

Administrative Professional Staff Council
Ombudsman Advisory Panel
June 17, 2009

- Purpose:** The Ombudsman Advisory Panel is a recognized committee of Southern Illinois University Carbondale, established to assure the essential autonomy and the effectiveness of the University Ombudsman Office. Representing the six constituencies, the Ombudsman Advisory Panel generally meets with the University Ombudsman Office staff once each semester. Each of the university-recognized constituency groups appoints one representative to serve on the Ombudsman Advisory Panel.
- Meetings:** 11/19/08 and 5/5/09
- Members:** Thomas Alexander, Graduate Council; Elizabeth Cheek, Civil Service Council; Carl Ervin, Administrative/Professional Staff Council; Roy Frank, Faculty Senate; Sidney Williams, Undergraduate Student Government
- Ombudsman Office Staff:** Lynn Connley, Director; Don Bixler, Associate Director; Judy Faulkner, Office Administrator; Cora Taylor, Clerical Extra Help; Misty Edwards, Law Clerk; Eric Rakestraw, Law Clerk
- Outreach:** Provided PowerPoint presentations for new students, residence halls, Univ. 101 and other classes. Set up an information table in the Student Center. The goal for the upcoming year is to expand the numbers reached
- Consolidation:** The Chancellor felt it was redundant so the position of "Faculty and Staff Ombudsman" was consolidated into the University Ombudsman Office on January 1, 2009
- User Satisfaction:** In May 2009 a letter of explanation and a survey is to be mailed to users of the Ombudsman Office. The responses are anonymous and are to be mailed directly to the Office of the Chancellor via an enclosed pre-addressed, postage-paid envelope

Office:

- Website updated March 2009 <http://ombuds.siuc.edu/index.html>
- *Office Terms of Reference/Charter* was approved and placed on the new website
- There are insufficient funds to replace outdated computers. The Civil & Environmental Engineering Department may donate several older but more up to date computers
- 5-10% cut in the budget is expected for the upcoming year

Issues and Trends:

- Chancellor Goldman was contacted regarding the need for supervisor training at all levels across the campus. The Chancellor suggested the office proceed by contacting Peggy Stockdale and Carol Fisher, as both have expertise in training and development
- A suggestion will be forwarded to Human Resources to put more information on their website in regards to the use of a Learner's List for hiring across campus
- Types of issues presented/categories of complaints: academic, disciplinary (social misconduct), employment, financial, and administrative
- The category of the problems seen varied depending upon the time period: the most frequent concerns during the first quarter of 2008 were employment and financial; the most frequent concerns during the third quarter of 2008, which included July-September, were academic and employment; and the most frequent concerns during the fourth quarter of 2008 were disciplinary
- The demographics of persons requesting assistance included American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, Black, Hispanic, White, faculty, A/P staff, Civil Service staff, undergraduate students, graduate students, males, females, and unknown
- Some complainants elect to take no action on their issues. Most visitors typically wanted the opportunity to discuss their problems and explore possible approaches with a disinterested party after which they can make a more informed decision about whether to follow through formally or informally on their concerns
- In the cases where complainants wished to go forward, the Ombudsman Office advised them as to options and assisted in discussions with appropriate offices
- A reminder that e-mail is not appropriate for confidential communication

Submitted by,
Carl Ervin
June 17, 2009