



The Spelman & Johnson Group

Position Specification

**Director, Career Center
Clarkson University
Potsdam, New York**

Background

Clarkson is a nationally ranked research university that offers comprehensive programs in business, engineering, science, liberal arts, and health sciences. Located in the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains in Potsdam, New York, Clarkson is a student-centered institution that emphasizes innovative teaching, interdisciplinary programs, and outstanding, focused research. Graduates are known for their strong sense of purpose and their ability to create, adapt, and manage technology for the benefit of society. Today's enrollment numbers approximately 2,600 undergraduates and 400 graduate students.

Founded in 1896, Clarkson was created as a memorial to Thomas S. Clarkson, a northern New York businessman with a deep concern for humanity. Today, the university continues to reflect his fundamental values: a commitment to professional skill and competence coupled with personal integrity and human understanding. As well, the campus and surrounding community continue to feature the striking red Potsdam sandstone from the Potsdam quarry owned by the Clarkson family. The institution has earned a reputation for producing innovative leaders in technology-based fields. While faculty, staff, and students are drawn to the school because of its quality of education, it is the quality of life and the friendly atmosphere of the institution and region that keep them there.

The university is located on a 640-acre wooded campus in the historic village of Potsdam (pop. 9,500), where the rolling foothills of the Adirondack Mountains meet the St. Lawrence River Valley. Clarkson's campus includes approximately 50 buildings and several academic research centers, including the Center for Advanced Materials Processing (CAMP)—a New York State Center for Advanced Technology—and the Center for the Environment, which is engaged in extensive community outreach and incorporates the Center for Air Resources Engineering and Science (CARES) and the Great Rivers Center. A new student center and renovated Educational Resources Center (ERC)—which houses The Career Center—are scheduled to open in Fall 2010. These two buildings, as well as several other buildings in the campus core, are linked by enclosed bridges that enable Clarkson community members to traverse much of the campus without ever having to step outside—though during pleasant weather there is no reason not to enjoy the attractive walking campus. These student-centered facilities, combined with expanded residential facilities are all part of a comprehensive master plan. Over 85 percent of all campus facilities have been constructed since 1970.

Clarkson is a nationally ranked research university offering more than 50 comprehensive programs in business, engineering, science, liberal arts, health sciences, and physical therapy, as well as innovative interdisciplinary majors such as bio-molecular science, environmental science and policy, information technology, and software engineering. The University has developed an international reputation in the fields of Advanced Materials Science, Biotechnology, Environment & Energy, Entrepreneurship and Global Supply

Chain Management. Students also have options for international study abroad; the University has agreements with more than 25 study abroad programs in 14 countries.

Clarkson is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, Inc., and its curricula are approved by the New York State Board of Regents. Additionally, specific curricula have been approved by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology Inc. (ABET); The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB); and The Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education of the American Physical Therapy Association.

Clarkson has received many coveted accolades, awards, and citations for excellence, among them:

- Clarkson is ranked number 54 among national universities. — *Washington Monthly* College Rankings, 2009;
- Clarkson is one of only 330 of the country's best and most interesting colleges and universities featured in the 2010 Edition of the Fiske Guide to Colleges;
- Clarkson is ranked among "America's Best Colleges 2010," a classification that includes the best and most prestigious schools in the country. We are in the top tier among all such elite institutions, with a ranking of 119. — U.S. News and World Report, Americas Best Colleges, 2010;
- Clarkson's School of Business Supply Chain Management program is ranked 14th in the nation. — U.S. News and World Report, Americas Best Colleges, 2010;
- The undergraduate engineering program is recognized as one of the "Best Undergraduate Engineering Programs" whose highest degree is a doctorate, with a ranking of 85. — U.S. News and World Report, Americas Best Colleges, 2010;
- Princeton Review features Clarkson in its "Best 371 Colleges" book. Only about 15 percent of the four-year colleges in America and two Canadian colleges were chosen for the book. — Princeton Review Best 368 Colleges, 2010;
- Clarkson's School of Business Operations Management program is one of the top 15 in the nation. — Entrepreneur Magazine/Princeton Review, April 2009.

Location

The region provides educational, cultural, and recreational outlets for individuals of every persuasion. Outdoor enthusiasts can find ample opportunities for hiking, mountain biking, camping, rock climbing, or just plain relaxing in the nearby Adirondack Park (6 million acres) and Thousand Islands region. Boating, fishing, and birding opportunities are also abundant on the Raquette River, which flows right through town, and the nearby St. Lawrence Seaway. Excellent skiing and snowboarding are available within a short distance from campus at Lake Placid, site of the 1980 Winter Olympic Games and the 2000 Goodwill Games. With three other higher education institutions in the immediate vicinity—St. Lawrence University, SUNY Canton, SUNY Potsdam, and the renowned Crane School of Music—there is an abundance of social, intellectual, and cultural stimulation. Potsdam is a pleasant and safe college town, providing inhabitants with a wide range of shopping and dining options. Within a two-hour drive from campus are two attractive international destinations—Ottawa, Canada's capital, and Montreal—and the many museums, ethnic neighborhoods, sporting venues, cultural performances, diverse dining, and shopping prospects one might expect to find in any major metropolitan area.

The University's Mission Statement

Clarkson University is an independent, nationally recognized technological university whose faculty of teacher-scholars aspire to offer superior instruction and engage in high-quality research and scholarship in engineering, business, science, health, and liberal arts. The university's primary mission is to educate talented and motivated men and women to become successful professionals through quality precollegiate, undergraduate, graduate, and professional continuing education programs, with particular emphasis on the

undergraduate experience. The Clarkson community and campus settings enhance the quality of student life and afford students access to and interaction with their faculty. Valuing community diversity, Clarkson strives to attune itself and its programs to our global, pluralistic society. At Clarkson, all share the belief that humane economic and social development derive from the expansion, diffusion, and application of knowledge.

The Faculty

Faculty at Clarkson are outstanding teachers and researchers who share a dedication to providing students with hands-on opportunities for creative problem solving. There are 190 full-time teacher scholars engaged in world-class research. Of the full-time faculty, approximately 74 percent are male, 26 percent are female, 11 percent are minorities, and 17 percent are international. One hundred (100) percent of the tenured faculty members hold a doctoral degree and 94 percent of all faculty have a terminal degree in their respective field. The student-to-faculty ratio is 15:1.

The Student Body

Clarkson enrolls approximately 2,600 undergraduates and 400 graduate students from 34 states and 40 countries. Students are hard-working and industrious, though also actively engaged in co-curricular programs outside their rigorous academic majors. Seventy percent of Clarkson students have graduated in the top 25 percent of their high school class. Male students outnumber female students three to one. Approximately 27 percent of all students hail from regions outside of New York State, with the majority coming from the Northeast. The university has several initiatives directed at recruiting and retaining a diverse student body. Based on recent enrollment, approximately 3 percent of all students were African-American, 3 percent were Asian-American, 3 percent were Hispanic, and 3 percent were international. Approximately 82 percent of students live on campus. One of three graduates goes on to graduate school in medicine, law, business, engineering, science, health administration, or physical therapy.

An Overview of Campus Life

Clarkson is a residential university where students are actively engaged in a wide range of co-curricular activities. Student affairs professionals view university life as a total educational experience, encompassing the ongoing activities and programs offered in residence halls, clubs and organizations, special campus events, and experiential programs both on and off the campus.

Some of the distinctive elements that contribute to a rich campus life at Clarkson include:

- More than 80 active student-run clubs and organizations on campus for interests that range from amateur radio, flying, gaming, honor societies, crew, photography, rugby, snowboarding, and Ultimate Frisbee. In addition, there are numerous leadership opportunities available through participating in the CUSA senate, environmental club, union board, outing club, Pan-Hellenic council, and interfraternity council. The performing arts are also represented with a theatre club, jazz ensemble, orchestra, and pep band;
- Intramural Sports—over 100 teams with 80 percent of Clarkson students participating;
- Varsity Sports—19 intercollegiate varsity sports compete at the NCAA Division III level; both men's and women's hockey teams compete at the NCAA Division I level;
- The Adirondack Lodge, nestled in the woods just off the main campus, serves as home base for student outdoor recreational activities and special gatherings;
- ROTC—Army and Air Force (voluntary);
- Eight fraternities (four national and four local) and three national sororities.

The Academic Program

Engineering is the largest discipline at Clarkson with growing proportions in business, arts and science, health science, and interdisciplinary programs. Numerous interdisciplinary programs, such as engineering and management, business and liberal arts double major, environmental science and policy, bio-molecular science, liberal studies, and software engineering, afford students the opportunity to combine interests and equip themselves as creative problem solvers. Graduate degrees are awarded in numerous fields including business, engineering, sciences, and physical therapy.

An Overview of the Position

The director of the career center reports to the vice president for university outreach and student affairs, Kathryn B. Johnson. There are five staff members who report to the director, including an associate director for co-op and internships, an associate director for study abroad and career counseling, one recruiting coordinator, a senior departmental secretary, and a receptionist. A search is underway to fill the recruiting coordinator position as the individual who was in that role for a number of years is transitioning into the 10-month receptionist position. The director controls an operating budget of approximately \$55,000, of which approximately \$27,400 is allocated to the career center, \$14,850 to co-operative education and internships, and \$12,750 to study abroad.

Johnson has high regard for the work of the career center, having served as the department's director for more than 25 years prior to her appointment as vice president in July 2004. Since 2004, the career center has had two directors. Changing personal circumstances led both directors to relocate out of the Potsdam area. A lack of leadership stability has challenged the center to build both the internal and external relationships so necessary to advancing the reputation of the department.

The "Clarkson Common Experience" core curriculum, introduced in 2006, promotes the acquisition of professional experience as a complement to academic coursework and places the career center as a key resource to both students and academic departments to assure appropriate opportunities meeting the full range of interests are available. It is of vital importance that the career center establishes strong working relationships with key academic partners as this will position the center to enhance its overall contributions to the undergraduate experience, support the institutional mission, and importantly, directly support student success and preparation for professionally rewarding careers upon graduation.

Historically, the career center has been regarded by students, faculty, and staff at Clarkson as a responsive, student-centered, and professional office. It has a three-pronged mission: 1) to assist all students in their career preparation beginning in their first year through graduation; 2) to develop, market, and facilitate the placement of students in meaningful experiential learning opportunities, including internships, cooperative education positions, and international study programs; and 3) to cultivate and sustain significant relationships with alumni and other business and industry representatives—as well graduate school representatives—interested in the recruitment and development of talented Clarkson students and graduates. Going forward, it is critical that the next director build on this foundation and partner effectively with faculty, cross-campus colleagues, alumni, and employer representatives as the center continues to fulfill its mission.

Responsibilities of the Position

Reporting to the Vice President for University Outreach and Student Affairs, the Director provides creative leadership, program development, and administration of a comprehensive, centralized Career Center with a particular focus on experiential education programs including co-op, internships, study abroad/exchange, and special semester program options. Utilizing state-of-the-art resources and technology, the Director maintains a student-centered office that engages students along with alumni, parents, and employers in the ongoing

activities of the Center. Collaborating with the Vice President in support of the well-established employer relations and international study programs, and active partnering with faculty, administration and staff, including the Alumni Council and Parents Committee, University Diversity Initiatives, Student Success Center, and International Students and Scholars Office are key responsibilities of the Director. There are five direct reports including two associate directors, recruiting coordinator, administrative assistant, and receptionist. The Director will develop the department's long-range plan, provide supervision and development of staff, manage the budget, engage in the direct delivery of service to students, support career fairs and special events, and serve as an important ambassador for the University in sustaining and expanding the Clarkson brand through the building of mutually beneficial working partnerships with many external constituents.

As stated in the official position description, additional responsibilities include:

- Manage services for students to include the organization of campus career workshops and programs and oversee the preparation of instructional materials; prepare a timetable of events and programs; continually assess and respond to changing job market and the changing needs of students while ensuring that students' needs are effectively met; develop a marketing plan to reach students; coordinate efforts with academic departments and student affairs staffs to provide students with the leadership, teamwork, and collaborative work skills needed in the workplace.
- Assist the vice president for university outreach and student affairs with the employer relations program with direct responsibility for the management of the career fairs and on-campus recruiting programs. Proactively market Clarkson to employers; develop marketing pieces, coordinate direct mail campaigns, and participate in on-site visits.
- Actively engage in job development (co-op, internship, and full-time), assuring that it is an ongoing priority for the center.
- Counsel freshmen through graduate-level students in the areas of career exploration, co-op, internship, full-time employment, and graduate school planning.
- Work with the vice president for university outreach and student affairs to develop options for study abroad; share in the responsibility of promoting study abroad/exchange programs and special semester programs as experiential options for students; encourage faculty support.
- Engage alumni in the programs and services of the center; oversee alumni services to include career services for alumni and the alumni mentor program; work cooperatively with the associate director on planning and implementation of alumni networking events and alumni career days.
- Manage the career center Web site and leased software packages utilized by the center, and ensure that the staff is using the latest technology to support the services provided to students, alumni, and employers.
- Analyze, interpret, and report data and trends to internal and external constituents.
- Coordinate a liaison system with the academic units; individual liaison responsibilities to the School of Engineering.
- Supervise and evaluate professional staff, support staff, graduate intern, and work-study students; provide appropriate staff development opportunities.

- Attend regular meetings of the university outreach and student affairs staff and be an active participant in developing and fulfilling the division's mission; support university diversity initiatives.
- Perform other duties incidental to the work described above.

Characteristics and Qualifications of the Successful Candidate

Clarkson seeks candidates with the following characteristics and/or qualifications:

- A bachelor's degree is required; master's degree preferred or comparable experience reflecting a contemporary understanding of student development and higher education administration issues.
- A minimum of five years of progressively responsible experience demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of career development, job search strategies, job market trends, employer relations, contemporary recruitment methodologies, and trends in career services, including the use of current technologies;
- Evidence of working creatively and effectively with students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, and employers;
- A commitment to customer service;
- Strong verbal and written communication, marketing, and public relations skills;
- Excellent organizational skills with an attention to detail and an ability to multi-task;
- Prior management experience utilizing a team approach.

Additionally, the following characteristics and attributes have been consistently identified by various stakeholders of the position on the Clarkson campus.

- Must possess the personal energy, creativity, and vision necessary to continually innovate programs and services that will meet the needs of current students, link students with professional role models, stimulate career preparation through experiential learning, and imbue in students and alumni a lifelong connection between their Clarkson education and career success;
- Work with passion and purpose to establish the career center as a "best in class" operation that leads, not follows, the competition;
- Demonstrate a record of successful relationship-building and collaboration with internal (e.g., undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, staff, members of the trustees, and officers of the college) and external constituencies (e.g., alumni, parents, employer representatives, and "captains of business and industry");
- Have a personal style that is professional, personable, approachable, and politically savvy—must have well-developed interpersonal skills and be an active listener;
- Be technically savvy and familiar with leading career center software (e.g. NACELink and/or other similar online job posting and college recruiting systems);
- Bring to the role of director an active professional network of higher education colleagues and business and industry representatives whose experience and perspective will help facilitate the ongoing assessment, benchmarking, and continual improvement of Clarkson career services;
- Embrace the culture of a small, highly focused, research-oriented institution with a well-established academic reputation for preparing graduates for success in science, technology, engineering, health care, and business;
- Possess a clear understanding of current research and trends impacting career services and the professional acumen to engage academic partners in discussions that dovetail with their areas of expertise and will lead to outcomes mutually beneficial to students;
- Exhibit the skills, abilities, and interests needed to actively partner with cross-campus colleagues to support diversity recruitment and retention, alumni engagement, and enrollment objectives;

- Possess strong leadership and team-building abilities—able to inspire and motivate both staff and students—and eagerly contribute to institutional goals and initiatives;
- Demonstrate a balanced approach to management that incorporates data-driven decision-making, team development, active assessment, and superior follow through on agreed upon goals and objectives;
- Understand the importance of ongoing professional development for self and staff;
- Be flexible and eager to move from high-level strategic planning to direct delivery of service to students;
- Appreciate the fact that the director's role is not confined to nine-to-five, nor to campus—must enjoy domestic and international travel directed toward developing and sustaining relationships with current and potential employers.

Likely Priorities and Challenges of the Position

Challenges and/or priorities for the position as articulated by stakeholders are as follows:

- Clarkson faculty have in recent years revised the core curriculum featuring enhanced interdisciplinary coursework and the acquisition of professional experience. Students who entered in fall 2006 (and graduated in spring 2010) were the first to embrace this new core curriculum, known as the Clarkson Common Experience, which promises that all students will participate in a project-based professional experience following the first-year such as co-op, internship, directed research, or community project clearly related to their professional goals. This initiative is still developing and the next director of the career center must establish him/herself and that of his/her staff as effective partners able to work in concert with academic affairs administrators and faculty in strengthening the career center's contribution to students' success in appropriate professional experiences.
- The director of the career center must recognize that developing strong connections with corporations is essential to the mission of Clarkson and must be eager to partner with many internal constituents, including trustees, president, senior cabinet members, deans, faculty, and development officers to expand and sustain these critical relationships;
- Work closely with the Dean of the Business School on evaluating career services needs of both undergraduate and graduate students. As staff resources within the Business School have been redirected in the past year to support new student recruitment, the reliance on the Career Center to meet the placement expectations of MBA students (most of whom are individuals who move directly from undergraduate programs into a one-year MBA program with limited full-time work experience) has grown. The next director will need to think creatively about how to best serve this MBA population (typically 40 to 70 students annually) and determine if sufficient resources and personnel are in place to meet the expectations of personalized service and outcomes.
- The director of the career center must be cognizant of how changes in the economy and advances in technology impact recruitment opportunities for graduates and actively employ strategies that will help mitigate adverse effects (e.g., ensure strong and enduring relationships with employers that will continue to have a presence on campus and actively support the hiring of Clarkson graduates);
- Maintain forward momentum of the study abroad programs and internship programs with a goal of increasing current student participation levels, in line with Clarkson's desire to prepare its graduates to successfully manage the unique challenges of today's complex world;
- Encourage students to assume some reasonable risk in exploring out-of-classroom experiences;
- Create a culture of mutual respect for professional competence and autonomy among staff of the career center;
- Collaborate with the Office of Alumni Relations to creatively engage alumni in support of the University and Career Center, including serving as mentors and networking resources for current students;
- As a member of the student affairs management team, continued collaboration and attention is required to meet the full spectrum of students' needs, including the development of enhanced co-curricular programming and establishment of active living learning residential environments;

- Actively participate in strategic planning initiatives of the division;
- Maintain a supportive and inclusive environment, programs, and services that will respond to the needs of female students who are current in the minority, as well as male students.

Measures of Success for the Position

The following items will define the new director's success at the end of the first year of employment:

- Maintains and expands the department's reputation for being an effective, student-centered service;
- Possesses a clear vision and sets appropriate goals for the next three to four years for the center that mesh with the overall strategic plan of the division;
- Demonstrates a keen interest and support of division objectives and serves as a contributing member of the university outreach and student affairs management team;
- Has developed an energized and highly engaged career center team;
- Has built positive working relationships with key campus constituents;
- Has initiated contact with some of the key external constituents and has a clear strategy for expanding this outreach with alumni, parents, and employers who are critical to supporting career center activities and providing internship, cooperative education placements, and post-graduate recruitment opportunities for Clarkson students.

Benefits Overview

Clarkson University offers a comprehensive benefits package. Highlights include:

- Comprehensive health coverage;
- Dental care plan;
- Supplemental vision plan;
- Short-term disability benefits plan;
- Long-term disability benefits plan;
- Group life insurance;
- Accidental death and dismemberment insurance;
- Group travel accident coverage;
- Flexible spending account;
- Retirement annuity plan options through either TIAA/CREF or Nationwide; mandatory participation is required after completion of two years of full time service; employees are required to contribute 4.8 percent of regular salary, while Clarkson contribution will equal 9.6 percent of their regular salary; for employees who have been at Clarkson less than two years, employees have the option to enroll in a supplemental pension plan—there is no match by Clarkson, however, this option does allow the new employee to put away money on pre-tax basis;
- Eight paid holidays and six personal days per year;
- Twenty vacation days annually
- Dependent children are eligible for two tuition assistance programs—the Clarkson University Program (providing free tuition in any course of study leading to a bachelor's degree) and the Tuition Exchange Program;
- Tuition Grant Program—if Tuition Exchange Program is not available, the Tuition Grant is available for those eligible; a maximum of \$1,200 per academic year will be allowed toward the tuition for undergraduate study at an accredited University of their choice.
- Spouses may enroll in courses at Clarkson for credit at a tuition charge that is one-third the normal tuition.

Application and Nomination

Review of applications will begin immediately and will continue until the position is filled. A resume with an accompanying cover letter may be submitted via the SJG website at **www.spelmanandjohnson.com** under the “Open Positions” link. Confidential inquiries and nominations for this position may be emailed to Valerie Szymkowicz at vbs@sjgsearch.com. If you are unable to submit materials electronically, please call SJG at 413-529-2895.

SJG - The Spelman & Johnson Group
Clarkson University – Director, Career Center
Valerie Szymkowicz, Senior Associate

Visit the Clarkson website at www.clarkson.edu

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