

Our Principles

Who we are and what we do

The UCSF Office of the Ombuds serves to humanize the workplace as well as increase productivity, reducing the high personal and financial costs of poorly managed conflict through the provision of services. We offer individual consultation and coaching; mediation and group facilitation; training on communication and conflict management; and confidential upward feedback.

Our services are both *responsive*, assisting visitors to explore options, as well as *proactive*, working to increase conflict competence at interpersonal and institutional levels.

Responsive Services

Our services occupy a unique niche in the array of resources at UCSF. We serve everyone in the UCSF community: both UCSF Health and Campus; faculty, staff, students, and trainees; and UCSF partners who work in collaboration with UCSF (e.g., ZSFG employees). This institution-wide vantage allows us to see themes across multiple issues, constituents, and policy areas and identify areas of concern to leadership, serving as an early warning system to the institution.

Proactive Services

- Training on communication, conflict management, trust, teambuilding, and feedback.
- Collaboration on initiatives:
 - Interprofessional Education for all first and second year professional students
 - Primary Care Leadership Team Training
 - Faculty Leadership Development Training
 - Provider Communication Training
 - Participation in the development of UCSF anti-workplace bullying efforts
 - UC-wide Ombuds network
 - Two International Ombuds Association annual conference presentations
 - California Caucus annual program committee

Keashly, L. (2015). Bullying in the workplace: Causes, consequences and actions. In: *University of Michigan Abilities Week*.

Confidentiality

The Ombuds holds all communications with those seeking assistance in strict confidence and does not disclose confidential communications unless given permission to do so. The only exception to this privilege of confidentiality is where there appears to be imminent risk of serious harm.

Neutrality

The Ombuds, as a designated neutral, remains unaligned and impartial. The Ombuds Office helps identify the perspectives and options of all parties, and does not take sides. The Ombuds Office is, however, an advocate for fair and equitable processes.

Informality

The Ombuds Office is an informal, off-the-record resource, and does not participate in any formal adjudicative or administrative proceedings. The Office has no decision-making authority and maintains no official records.

Independence

The Ombuds is independent in structure, function and appearance to the highest degree possible within the organization.

**FY 2017-2018 Update:
Categorizing our Work**

Visitor-reported Concern: Abrasive conduct

In previous years, the Ombuds visitor-reported concern most frequently mentioned has been “Respect and Treatment.” The same is true for this year, but we’ve sharpened our focus by combining four visitor-reported concerns, based on literature on abrasive conduct (Keashly, 2015): Abuse of Power, Harassment/Bullying/Mobbing, Retaliation, and Violence into an Abrasive Conduct cluster. These specific behaviors constitute the more extreme end of a continuum of incivility with variables such as Lack of Respect or Recognition on the lower end of the continuum. Altogether, 168 of 533 (32%) visitors reported experiencing or witnessing these more extreme forms of incivility, across faculty, managers, staff, trainees, and students. These visitors’ explicit stated concerns addressed some form of highly abrasive conduct. Additionally, we heard that systems to address these experiences lacked clarity, transparency, or timeliness.

Visitor-Reported Risk

Over the past three years, we’ve captured the risk that our visitors report, including risks to themselves, to their unit, and to the institution. This year, 224 of 533 visitors expressly stated one of our 7 risks (see other side), with an increase in “unwarranted staff attrition/transfer.” In the literature, turnover costs 150% of an employee’s salary, with additional impacts on morale and continuity.

Ombuds-assessed Case Complexity

In addition to analyzing visitor-reported concerns and visitor-identified risk, this year we also developed an Ombuds-assigned method for categorizing overall case complexity. When visitors share their own concerns, they may not be aware of additional individuals or components involved in their case. They cannot compare their experience to others who use our services. To simplify our ability to describe the range of seriousness and intensity of Ombuds cases, we developed the following taxonomy:

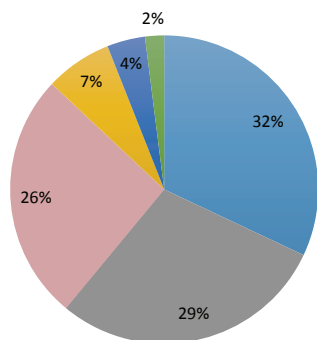
- Green - fairly straightforward, usually with fewer than 4 people; mostly interpersonal conflicts
- Yellow - more people involved, multiple issues, increasingly serious consequences
- Red - highly complex work with high stakes, often lasting several months or impacting multiple parts of the organization

Of the 533 visitors who received Ombuds services, the case complexity was as follows:

Green	Yellow	Red
282 (53%)	190 (36%)	61 (11%)

A confidential, independent, informal, and impartial resource is an essential UCSF service, providing a safe place for members of the UCSF community to explore options and address concerns in a self-directed way. The support of the institution is essential, and the Office of the Ombuds provides upward feedback that might not be available otherwise. By reinvigorating the PRIDE Principles and continuing to explore anti-bullying efforts, UCSF can strengthen the resolve to improve the campus climate and support a zero tolerance for abrasive behavior in our work and learning environment. Our mission to promote worldwide health begins at home.

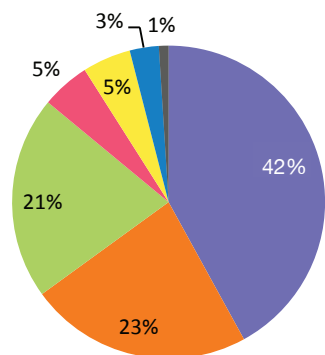
2017-2018 Ombuds Visitors Served (N=533)



- Manager & Supervisor (N=169)
- Faculty (N=155)
- Staff (N=137)
- Trainee* (N=39)
- Student** (N=22)
- Other (N=11)

* Trainee includes Post Docs, Fellows and Residents
 ** Student includes Students and Grad Students

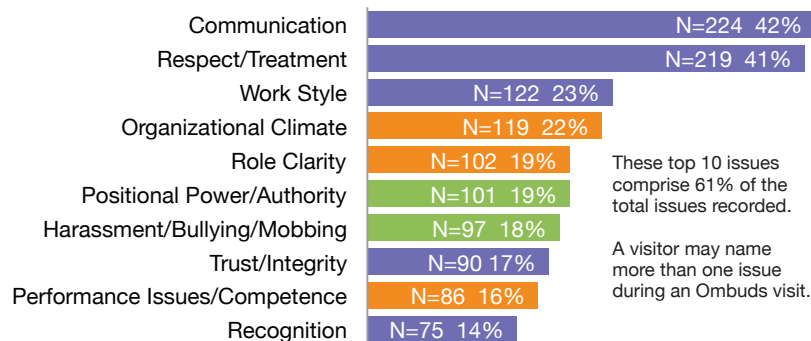
All Visitors' Concerns: Main Categories (N=2,099)



- Interpersonal Issues (N=892)
- Structural/Workplace issues (N=479)
- Power Issues (N=432)
- Policy/Code of Conduct (N=112)
- Formal Processes (N=112)
- Miscellaneous (N=55)
- Disability Issues (N=17)

A visitor may name more than one issue during an Ombuds visit.

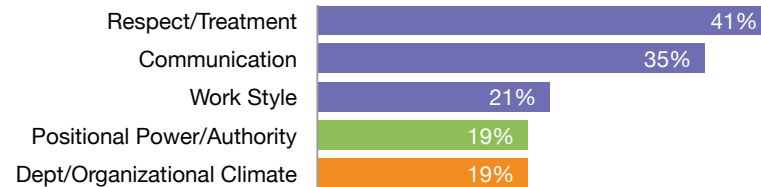
All Visitors' Concerns: Top 10 Subcategories (N=533 people)



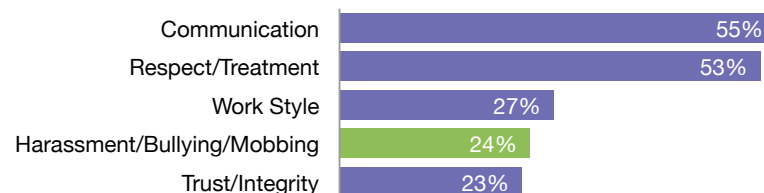
These top 10 issues comprise 61% of the total issues recorded.

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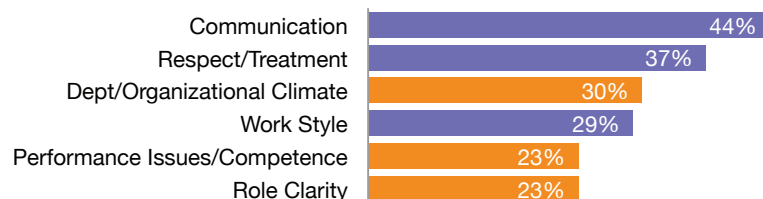
Top 5 FACULTY Concerns (N=155)



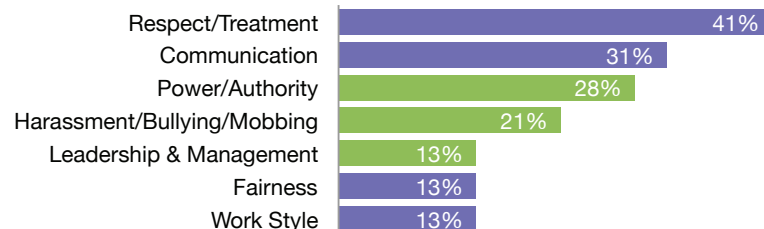
Top 5 STAFF Concerns (N=137)



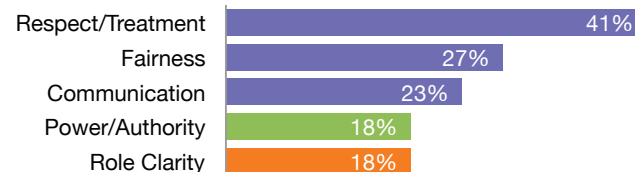
Top 5 MANAGER & SUPERVISOR Concerns (N=169)



Top 5 POST-DOC, RESIDENT & FELLOW Concerns (N=39)



Top 5 STUDENT & GRAD STUDENT Concerns (N=22)



Our Mission

To humanize the experience of working and learning at UCSF by providing a confidential, impartial, 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.

Services Provided

Services Provided	Number	People
Individual Ombuds Consultation	533	533
Mediations and Group Facilitations	72	517
Trainings	69	1540

Risks

The Office of the Ombuds identifies the risks that visitors expressly state in their confidential meetings. In 2017–2018, 42% of the 533 visitors identified at least one associated risk. Unresolved conflict creates both risk and cost.

Risk	Total
Loss of departmental productivity due to pervasive conflict	109
Unwarranted staff attrition/transfer	84
Potential for internal/external grievances	75
Significant violations of policy/Code of Conduct	34
Litigation potential	31
Negative publicity	30
High-risk safety issue	18

For more information about the Office of the Ombuds services, please call us: (415) 502-9600. Visit us online: www.ombuds.ucsf.edu. Visit us in person: Laurel Heights Campus, 3333 California Street, Suite 309; Parnassus Campus, 505 Parnassus Ave., Room M623.