

WSU Faculty Ombuds Services

Ombuds at WSU

- Institutionalized in WSU Policy 4.04
- Formal charter adopted by faculty and approved by President's Executive Team (PET) in Spring 2024.

Standards of Practice

1. **Independence** – operate separately from institutional reporting structures; adhere to university policy; budget for ongoing professional development
2. **Impartiality** – facilitate problem solving that does not take sides or favor a particular outcome
3. **Confidentiality** – Do not share any information with others without permission; the Ombuds role is *not* mandatory reporter
4. **Informality** – Do not conduct or participate in formal investigative procedures

Ombuds Members

- Qualifications
 - International Ombuds Association (IOA) membership, training and experience.
- Provost can receive complaints about violations of standards of conduct

Reasons to seek Ombuds Services

- Address tensions before conflicts escalate
- Pursue informal conflict resolution measures
 - Conflict may develop and harms organizational unity when silenced, ignored, or denied.
 - Not all conflict needs to be resolved with a formal grievance, but addressing the conflict can help the organization's health.
 - Informal conflict resolution can reduce the organizations use of resources, time and energy of parties required in formal grievance processes.
- Identify resources and information for problem solving
 - Individuals may not be aware of resources and processes within the university to address concerns. Ombuds persons can clarify and direct people to appropriate resources.

Services available

- An Ombuds can:
 - Facilitate conflict resolution
 - Listens to concerns and complaints
 - Provide faculty a safe space to be heard
 - Seek answers to questions
 - Explain University policy and procedure
 - Help identify options for managing concerns
 - Informally facilitate communication between individuals in conflict
 - Discuss formal options that are available

Services NOT provided

- An Ombuds will not:
 - Give legal advice
 - Participate in formal grievance procedures
 - Testify in any court-initiated proceeding
 - Provide psychological counseling or therapy
 - Make binding or administrative decisions

Annual reporting

- The Ombuds program provides aggregate-level data to the faculty senate in an annual report.
 - The report may include statistics, trends, systemic issues, but without any revealing identifying information.

Current Ombuds

- Bayram Yildirim, 2022 – 2025
- Carolyn Shaw, 2022 – 2026
- Stephanie Nicks, 2024 – 2027
- Mehmet Barut, 2024 – 2028

Questions?

www.wichita.edu/ombuds

Policy 4.04