project management, writing and editing both for print and online, social media, internal communications and other administrative duties.
14. Participate in team meetings and brainstorming sessions identifying communications opportunities and new approaches to positively position Trent University in building retention and reputation.
15. Provide a high level of general writing and project management support to VP and Manager, Communications, including briefing notes, preparation for interviews, news releases, etc.

### Emergency Operations & Issues Management

1. Act on strategies for crisis/emergency communications as required, including emergency response, campus closures, issues management.
2. Access and synthesize confidential and sensitive information, related to board governance, budgets, human resources, for backgrounders, speaking points, communications plans, etc.
3. Maintain discretion and confidentiality with regard to files and sensitive issues, attending meetings, interviewing senior administrators to support the Manager of Communications on communication plans and materials.
4. Develop briefing materials, backgrounders, speaking points for senior administration on media requests and confidential issues as required.

### Administrative Duties & Support

1. Manage team of external freelance writers, setting up contracts and purchase orders, providing direction on Trent standards and writing guidelines, assigning and editing work, etc.
2. Act as key member and contributor to University-wide Integrated Communications Group.
3. Assist in planning, development and implementation of marketing and communications, colleges and student events.
4. Build effective relationships and collaborate with all administrative and academic departments on key messaging.
5. Oversee and provide direction on work of student employees.
6. Liaise with suppliers (e.g. freelancers, printers, sign companies, designers) to ensure deadlines are met.
7. Post material to daily news and myTrent portals, and other communications tools as they evolve.
8. Support distribution logistics for print and e-newsletters, including Colleges.
9. Estimate budgets for communications materials and projects and ensure timely, on-budget delivery.
10. Contribute to management of materials library, assist with photo database, electronic and hard copy department files.
11. Schedule, take minutes and follow-up on action items of department meetings, standing or ad hoc committees.
12. Other duties as assigned.

## Education

Bachelor’s degree (Honours) in Marketing, Communications, Journalism, Media Studies or related field (or general degree with post-graduate diploma or specialization in any one of these areas) is required.

## Experience Required

1. A minimum of five years’ experience in professional writing and communications activities (using new and traditional forms of media), preferably in a large public sector or corporate setting, is required.
2. Demonstrated knowledge and experience with writing and marketing techniques to communicate effectively to a variety of audiences.
3. Exemplary interpersonal, communications (written and verbal), conflict resolution skills with abilities to build bridges between complex stakeholder groups and individuals.
4. Proven project management skills.
5. Strong understanding of student life in a university environment and knowledge of postsecondary sector and trends and needs.
6. Conversant with new media technologies; Interest and appetite for the latest developments in marketing and media as well as experience in integrating social media and online media strategies.
7. Ability to manage diverse projects and shifting priorities within tight timelines.
8. Self-motivated and responsible with mature attitude and professional demeanour.
9. Outstanding strategic, creative, and conceptual writing and editing skills for various media.
10. Ability to take direction and work with constructive feedback.
11. Well-honed issues management skills and ability to manage confidential information and display sensitivity during difficult situations.
12. Excellent sense of discretion, judgment, tact and diplomacy.
13. High degree of enthusiasm, and customer service orientation.
14. Excellent computing skills (Microsoft Office, Word, Excel, Project Management, email, internet, web content management, PowerPoint, etc.)
15. Superior interpersonal strengths, conceptual skills, the ability to collaborate creatively and consult with others.
16. Experience in proofreading, editing and in managing publication projects.