Purpose:
The faculty ombuds provides members of the University with faculty appointments a prompt and professional way to resolve concerns, conflicts, and complaints beyond turning to their supervisors.

- E-mail: facombud@austin.utexas.edu
- Phone: 512-471-5866
- Office Location: WMB 2.102
- Web: www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/ombuds
NUMBER OF FACULTY MEETING WITH OMBUDS

2014-2015
2013-2014
2012-2013
2011-2012
2010-2011
2009-2010
2008-2009
Ave. 2004-2008
2014-2015 Academic Year

✓ Total of 125 Visitors
✓ From 14 Colleges/Schools including 40 Departments/Divisions
  13 Lecturers; 24 Assist Prof; 30 Assoc Prof; 33 Prof
  18 Dept Chairs/Directors; 7 Deans/Associate Deans
  74 Female; 51 Male
✓ Faculty ombuds works approximately 10-15 hrs/wk
✓ Most cases resolved without initiating grievance process
✓ Extraordinary cooperation from Office of Institutional Equity, Employee Assistance Program, Legal Affairs, and other Administrative Officials
EXAMPLES OF CONCERNS BROUGHT TO FACULTY OMBUDS

- Questions or complaints about a University office, service, or decision
- Need for mediation or help facilitating communication
- Perceived inequities in work or pay; unfair treatment
- Belief that a University policy or practice is unfair or confusing
- Perceived unethical or inappropriate behavior; concerns of bullying
- Interpersonal conflicts and problems with workplace climate
- Concerns about career advancement & job satisfaction or security
- Advice on having a difficult conversation
- Problems of institutional non-responsiveness and red-tape
- Need for an impartial and confidential sounding board
- Unsure where else to turn for help or next steps
CAMPUS OMBUDS OPERATING PRINCIPLES

CONFIDENTIALITY:
- In order to create a safe place to voice concerns, evaluate issues, and identify options, Ombuds respect the confidentiality and privacy of all individuals.
- Exceptions are made as required by law or University policy, including imminent harm to self or others.

NEUTRALITY:
- Ombuds operate as neutral third-parties and do not take sides.
- Ombuds consider the interests and concerns of all parties with the aim of developing fair and equitable options toward resolution.
CAMPUS OMBUDS OPERATING PRINCIPLES

INFORMALITY:
- Use of Ombuds office is strictly voluntary.
- Conversations with Ombuds are considered informal and off-the-record.
- Ombuds does not participate in formal grievances or complaints.

INDEPENDENCE:
- The faculty ombuds reports directly to the Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and the Provost; this provides the office with an independence to ensure impartiality.
CAMPUS OMBUDS PROCESS

- **Identify** issues and options
- **Clarify** desired outcomes
- **Strategize** – to whom and how best to raise the issue or concern
- **Think through** difficult situations (personally and/or professionally) in a confidential, neutral setting – with someone familiar with UT culture
- **Facilitate** understanding and resolution
- Pursue **organizational development** through systemic feedback
HOW CAN THE FACULTY OMBUDS HELP?

The Ombuds CAN...

- Listen in a nonjudgmental and objective way
- Answer questions or refer visitors to someone who can
- Explain how University policies or procedures work
- Help identify options in resolving a problem
- Help evaluate options and possible next steps
- Assist in informally resolving a dispute or conflict by facilitating communication, coaching on conflict resolution, or mediating between willing parties
- Refer individuals to the appropriate office should they wish to file a formal complaint
- Look into perceived procedural irregularities in grievance proceedings
- Recommend changes to policies/procedures that appear problematic
- Inform University officials about significant trends, patterns of complaints, or problems that appear to be systemic
How Can the Faculty Ombuds Help?

The Ombuds CANNOT…

- Take sides or serve as an advocate for any party
- Maintain official records
- Unilaterally change rules or policies
- Set aside a decision or supersede the authority of another University official
- Provide legal advice
- Provide psychological counseling or therapy
- Participate in any formal grievance process
- Conduct formal investigations
GENERALIZATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Choose actions that best demonstrate fairness and respect, and where appropriate, advocacy for rewards.
- …nonetheless, conflicts will arise (well-meaning bright people sometimes disagree), and most can be resolved amicably.