



UNIVERSITY OF  
GEORGIA

Equal Opportunity Office

August 30, 2019

TO: President Jere Morehead  
213 Administration Building

FROM: E. Janyce Dawkins, Director *EJD*  
Equal Opportunity Office  
278 Brooks Hall

RE: 2018-2019 Ombudsperson<sup>1</sup> Report

This report marks the tenth annual Ombudsperson Program report since the Ombudsperson Program (“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.<sup>2</sup> 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.

The Program has appropriately and responsibly responded to this awareness and currently serves 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.<sup>3</sup> However, the Program has expanded well beyond that initial focus and serves the UGA Community in multiple areas.

Dr. Jenny Gaver a Professor in the J.M. Tull School of Accounting continues as the Faculty Ombuds. Charisse Harper from the Office of the Dean of Students continues as the Student Ombuds and Steve Gibson from the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, the longest serving Ombuds, continues as the Staff Ombuds.

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<sup>1</sup> Steve Gibson has asked that we shorten the title from Ombudsperson to Ombuds. I have used ombuds<sup>1</sup> when referencing them personally.

<sup>2</sup> See Ombudsperson Program Website: <http://www.uga.edu/ombudsperson/>

<sup>3</sup> There were 2 reports of sexual harassment to ombuds in the 2018-2019 reporting period. This represents 2.0% of the total concerns addressed. This is consistent with last year’s report of 2.7%.

Though the primary roles of the individual Ombuds 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 Ombuds 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 Ombuds 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.

#### 2018-2019 CONCERNS

The Ombuds addressed 97 concerns during the 2018-2019 reporting period. This reporting period, 43.75% of the student concerns involved conduct. 85% of the student conduct concerns related to faculty/staff conduct (12 reports) with half of those concerns identified discrimination as the reason for the report. Last year conduct concerns accounted for 19.6 % of the total student concerns or 10 reports. 50% of those conduct concerns related to students and 50% related to faculty/staff conduct. Last year academic probation and dismissals represented 44% of the concerns, yet this year only represented 6.25%.

Employee/Workplace Issues represented 70% of the staff concerns with 70% of those relating to supervision issues. This category was the most reported last year as well, but the representation of the total has increased this year. Faculty concerns within Employee/Workplace Issues were equality split between conduct and employment/workplace issues. While recognizing the sample size is low (only 17 concerns), intimidation was the most frequent concern raised.

#### TOPIC FOR CONSIDERATION

Year after year supervision and management issues have been the overarching campus concern with faculty and staff. We have implemented supervisor training and the reduction in the number of complaints may be attributed to this training. Ineffective communications, unfair treatment, non-compliance with existing practices and procedures, and personality issues continue as problems for employees. The intimidation concerns raised by faculty are not surprising and arguably inevitable in the inherent power differential along with the stresses of faculty responsibilities. 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

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available to new staff supervisors through Training and Development. Human Resources, as well as Faculty Affairs, has developed and implemented new opportunities for developed. It is also important that all employees take advantage of training opportunities so that they are informed about UGA policies and procedures. More widespread participation in training opportunities would facilitate more informed interactions that would realize expectations that are more realistic. No UGA offered training is mandatory for employees.

The increased complaints of faculty discriminating against students is concerning. While we don't have the specific types of discrimination voiced, this is a negative trend that the Equal Opportunity Office will review and evaluate. Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment (NDAH) Policy training discusses the implications of unintended comments and actions, and how that conduct may create offensive perceptions. There are also training opportunities that offer insight into creating and maintaining nondiscriminatory environments through the Diversity Certificate Program.

#### SUMMARY

The 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 opportunity to speak with ombuds in other USG institutions provide networking and learning opportunities that will help our ombuds grow in their roles and become more effective.

Thank you for your continued support.

Encls: 2018-2019 Ombudspersons Data Report

cc: Provost Jack Hu  
David Shipley

**OMBUDSPERSONS REPORT  
2018-2019**

**Table 1**

**All Ombudsperson Visitors**

**Status, Gender and Ethnicity of Contacts in 2018-2019**

<b>Status of Contact</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Not Known</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>African-American</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Caucasian</b>	<b>Latino</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Not Known</b>
Student	8	7	16	31	1	0	5	1	0	24
Faculty	10	8		18		1	16	1		
Staff	29	16	0	45	7	5	36		0	
Non-UGA	3	0		3			0			0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>24</b>

**Table 2**

**Types of Primary Issues Presented by Campus Constituencies**

<b>Types of concerns</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Faculty</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>Non-UGA</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Financial Concerns	2	1	3	0	6
Student Academic	4	0	0	0	4
Student Conduct	2	1	0	0	3
Classroom Instruction	3	0	0	0	3
Faculty/Staff Performance	3	0	1	0	4
Employment/Workplace Issues	4	6	34	0	44
Faculty/Staff Conduct	12	6	7	0	25
Misc. Concerns	2	3	3	0	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>97</b>

**Table 3**

<b>Financial Concerns</b> Contracts, emergency loans, encumbrances, fees, financial aid, fines, independent status, insurance, leases, paycheck, refunds, tuition, tuition waiver, graduate assistantships, other.
<b>Academic</b> 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.
<b>Student Conduct</b> Academic misconduct, alcohol, classroom disruption, due process, harassment, hazing, intimidation, judicial system, residence hall misconduct, roommate disputes, sanctions, sexual harassment, theft, other.
<b>Classroom Instruction</b> 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.
<b>Faculty/Staff Performance</b> Inaccurate advising, inattentiveness, incompetence, retention of test/papers, availability, tardiness, attendance, completion of tasks.
<b>Employment/Workplace Issues</b> 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
<b>Faculty/Staff Conduct</b> Deceitfulness, derogatory comments, discrimination, favoritism, harassment, intimidation, retaliation, rudeness, sexual harassment, theft, intoxication/under influence, insubordination, job abandonment, workplace violence, arrest/conviction, garnishment, other.
<b>Miscellaneous</b> 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).
<b>*These data only represent allegations that were brought to the Ombudspersons and should not be interpreted as confirmed incidents.</b>

**Table 4**

**Ombudspersons Presentations/Meetings**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Organization/Group</b>
9/6/2018	Meeting	SART Meeting - Charisse
9/7/2018	Meeting with President Morehead	Ombuds Staff - Charisse
7/30/2019	Mental Health First Aid Certification	Student Care and Outreach - Charisse
9/7/2018	Meeting with President Morehead	Ombuds report - Jenny
	Sexual Misconduct policy	SART -Jenny
6/18 - 6/21/19	Ombuds Workshop	Summer Institute for Conflict Management - Steve