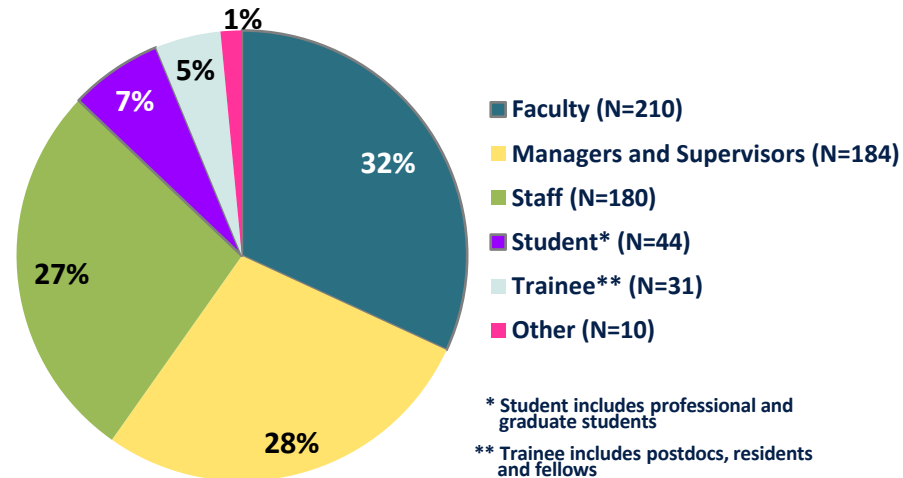
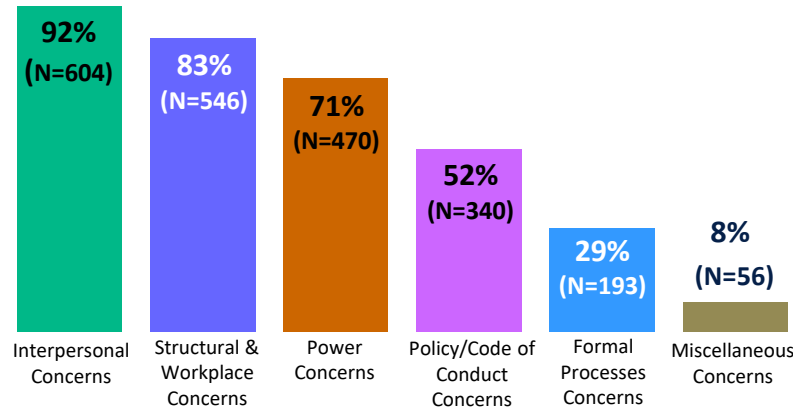


Ombuds Visitors Served (N=659 people)



Visitors' Top Concerns (N=659 people)

Main Categories of Concerns
 (Note that visitors may express multiple concerns)



Discrimination and Abusive Conduct Concerns (N=659 people)

Concern Clusters	Number	Percent
*Discrimination Cluster	176	27%
Discrimination includes Sexual/Gender orientation, Racial, Age, Disability, Structural Racism, and Other. In FY 2022-23, the Discrimination Cluster is in the Top 10 Concerns for the first time, at #7.		
Abusive Conduct Cluster	255	39%
Abusive Conduct includes Positional Power, Harassment/ Bullying/ Mobbing, and Retaliation.		

Office of the Ombuds Services

Services Provided 2022-2023 (N=659)		
Service	Services Provided	Number Served
Individual Ombuds Consultation	659	659
Mediations, Group Conflicts & Group Facilitations	47	239
Trainings	47	903



Top 10 Subcategories of Concerns

Visitor-Expressed Risks (710 Risks)

Risk	Total
Potential for internal/external grievances	153
Unwarranted attrition/transfer	148
Significant violation of policy/Code of Conduct	143
Loss of department productivity due to pervasive conflict	141
Negative publicity	59
Litigation potential	36
High-risk safety issue	30

These are the risks that visitors expressly state. Of the 659 Ombuds visitors, 373 (57%) identified at least one associated risk. Unresolved conflict creates both risk and cost.

Our Mission: To humanize the experience of working and learning at UCSF by providing a voluntary confidential, neutral, informal, and independent problem-solving resource that includes individual consultation, mediation, and group facilitation services to members of the diverse UCSF community predicated on the principles of fairness, equity, and respect.

For more information about Office of the Ombuds services, call (415) 502-9600 or visit ombuds.ucsf.edu.

Our Services

The Office of the Ombuds provides confidential, off-the-record conflict management resources for faculty, staff, trainees and students. We serve as thought partners, skill-builders, and resources for navigating both formal and informal [options](#) when workplace tension, conflict, or team dynamics have a negative impact on UCSF community members who work or learn at UCSF Health or Campus. Ombuds focus on de-escalation skills and applied problem-solving for [workplace concerns](#).

Our tailored, responsive work includes individual consultation and options assessment, mediation, responsive group facilitation, proactive skills-building on communication and conflict management, and upward feedback to leadership. Working with an Ombuds is voluntary.

When Do People Reach Out?

Faculty, staff, and students contact the Office of the Ombuds to discuss a range of experiences. Examples include: feeling disrespected; managing the challenges of too much, too little, or hurtful communication; a stressful team climate; feeling bullied, undermined or excluded; struggling to engage in complex administrative formal processes; and institutional betrayal. Concerns are about peers (17%), supervisors (51%), direct reports (26%) and/or about a group (27%). Visitors may report concerns about more than one individual or group.

After an initial consultation, Ombuds and our visitors prioritize concerns, explore options and skills, and develop plans based on individual situations and goals. Ombuds often make referrals, share resources, and help people clarify goals and practice skills.

As a neutral, confidential resource, Ombuds don't give advice, represent an individual, or engage in formal processes.

What Are We Seeing?

Our team notes the frequency and distress level of visitors affected by workplace incivility, which often occurs below the threshold of a policy violation but has become the norm in a workplace and negatively impacts team functioning and wellness.

Managers and supervisors reach out for support in addressing complex group dynamics, especially new managers who come into a group with pre-existing conflict. "The culture of any organization is shaped by the worst behavior the leader is willing to tolerate."¹

Remote work and asynchronous communication can impact colleagues' ability to communicate effectively and engage with high interpersonal skills. Some teams engaging in virtual environments with electronic communication and collaboration tools see new behaviors which increase conflict.

Finally, there's a lack of clarity regarding options for addressing conflict, including multiple formal and informal resources, with increased requests for help in navigating the relevant options.

Conflict Competence Skills²

- ❖ *Cool Down* – Emotional self-regulation skills
 - Prepare to engage responsively rather than reactively.
- ❖ *Slow Down* – Cognitive assessment
 - Consider goals, inputs, and options for resolution.
 - Be curious, not furious.
 - Consider the risk of *not* addressing the conflict.
- ❖ *Engage Constructively* – Behavioral skills
 - Consider time, place, and manner.
 - Use cooperative language to increase effectiveness.
 - Listen for understanding, with a willingness to be influenced.
 - Move from position (*what* you want to have happen) to interest (*why* you want something to happen) to expand options for mutual resolution.

What Do Ombuds Visitors Say?

"I have to say, our talk worked. I met with my supervisor yesterday, and I was calm, cool and collected. I was not reactionary and feel so much better."

"Thank you! We needed guidance to untangle the knot together. It is analogous to what mediation is, that is untangling knots akin to how we would untangle garden hoses, so we get the flow back."

"The conversations are really helping me narrow down my ask in order to move forward."

"I really liked the way you broke down and categorized my list of areas we don't agree on into either 'structural issues' or 'interpersonal issues'."

Recommendations

As UCSF has developed deep commitment to the equitable treatment of all members of our community and the UC Office of the President has committed to addressing abusive conduct, we recognize the need for a commitment to developing coordinated systems and individual skills that support conflict competence and de-escalation.

The [2021-22 Annual Report](#) included three recommendations, which continue this year:

- Structural Responses to Burnout
- Conflict Management Skills-Building for managers
- Address Procedural Fairness

¹ *School Culture Rewired: How to Define, Assess, and Transform It*, Gruenert, S., Whitaker, T. 2015.

² *Developing Your Conflict Competence: A Hands-On Guide for Leaders, Managers, Facilitators, and Teams*. Runde, C.E., Flanagan, T.A. 2010.