



# Office of the Ombuds

## Our Services

The Office of the Ombuds is an informal, impartial and confidential resource for addressing complaints, problems, or conflicts. The office is independent and unaffiliated with any other campus office.

### Our Services

1. Individual services, designed as a means to clarify interests, issues, and options through consultation or coaching on conflict situations.
2. Two or multiple –party mediations. Mediations are negotiations facilitated by an impartial third-party who, through a relatively defined process, assists the parties in moving to resolution.
3. Group trainings or facilitation that address existing complaints or promote team-building to manage conflict in a pro-active, skill-building fashion.

For staff, mediation services are also offered as an alternative dispute resolution process, preferably before a formal complaint is filed under PPSM 70 A (Professional and Support Staff) or PPSM B (Managers and Senior Professionals) for a range of employment-related issues including, but not limited to, employee performance, equity, treatment, etc. For faculty, as stated in specific (Senate and Non-Senate) academic personnel policies, mediation services are offered to resolve issues which may include, but are not limited to, faculty conduct and performance, academic freedom, intellectual property, discrimination, etc.

In a climate of high stress, reduced resources, and organizational change, misunderstandings often arise. Confidential consultation, conflict coaching, mediation, and training are particularly effective ways to improve the morale and functioning of a work unit.

### Situations which may benefit from Office of the Ombuds services include the following:

- A staff or faculty member faces the loss of his or her job and wants to understand the options available.
- An employee feels singled out by a supervisor and wants to proactively work to address this relationship.
- A student has concerns about unfair treatment from faculty members or other students.
- An academic team member experiences lack of respect or recognition for his/her contribution, including authorship issues, team-developed products, or input to the work environment.
- A manager and an employee have different expectations regarding the degree of flexibility in meeting the requirements of the job.
- A work team experiences significant staffing changes due to budget cuts or reorganization and wants help restoring a culture of trust and good morale.
- A group of clinicians recognizes that improved communication could improve patient safety and wants a training that uses validated assessments.
- A manager identifies that workplace bullying is going on, and wants help bringing the topic to the work group and developing a communication protocol.
- A faculty member wants to prepare trainees to be leaders with effective conflict competence skills.
- A work team wants an external facilitator for strategic planning or other group process work.