

Administrative Professional Staff Council
Ombudsman Advisory Panel
December 16, 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:** Fall 2009 (12/4/09) and Spring 2010 (TBA)
- Members:** Sara Baer, Graduate Council; Tina Biggs, Civil Service Council; Carl Ervin, Administrative/Professional Staff Council; John Cotter, Faculty Senate; Vacant, Graduate & Professional Student Council; and Josh Petralia, Undergraduate Student Government
- Ombudsman Office Staff:** Lynn Connley, Director; Don Bixler, Associate Director; Judy Rose, Office Administrator; Michael Blum, Law Clerk; and Eric Rakestraw, Law Clerk
- Website:** The website <http://ombuds.siuc.edu/index.html> offers description of the office, services and a PDF copy of the latest brochure
- Outreach:**
- Created a PowerPoint presentation about ombudsman services mainly targeted toward those relatively new to SIUC and presented it in the residence halls and Univ. 101 classes.
 - An information table was set up in the Student Center on September 11. Director Connley contacted the academic deans for the purpose of reminding the deans that the office is a resource for the use of their faculty and staff, as well as their students.
 - A new brochure had been created for the office and is being distributed far and wide
 - Ideas under consideration are to utilize the information kiosk in the Student Health Center, distribute the PowerPoint which describes the office to classrooms to play when the instructor is absent, present at a meeting of the faculty senate and the A/P Staff Council, and inquire about offering a session at the August graduate teaching assistant training workshops.

Ombudsman Office:

- Types of issues presented/categories of complaints: academic, disciplinary (social misconduct), employment, financial, and administrative
- Out of the ninety-three (93) cases brought to the University Ombudsman office for the current reporting term there was one (1) A/P case

First Quarter 2009
(January, February March)
55 cases

Type case	Number of cases
Academic	17
Disciplinary (social misconduct)	22
Employment	7
Financial	5
Other (housing, parking, personal issues)	4

Constituency Group	Number of cases
A/P	1 (employment)
Faculty	3
Civil Service	2
Graduate student	8
Undergraduate student	41

Second Quarter 2009
(April, May, June)
38 cases

Type case	Number of cases
Academic	13
Disciplinary (social misconduct)	9
Employment	3
Financial	3
Other (housing, parking, personal issues)	10

Constituency Group	Number of cases
A/P	0 (employment)
Faculty	2
Civil Service	2
Graduate student	6
Undergraduate student	28

Challenges:

Office of Notice

- In a statement prepared by Lynn Connley and given to the Chancellor, it was reported that the current challenge to the Ombudsman Office is the threat of being designated as an office of “notice” for the University regarding sexual harassment issues. SIUC guidelines and procedures for dealing with matters of sexual harassment are being revised and in the current interpretation by the Office of General Counsel, these procedures seem to require the office to be considered an office of “notice” to the University for such complaints. This requirement would be in direct contradiction to the offices’ stated and expected operating principles of confidentiality, informality, neutrality and independence which have been clearly communicated and practiced on the campus since 1974.
- Adapting the new policy more than likely will result in the following: 1). Taking no names of those seeking assistance 2). Informing visitors before they speak that in regards to sexual harassment cases the confidentiality cannot be maintained and 3). Continuing efforts to persuade the General Counsel to exempt the office from being considered an office of notice for sexual harassment or any other type of issue.
- Constituency groups may be asked to support the office’s efforts to remain outside of a office of notice designation

Budget

- Budgetary restrictions may prevent professional development opportunities

Submitted by,
Carl Ervin
December 16, 2009