

Administrative Professional Staff Council
Ombudsman Advisory Panel Report
June 16, 2010

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.
Ombudsman Office Staff	Lynn Connley, Director; Don Bixler, Associate Director; Judy Rose, Office Administrator; Eric Rakestraw, Assistant Ombudsman; Michael Blum, Assistant Ombudsman; Kendra Johnson, Student Employee, and Lakeshia Crump, Student Employee
Ombudsman Advisory Panel	Sara Baer, Graduate Council; Tina Biggs, Civil Service Council; John Cotter, Faculty Senate; Carl Ervin, Administrative/ Professional Staff Council; Josh Petralia, Undergraduate Student Government, and currently vacant, Graduate & Professional Student Council
Meetings	(Fall 2009) 12/4/09 and (Spring 2010) 3/25/10
Ombudsman Services	Types of issues presented/categories of complaints: academic, disciplinary (social misconduct), employment, financial, administrative and other
Ombudsman & A/P Staff	<p>Out of the two hundred four (204) cases brought to the University Ombudsman Office for the year 2009 there were six (6) cases that involved members of the A/P staff constituency group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• First Quarter 2009 - (January, February & March) 1 out of the 55 cases involved members of the A/P constituency group (An employment concern)• Second Quarter 2009 - (April, May & June) 0 out of the 38 cases involved members of the A/P constituency group• Third Quarter 2009 - (July, August & September) 4 out of the 50 cases involved members of the A/P constituency group (3 employment concerns and 1 financial concern)• Fourth Quarter 2009 - (October, November & December) 1 out of the 61 cases involved members of the A/P constituency group (An employment concern)

Ombudsman Overview

Outreach

- A new brochure was created for the office and distributed, the website was updated, a PowerPoint presentation was created about ombudsman services and presented it in the residence halls and UNIV 101 classes, an information table was set up in the Student Center in September and the Director contacted & reminded the academic deans that the office is a resource for the use of their faculty and staff, as well as their students.

Staff Changes

- At the 3/25 meeting Director Lynn Connley announced that she would be retiring June 30, 2010
- The Advisory Panel recommended the appointment of Don Bixler, associate director of the Ombudsman Office, as interim director until a search finds a replacement for Director Connley

Review

- Chancellor Goldman asked the Advisory Panel, which will in accord with its Operating Paper, serve as the search committee for the director, to do a review of how the office currently functions and may function in the future.
- The Advisory Panel met on 4/1 and 4/15 and corresponded by telephone and e-mail through 5/10 with the report on the office which included a recommendation for an interim director being delivered to the Chancellor on 5/11
- The review indicated that the office is meeting its charge of serving students, faculty and staff in a manner consistent with the standards and practices of the profession and what is done in offices located at state directional and peer institutions. The operations are lean, make efficient use of available resources and provide a service of which surveyed users are overwhelmingly satisfied.

Issues, Trends and Challenges

- Several cases were reported including ones involving conflict with supervisors. It was noted by the Ombudsman Office staff that the University may need to better train supervisors in how to supervise others effectively
- The proposed designation as an office of notice for the university regarding sexual harassment issues prevent full adherence to professional standards and may impact its ability to fully serve the needs of the academic community
- Budget restrictions may limit professional development and office outreach
- Panel members were reminded not to distribute copies of the Ombudsman Office reports

Respectfully submitted by, Carl Ervin, A/P Staff Council Representative to the Ombudsman Advisory Panel