



UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA

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TO: President Jere Morehead
213 Administration Building

FROM: E. Janyce Dawkins, Director *EJD*
Equal Opportunity Office
119 Holmes-Hunter Academic Building

RE: 2017-2018 Ombudsperson Report

This report marks the ninth annual Ombudsperson Program report since the Ombudsperson Program began on October 1, 2008. This annual report is charged with discussing trends or patterns in the reporting of issues and concerns by students, faculty and staff and making recommendations for changes or improvements to existing policies and procedures.¹ The Program was initiated in 2008 to address concerns about the handling of sexual harassment complaints. Since that time the landscape of sexual harassment has exploded in public awareness, in regulatory oversight, and in institutional priorities.

Our Ombudsperson Program has appropriately and responsibly responded to this awareness and currently serve as a confidential resource for persons requiring information and support for alleged instances of sexual misconduct. Nonetheless sexual harassment issues have consistently been a very small percentage of the ombudspersons contacts.² However, the ombudsperson program has expanded well beyond that initial focus and serves the UGA Community in multiple areas.

Cathy Jones stepped down as the Faculty Ombudsperson on June 30, 2018. Jenny Gaver, currently a Professor in the J.M. Tull School of Accounting, has stepped into this role with energy. Charisse Harper from the Office of the Dean of Students continues as the Student

¹ See Ombudsperson Program Website: <http://www.uga.edu/ombudsperson/>

² There were 4 reports of sexual harassment to ombudsperson in the 2017-2018 reporting period. This represents 2.7% of the total concerns addressed.

Ombudsperson and Steve Gibson from the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, the longest serving Ombudsperson, continues as the Staff Ombudsperson.

Though the primary roles of the individual Ombudspersons have been delegated as faculty, staff or student respectively, individuals are advised to seek assistance from any designee regardless of their formal designation. This has worked well by accommodating absences and potential conflicts of interest. The Ombudspersons continue to provide support to the entire University community in furthering fairness within the University community and serve as a source of information and referral. The Ombudspersons continue to serve as a Confidential Support Resource under UGA's Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) Protocol. The Program, in its organization and operation, serves as an additional resource to the University's existing policies and procedures for processing and resolving student, faculty and staff complaints and concerns.

The Ombudspersons addressed 148 concerns during the 2017-2018 reporting period and represents the largest number of contacts to date. 44% of the student concerns involved academic probation and dismissals. 40% of the employee concerns (faculty and staff combined) were classified as Employee/Workplace Issues with 42.3% of those relating to Supervision.

TOPIC FOR CONSIDERATION

It is concerning that this section of the Ombudsperson Report remains essentially unchanged each year. Again, there is a recurring concern stemming from supervisory decisions and management issues. Ineffective communications, unfair treatment, non-compliance with existing practices and procedures, and personality issues were all raised. These issues, whether perceived or actual, lead to conflicts in the working relationship. The inherent power differential in the supervisory relationship intensifies the conflicts and can create a sense of frustration and belief that the reporters have no voice. Continued and increased training opportunities are applauded to help supervisors and managers address workplace conflicts and resolve issues in a fair and objective manner consistent with policies and procedures already in place. New Department Head training is available and most new appointees attend this training. Similarly, basic supervisor training is available to new staff supervisors through Training and Development. Neither is mandatory. Moreover, this one-time training is not sufficient to provide these employees with the tools sufficient to become successful managers and supervisors.

We recommend that the aforementioned training for appointees with new management responsibilities become mandatory for staff and faculty. We also recommend the development of additional training opportunities to supplement this initial training and provide opportunities to refine their newly acquired skills and acquire new skills and tools in order to be successful managers and supervisors.

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SUMMARY

The Ombuds Program continues to serve as a resource for the entire UGA community in a tangible way. The Ombuds provide an opportunity for UGA Community members to speak candidly about concerns and discuss those concerns in a safe environment. The expansion of ombudspersons into new USG institutions will provide networking and learning opportunities that will help them grow in their roles and become more effective.

As the Ombuds Program grows, it is increasingly important to monitor the number of contacts and the amount of time required so that we can appropriately respond to any interference with the Ombuds' primary responsibilities.

Thank you for your continued support.

Encls: 2017-2018 Ombudspersons Data Report

cc: Provost Libby Morris
Dr. Andy Owsiak

**OMBUDSPERSONS REPORT
2017-2018**

Table 1

All Ombudsman Visitors											
Status, Gender and Ethnicity of Contacts in 2012-2013											
Status of Contact	Female	Male	Not Known	TOTAL	African-American	Asian	Caucasian	Latino	Other	Not Known	Total
Student	35	11	3	49	2	1	5	3	4	34	49
Faculty	15	14		29	1	1	22			2	26
Staff	22	7	1	30			27	1	3	3	34
Non-UGA	3	1		4			1			2	3
TOTAL	75	33	4	112	3	2	55	4	7	41	112

Table 2

Types of concerns	Students	Faculty	Staff	Non-UGA	TOTAL
Financial Concerns	3	1	3	1	8
Student Academic	24	0	0	0	24
Student Conduct	5	0	0	1	6
Classroom Instruction	7	0	0	0	7
Faculty/Staff Performance	1	3	0	0	4
Employment/Workplace Issues	2	10	47	0	59
Faculty/Staff Conduct	5	7	15	0	27
Misc. Concerns	4	6	2	1	13
TOTAL	51	27	67	3	148

Table 3

Financial Concerns Contracts, emergency loans, encumbrances, fees, financial aid, fines, independent status, insurance, leases, paycheck, refunds, tuition, tuition waiver, graduate
Academic Academic probation/dismissal, add/drop, admission, certification, clinical/student teaching course, closed classes, comprehensive exams, credit transfer, incompletes, transfer, incompletes, degree/graduation requirements, medical withdrawals, other.
Student Conduct Academic misconduct, alcohol, classroom disruption, due process, harassment, hazing, intimidation, judicial system, residence hall misconduct, roommate disputes, sanctions, sexual harassment, theft, other.
Classroom Instruction Attendance, course syllabus, discriminatory grading, faculty absences, final exams, grade appeals, grade change, grading standards, make-up work, personality conflicts, quality of instruction, teacher fluency, other.
Faculty/Staff Performance Inaccurate advising, inattentiveness, incompetence, retention of test/papers, availability, tardiness, attendance, completion of tasks.
Employment/Workplace Issues Training, supervision, performance evaluation, pay, benefits, retirement, promotion/tenure, job classification/duties, work schedule/setting, hiring, discharge, unfit for duty, interpersonal conflict, disability issues (ADA/FMLA), conflict of interest, nepotism
Faculty/Staff Conduct Deceitfulness, derogatory comments, discrimination, favoritism, harassment, intimidation, retaliation, rudeness, sexual harassment, theft, intoxication/under influence, insubordination, job abandonment, workplace violence, arrest/conviction, garnishment, other.
Miscellaneous Policy Issues and Development, privacy issues, disability accommodations, parking, on-campus housing, legal issues, health concerns, ethical considerations, off-campus housing, immigration issues, off-campus problems, safety issues, career advising, not otherwise categorized (NOC).
*These data only represent allegations that were brought to the Ombudspersons and should not be interpreted as confirmed incidents.

Table 4

Steve Gibson - Ombudspersons Presentations/Meetings 9-1-17 to 8-31-18		
Date	Topic	Organization/Group
Monthly	Various questions at several meetings	UGA Staff Council
8/2/2018/7/25/2018	EAP and other services available to employees	HR Liaisons Meeting
8/3/2018	EAP and other available support services	OneSource Change Champions Webinar
Catherine Jones - Ombudspersons Presentations/Meetings 9-1-17 to 8-31-18		
Date	Topic	Organization/Group
9/26/2017	Meeting with President Morehead	Ombuds report
10/5/2017	Sexual Misconduct policy	SART
12/7/2017	Sexual Misconduct policy	SART
Charisse Harper - Ombudspersons Presentations/Meetings 9-1-17 to 8-31-18		
Date	Topic	Organization/Group
9/7/2017	Meeting	SART Meeting
10/4/2017	Meeting	Womens Resource Committee Meeting
10/5/2017	Meeting	SART Meeting
11/2/2017	Meeting	SART Meeting
12/7/2017	Meeting	SART Meeting
1/4/2017	Meeting	SART Meeting
7/12/2018	Meeting	SART Meeting