

Ombudsperson Update

Background

- Established in 2015
- Service originally limited to past faculty senate presidents
- One-day training sessions held in 2015 and 2017 that were open to other faculty members, student advocate, general counsel, and HR staff
- Eligibility extended in 2021 to faculty who “By virtue of their prior service, possess significant knowledge of University structure and operations”
- Average of 5-10 total cases a year

Role of Ombudspersons

- To work with individuals and groups at the University to explore and assist them in determining options to help resolve conflicts, problematic issues or concerns.
- The Ombuds provides confidential, informal, and impartial assistance.
- Issues might include but are not limited to professional tensions, personal differences, misunderstandings, and conflict over resources.

An Ombuds DOES:

- Maintain confidentiality
- Listen to concerns and complaints
- Provide constituents a safe and informal space to be heard
- Seek answers to questions or helps find others with answers
- Explain University policy and procedure
- Provide information and assists in identifying options for managing or resolving concerns
- Informally facilitate communication between individuals in conflict
- Discuss formal options that are available

An Ombuds does NOT:

- Advocate for specific outcomes, or for individuals or groups
- Breach confidentiality
- Maintain official records
- Give legal advice
- Participate in formal grievance procedures
- Testify in any court-initiated proceeding
- Provide psychological counseling or therapy
- Make binding or administrative decisions
- Make university policy

Periodic Training Provided

- National and International associations of Ombuds: usombudsman.org and ombudsassociation.org
- 1 day campus visit at least every other year
- Supported by Academic Affairs
- Open to faculty, student and staff participants (capped capacity)
- **Tentative next dates: April 14 and 21 (1/2 days)**

Current Ombudspersons

- Carolyn Shaw, Coordinator
 - 2022-2023
- Mehmet Barut
 - 2022-2024
- Bayram Yildirim
 - 2022-2025
- Peer Moore-Jansen
 - 2022-2026

More Info

- www.wichita.edu/ombuds