University of Victoria  
Cupe Local 951 Position Description

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<th>JOB:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Clerk/PB8</td>
<td>Program Clerk</td>
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<tr>
<th>DEPARTMENT:</th>
<th>POSITION NO:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty of Graduate Studies</td>
<td>994099; 997578; 997947</td>
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<th>SUPERVISOR:</th>
<th>LAST UPDATED:</th>
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<td>Assistant to the Dean/Office Manager</td>
<td>February 2017</td>
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SUMMARY: *(Provide a brief summary of the primary functions and purpose of the position)*

The Faculty of Graduate Studies, Dean’s Office, administers programs leading to Doctoral and Masters degrees. Unlike any other Faculty, the Faculty of Graduate Studies administers policies and procedures across all faculties, currently over 150 graduate programs in 55 academic units. The Faculty of Graduate Studies has over 800 regular faculty members who teach graduate level courses, who supervise graduate students and who are members of graduate student committees. There are also more than 600 Associate and Emeritus faculty members.

The Dean’s Office is a resource for, and provides support and training to, the more than 55 graduate advisers and associated graduate secretaries across campus. The Dean’s Office is responsible for leadership in graduate student recruitment, program development and support; admissions and records policies; policy development and exceptions; mentoring and professional development for students, faculty and staff; internal and external scholarships and awards; advocacy for better resources; problem solving and appeals; oral examinations; and convocation. The Faculty of Graduate Studies, Dean’s Office’s major responsibility is to support over 3,000 University of Victoria graduate students.

Reporting to the Assistant to the Dean, the Program Clerks are the first point of contact for Graduate Advisors, Graduate Secretaries and Graduate students and provides a range of administrative support to the three Associate Deans, the Coordinator, Information, Communication and Research and to the Dean as necessary. The Program Clerks gather information, identify trends and recurring problems, and have a solid understanding of issues, policies and programs in order to respond to a variety of queries and find suitable resolutions.

This position is multi-faceted and is responsible for:

- Doctoral and Masters Oral Defence Process;
- Provides administrative support to the three Associate Deans;
- Administrative Assistant to the Coordinator;
- Composes case-by-case correspondence to students and faculty;
- Interprets and communicates policies and procedures;
- A key contact, liaison and support to Chairs, Supervisors, Graduate Advisers and Graduate Secretaries;
- Liaises directly with senior faculty, staff and students as well as colleagues at universities across Canada and the world;
• Maintains and manages the Faculty of Graduate Studies’ membership list;
• Responsible for finding Chairs for over 300 Masters and 100 Doctoral defences per year;
• Coordination with the Communications Department to encourage Graduate Student participation in the Speaker’s Bureau program and processing of payments and correspondence to speakers;
• Collaborates with the Ceremonies and Special Events office to ensure attendance of PhD supervisors at convocation.

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES: (In order of importance to a maximum of 8)

1. **Responsibility:** Facilitates Doctoral and Masters Oral Defence Process 30%

**Duties:**
- Responsible for all aspects related to the coordination of oral examination process for Doctoral and Masters (both thesis and non-thesis) students;
- Ensures the integrity of the oral examination process including: ensuring the student’s committee structure is in line with the current Faculty of Graduate Studies regulations, troubleshooting between Graduate Admissions and Records and student’s home department where exceptions to committee structure are required; ensuring no conflict of interest exists between the external examiners, the student, and any member of the supervisory committee, distribution of required materials prior to defence;
- Interacts on a daily basis with faculty, both on and off campus, staff and students to ensure the oral defence process is adhered to and runs smoothly for the student and all involved;
- Works collaboratively with other staff in the Dean’s Office; Graduate Admissions and Records Office; on and off campus administrative units; faculty members, both internal and those from other universities around the world; associated professionals; students and the public;
- Updating of student records in Banner;
- Manages crisis situations which may rise during oral defences, for example, if a committee member or the Chair does not show up, and/or equipment failure;
- Maintains and collates statistics for all defences in order to generate a number of different methods of analysis;
- Collaborates with the library and Graduate Admissions and Records staff to facilitate the thesis/dissertation withholding policy for students who do not wish their thesis or dissertation to be made readily available to the public;
- A key contact, liaison and support to Chairs, Supervisors, Graduate Advisers and Graduate Secretaries across campus;
- In addition to standard, day-to-day communications, this position receives and conveys policy information, orally and/or in writing to faculty, staff and students, external defence examiners (from outside of the University), various Faculty of Graduate Studies committee members, and Graduate Admissions and Records staff.

2. **Responsibility:** Administrative Assistant to FGS Associate Deans 30%

**Duties:**
- Researches, reviews and prepares background information for student requests for extensions, withdrawals, continuation in program requests, and undergraduate student requests to take a graduate level course;
- Prepares draft letters for Associate Dean ensuring the Associate Dean has all of the pertinent information;
- Stays constantly aware and on top of emerging and urgent issues in order to apprise the Dean; Associate Deans and the Coordinator;
- Aids in developing and maintaining Faculty of Graduate Studies departmental procedures, guidelines and processes;
- First point of contact for students wishing to meet with an Associate Dean, often dealing with sensitive and confidential issues;
- Manages Associate Deans’ Outlook Calendars.

3. Responsibility: Implementation of Faculty of Graduate Studies Policies and Procedures as set out in the Academic Calendar 20%

Duties:
- Primary Administrative Assistant to one Associate Dean and secondary support to two other Associate Deans, which involves the interpretation and application of the University Graduate Calendar;
- Knowledge of policies and procedures for the Faculty of Graduate Studies, the University of Victoria, all faculties and the 55 units on campus who offer graduate programs in order to direct faculty, staff, students (both current and prospective) and the general public to the appropriate resources;
- Contributes to the bi-annual Graduate Secretary Workshop including event planning and presentation, preparation and execution;
- Conveys information which requires careful explanation and interpretation; eg: explaining or interpreting policies and processes to more than 55 faculty graduate advisers and more than 55 graduate secretaries, faculty, staff, and outside stake holders;
- Deals with matters of a sensitive nature which require high levels of tact and diplomacy, for example, where a faculty member, staff, or student is abrupt, abrasive, patronizing or intimidating;
- Responsible for distribution of FGS mail and maintaining inventory of office supplies.

4. Responsibility: Administrative Assistant to Coordinator, Information, Research & Communication 5%

Duties:
- Performs research and triage for Coordinator, including retrieving and/or entering student data into Banner;
- Provides Coordinator with all background and other relevant information on Faculty of Graduate Studies membership issues;
- Maintains the Faculty Membership List database of over 1500 members;
- Works with Coordinator on all Grade Changes and Course Changes for over 3000 graduate students;
- Administers requests from undergraduate students seeking permission to take a graduate course;
- Supports University Calendar updates (now occurring 3 times per year) and on-going calendar (policy) changes requiring a clear understanding of Faculty of Graduate Studies policies;
- Composes correspondence to students, graduate advisers, graduate secretaries and Faculty of Graduate Studies faculty members;
- Composes information for and updates the Faculty of Graduate Studies website using Cascade.
5. Responsibility: Other Key Functions 15%

Duties:
- Opens and distributes office mail;
- Orders office supplies and photocopier paper, and participates in the research and recommendation of office equipment;
- Participates on various interview panels as required including Associate Dean searches; program clerks; work study students; and casual or temporary staff interviews;
- Participates in training of new Program Clerks;
- Attends meetings and takes minutes as required;
- Participates as an active team member, in order to meet Faculty of Graduate Studies objectives/deadlines;
- Coordinates with Communications department by contacting Graduate Students about Speaker’s Bureau program participation;
- Sets up and maintains the Speaker’s Bureau database for tracking speaking engagements and honorarium payments;
- Processes cheques requisitions for honorarium payments;
- Produces and sends thank you letters to students;
- Provides assistance and support to other front office program clerks;
- Provides feedback to the program clerk team and ensures standards and team objectives are met;
- Contributes to and makes recommendations regarding changes to processes, and modifies and revises documents and forms used by graduate students;
- Provides back-up on a regular basis for the other program clerks, who have identical duties for different graduate programs;
- Provides back-up to the Assistant to the Dean/Office Manager;
- Other duties as required.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS:
(Identify the qualifications required to perform the job. These should be directly related to the work and not to the education and experience level of the current incumbent.)

Skills:
- Excellent written communication skills in order to communicate to faculty, staff and students, remaining professional, calm and understanding while clearly communicating often complex information;
- Excellent interpersonal skills and ability to establish and maintain effective working relations in a multi-cultural environment;
- Excellent knowledge and understanding of Faculty of Graduate Studies policies and procedures;
- High level of computer expertise and a broad understanding of related areas including support of managing the Faculty of Graduate Studies website;
- Ability to operate and trouble-shoot on-line video conferencing for meetings and thesis defences;
- Ability to problem solve and resolve discrepancies between the interpretation and understanding of Faculty of Graduate Studies policies and the policies of the over 55 campus departments with graduate programs;
- A high level of tact and diplomacy;
- Excellent planning, organizational skills and time management skills with an ability to stay within tight time constraints, and manage a significant volume of work while dealing with constant interruptions without compromising accuracy or attention to detail;
- Ability to adapt to continuous procedural and systems changes while maintaining consistency in a multi-tasking environment;
- Ability to use initiative in the creation and maintainence of forms;
- Ability to use sound judgment in making decisions on timelines and the prioritization of duties;
- Flexibility to work in a high volume environment, adapt to changing priorities, fluctuating tasks and pace in response to operational need.

**Specialized Knowledge/Education:**
- Excellent administrative and technical skills using the Microsoft Office Suite (Work, Excel, Outlook), Filemaker Pro, Connect, Adobe Pro and database software, including Banner, FAST and web authoring tools (Cascade), with efficiency, accuracy and attention to detail.
- Extensive knowledge of the Faculty of Graduate Studies’ policies and procedures is essential.

**Experience:**
A minimum of three to five years in an administrative position, experience must include navigating detailed processes and procedures, providing a high level of customer services and dealing with private and confidential information. Experience in a post secondary institution and graduate studies preferred.

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