




The University of Georgia

September 3, 2014

TO: President Jere Morehead
213 Administration Building

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

RE: 2013-2014 Ombudsperson Report

This report marks the sixth 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 continues to be well-received by the University Community and has become a sought-after neutral resource.

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 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 number of ombudspersons reported concerns increased from 75 to 92² during 2013-2014. Employment/Workplace Issues at 34 or 36% of the issues remains the most reported concern. Faculty/Student Conduct issues were the second most reported concern at 22 or 24% of total concerns. Faculty/Staff Performance issues decreased from 17 to 1 over this reporting period.

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

² Staff Ombuds contacts = 40; Faculty Ombuds contacts = 19; Students Ombuds contacts = 33

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The Ombudspersons have recently been identified as Support Resource Employees under UGA's Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) Protocol. As a resource with some level of confidentiality, we anticipate an increased number of contacts relating to sexual misconduct issues.

TOPICS FOR CONSIDERATION

- A recurring concern stems from supervisory decisions and management issues. Ineffective communications, unfair treatment, non-compliance with existing practices and procedures, and personality issues were all raised. A common thread in many of these contacts is the lack of preparation for supervisory appointments. The selection and appointment of persons into supervisory positions varies throughout the university. It is recommended that some type of training be required for all persons in supervisory positions that will help them become more effective managers.³ In addition, periodic review of departmental bylaws and policies and procedures might help awareness and ensure fairness and consistency.
- Faculty members have expressed the need to publish the procedures for filing a grievance with the University Council Faculty Grievance Committee. The Faculty Grievance Committee has worked to add the procedures to the Council website without success.
- Faculty and 50% of the staff contacts have expressed a desire to have access to some type of assistance/counseling program such as that provided by Northeast Georgia Employee Assistance Program : <http://negeap.com/>⁴
- In previous reporting periods, bullying and incivility have been concerns in the workplace. During this reporting period, bullying and fear of retaliation has increased among students for the first time.

SUMMARY

The Program continues to serve the entire UGA community in a tangible way. It serves as a beacon of fairness, a source of information, and a place to go when there seems to be no place to go. All three Ombudspersons' appointments have been recently renewed for a two-year period. This stability will help anchor the Program and individual Ombudspersons within all constituencies. The Program has been a valuable addition to the UGA Community.

cc: Provost Pam Whitten
David Shipley

³ Provost Whitten has implemented new Department Head training and Human Resources has supervisor training available through Training and Development.

⁴ This reference serves only as an example and is not being specifically recommended or endorsed.

OMBUDSPERSONS REPORT (Totals for Linda Edge, Steve Gibson and Cathy Jones)

2013-2014

Table 1

All Ombudsperson 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
Student	21	12	0	33	0	1	13	0	4	15
Faculty	11	8	0	19	2	1	6	1	0	9
Staff	13	7	0	20	3	0	15	0	0	2
Non-UGA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	45	27	0	72	5	2	34	1	4	26

Table 2

Types of Primary Issues Presented by Campus Constituencies					
Types of concerns	Students	Faculty	Staff	Non-UGA	TOTAL
Financial Concerns	8	0	0	0	8
Student Academic	5	0	2	0	7
Student Conduct	2	2	0	0	4
Classroom Instruction	2	0	0	0	2
Faculty/Staff Performance	1	0	0	0	1
Employment/Workplace Issues	1	10	23	0	34
Faculty/Staff Conduct	6	6	10	0	22
Misc. Concerns	8	3	1	2	14
TOTAL	33	21	36	2	92

Table 3

Financial Concerns assistantships, other.
Academic 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 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

Ombudspersons Presentations/Meetings 9-1-13 to 8-31-14		
Sep-13	met with Victor Wilson re Ombuds Program	VP for Student Affairs-Edge
12-Sep-13	Conflict Management/Strategies for Analyzing	Ombuds Webinar-Edge
	Cultural Components in Conflict	Linda Edge
7-Oct-13	Meeting abt Ombudsing & student veterans	Ted Barco - Student Veteran Resource Center-Edge
11/6/2013	Ombuds presentation	A&S advisors-Edge
11/14/2013	Conflict Management, Styles, and Approaches	Ombuds Webinar-Edge

12/5/2013	Ombuds meeting	President Morehead and fellow Ombuds-Edge
June 16-18, 2014	Ombudsing in Higher Education	CNCR workshop-Edge
Jun-14	Created an Ombuds program brochure	Provide as <i>handout-Edge</i>
12/5/2013	Ombuds Program - Description and Issues	President Morehead -Jones
12/5/2013	Update of Ombuds Program	President Morehead-Gibson
6/5/2014	New Federal Guidance on Title IX	UGA Sexual Assault Response Team-Gibson
7/29/2014	Discussing Ombuds Responsibilities	Dr. Teresa Raetz, Director of Student Affairs, UGA Gwinnett
7/9/2014	New guidelines for Support Resource Employees	Janyce Dawkins-Jones
7/10/2014	Protocol -- Sexual Misconduct	Sexual Assault Response Team-Jones
12/20/2013	Ombuds Program - Duties of Ombudspersons	Gene Ruffin, new Ombuds @ GA Gwinnett-Jones
8/12/2014	Ombudsprogram-Annual Meeting	Ombudsperson, EOO
8/6/2014	Sexual Misconduct	Sexual Assault Response Team-Jones