



University faculty ombuds

2/6/20

Overview

- ▶ Basics
- ▶ IOA
- ▶ What an ombuds can do
- ▶ What an ombuds can't do
- ▶ FY19 summary



Basics

What is an ombudsperson (aka ombuds or ombudsman)?

An ombudsperson is a neutral person who can assist in resolving concerns and disputes in an informal, confidential, impartial manner. We support individuals and groups, optimize the effectiveness of University programs and services, and enhance the safety culture and learning environment at MUSC.

How does the Ombuds handle issues brought by faculty?

This program provides a safe and confidential place for you to seek information, discuss concerns and disputes, explore your options, and identify helpful resources that may be available to you. The Office's goal is to offer constructive strategies to deal with challenging situations. We utilize listening, coaching, informal consulting, facilitated meetings with other parties, shuttle diplomacy, and referrals to other existing services.

Who can use the MUSC faculty ombuds program?

The Ombuds program is offered as a no-charge service to MUSC faculty.

- ▶ <https://education.musc.edu/leadership/provost/reporting-units/ombudsman/frequently-asked-questions>



What ombuds can do

- ▶ Listen
- ▶ Validate
- ▶ Shuttle diplomacy
- ▶ Contact with resources
- ▶ Informal inquiry
- ▶ Conflict coaching
- ▶ Facilitated discussion
- ▶ Training
- ▶ Maintain confidentiality



What ombuds cannot do

- ▶ Legal advice
- ▶ Psychological counseling



FY19 based on IOA uniform reporting categories

- ▶ 17 cases, average 3h/case
- ▶ Average duration: 16.8 days; median 3d
- ▶ Most utilization by COM
- ▶ All either self-referred or referred by colleague
- ▶ Common themes:
 - ▶ Respect
 - ▶ Equitable treatment
 - ▶ Bullying
 - ▶ Organizational climate
 - ▶ Use of positional power/authority
 - ▶ Work-life balance, stress
 - ▶ Values/culture
- ▶ Common impact:
 - ▶ Lower morale, job satisfaction, sleep, anxiety
 - ▶ turnover
- ▶ Common triggers:
 - ▶ Resignation
 - ▶ Position ambiguity



Unsolicited thoughts 😊

- ▶ Culture assessment
- ▶ 360 evals → insight
- ▶ Don't underestimate the power of one toxic person
- ▶ Don't be conflict averse; address issues early
- ▶ Embrace the power of respect, kindness!
- ▶ Evaluate professionalism
- ▶ Remember everyone has something going on
- ▶ Key resources: legal, title IX, OGE, compliance, patient safety, diversity/inclusion

