



An ombudsperson is a neutral person who can assist in resolving concerns and disputes in an informal, confidential, impartial manner. We support individuals and groups, optimize the effectiveness of University programs and services, and enhance the safety culture and learning environment at MUSC.

The Ombuds serves as a sounding board that provides information, navigates University resources, and helps faculty resolve situations in a non-escalating fashion. The Ombuds also serves as a listening post for systemic concerns, and brings these to the attention of the University.

We follow the International Ombudsman Association's Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice.

MUSC Office of Faculty Ombuds

Phone: 843-792-2618

Email: univ-ombudsman@musc.edu

muscedu/ombuds



Changing What's Possible



MUSC Faculty Ombuds

A free faculty service that is an impartial, independent, confidential, and informal option for resolution of puzzling or troublesome issues faced by faculty.



Changing What's Possible

MUSC Faculty Ombuds

What the Ombuds can do for you

The MUSC Faculty Ombuds may be a good option for you if you:

- Are looking for a safe space to discuss a problem
- Are seeking help in thinking through a concern
- Need a fresh, impartial listener
- Want an informal, non-escalating approach
- Are unsure whom to talk to or where to go for help
- Want to discuss options and resources for a particular concern
- Want help in communicating with others (e.g., committee, supervisor, chair, division director, co-workers, employee, student, etc.)

Typical Ombuds issues

Career Management

Promotion; performance management; end of appointment; layoff; reorganization; uncollegial environment; overwork; compensation; benefits

Work Relationships

Conflict with colleague, manager, or advisor; difficult staff; inappropriate or disrespectful behavior; abuse of power; bullying

Research Concerns

Authorship; unethical behavior; research misconduct; conflict of interest; time commitment; compliance

What the Ombuds cannot do for you

- Assist a faculty member who has pursued formal pathways (e.g., grievance or lawsuit)
- Serve as a witness
- Keep identifying records of visitors or their concerns
- Advocate for either side in a dispute
- Breach confidentiality (exceptions: situations of child abuse or neglect; concern of harm to self or others; or if ordered by a court of law)
- Conduct formal investigations
- Make decisions or file complaints
- Participate in formal processes such as performance evaluations
- Give legal advice

Policies & Requirements

Academic and employment guidelines; disciplinary process and rulings; grievance and complaint procedures

Illness, Disability

Disability services; accommodation requests; disability plans; leave options; internal and outside resources

Sexual Harassment, Discrimination

Unwelcome, inappropriate behavior; inappropriate relationships

Other Concerns

Parking; housing; University services; financial aid; community safety

How the Office of the Ombuds works

The Faculty Ombuds Office practices in accordance with the International Ombudsman Association Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. Principles of confidentiality, impartiality, independence, and informality are essential to the mission and function of the Office.

Please note the Ombuds may not be involved if/when legal counsel is retained regarding the matter at hand. To protect confidentiality, please contact the Office by phone.

1. The Office is a voluntary resource. Those who consult the Office will be understood to have agreed to respect and abide by the International Ombudsman Association Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice and will not ask the Ombuds to testify with respect to confidential communications in formal or legal proceedings.
2. When responding to inquiries or making appointment with visitors, the administrative assistant will ask if the caller wishes to leave a first name and/or private phone number at which he or she may be reached. Callers are not required to leave either. Written phone messages are shredded promptly.
3. Any notes that may be created by the Ombuds are temporary. They are personal working notes used only to clarify visitor concerns and are not preserved for any reason. These notes are shredded routinely and promptly.
5. Communication with the Office is considered confidential and off-the-record. Thus, the Office does not retain case records.
6. Visitor appointments in the electronic calendars for the University Faculty Ombuds will be labeled discreetly.
7. De-identified statistical data are retained for the Office's annual report.
8. The University Faculty Ombuds and the administrative assistant will take other steps as appropriate and necessary to ensure the confidentiality of the Office operations.