

# Faculty & Staff Ombuds Office

## 2024-2025 Activity Report

# *Message from the Faculty & Staff Ombuds*

Serving as your Faculty and Staff Ombuds has been a privilege that I respect tremendously. I do not take it lightly that visitors from across campus reach out for safe space to express concerns that can be deeply personal.

The Faculty and Staff Ombuds Office serves as a confidential, neutral, and informal resource for all members of our Wolfpack community who seek guidance in navigating concerns, conflicts, and challenges in the workplace.

Over the past year, I have engaged with faculty, staff, students, and community members to provide a safe space for them to share their experiences, explore options, and work toward constructive resolutions.

This report provides insight into the services the office provides, challenges faced by those who have sought resources, and considerations for addressing the complex issues shared by visitors.

Bradley Davis, Ed.D



# Ombuds Guiding Principles

## Confidentiality

Communications with the Faculty and Staff Ombuds Office are kept confidential to the fullest extent of the law and applicable University Policies, Regulations, and Rules.

## Informal

The Faculty and Staff Ombuds Office is an informal resource to assist in facilitating informal issue or dispute resolution. The Faculty and Staff Ombuds Office does not formally investigate, mediate, arbitrate, adjudicate, or in any other way participate in formal internal University processes or actions.

## Independence

The Faculty and Staff Ombuds Office shall be independent in structure, function and appearance to the highest degree possible. The office operates independent of ordinary lines and staff structures and shall exercise sole discretion over whether and how to act regarding individual matters or systemic concerns.

## Impartial

The Faculty and Staff Ombuds Office shall be impartial in all activities, and shall not take sides in any conflict, dispute or issue.

# Ombuds Services Provided

*The Faculty and Staff Ombuds provides confidential, impartial, and informal services to visitors seeking support in resolving concerns or navigating complex situations. By offering a safe space to discuss issues, an ombuds helps individuals explore options, improve communication, and better understand available resources. The options below describe some of the services provided by the Faculty and Staff Ombuds Office.*

**Facilitated Dialogue.** Act as a neutral third party who can facilitate conversations with groups or individuals in conflict.

**Policy Clarification.** Helps visitors understand how university rules and systems work—such as grievance procedures, grade disputes, appeals processes, or employment policies—without taking sides.

**Option Generation.** Assists in generating possible ways to address a concern, evaluating risks/benefits, and identifying next steps. The Faculty & Staff Ombuds does not make decisions for the visitor, but helps inform and empower them.

**Training & Workshops.** Provides education on conflict resolution, communication skills, civility, difficult conversations, or organizational climate to departments or student groups.

**Conflict Resolution Support.** Helps students, staff, and faculty address interpersonal or organizational conflicts. This may include coaching on communication strategies, helping prepare for difficult conversations, or exploring non-adversarial approaches.

**Referrals.** Helps visitors understand how university policies, rules, and regulations, such as grievance procedures, employment policies, etc.

**Systems Change Feedback.** Identifies patterns or trends in campus concerns and reports them (anonymously) to leadership. This may include recommendations for improving policies, reducing conflict points, or enhancing campus culture.

**Shuttle Diplomacy.** Communicates informally between parties unable or unwilling to meet directly, carrying messages to help de-escalate disputes or explore areas of agreement.

# International Ombuds Association

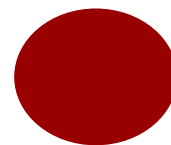
## Uniform Reporting Categories

*The International Ombuds Association (IOA) developed a set of Uniform Reporting Categories (URCs) to help organizational ombuds offices consistently track and report the types of issues they handle. These categories are intended for aggregate, non-identifiable reporting, so organizations can better understand trends while maintaining confidentiality.*

01

### Compensation & Benefits

Questions, concerns, issues or inquiries about the equity, appropriateness and competitiveness of employee compensation, benefits and other benefit programs.



02

### Evaluative Relationships

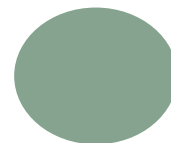
Questions, concerns, issues or inquiries arising between people in evaluative relationships (i.e. supervisor-employee, faculty-student.)



03

### Peer & Colleague Relationships

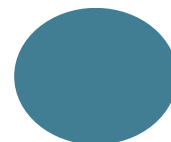
Questions, concerns, issues or inquiries involving peers or colleagues who do not have a supervisory- employee or student-professor relationship.



04

### Career Progression & Development

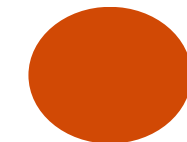
Questions, concerns, issues or inquiries about administrative processes and decisions regarding entering and leaving a job, what it entails.



05

### Legal, Regulatory, & Compliance

Questions, concerns, issues or inquiries that may create a legal risk (financial, sanction etc.) for the organization or its members if not addressed, including issues related to waste, fraud or abuse.



# International Ombuds Association

## Uniform Reporting Categories

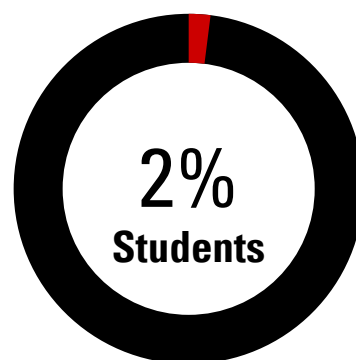
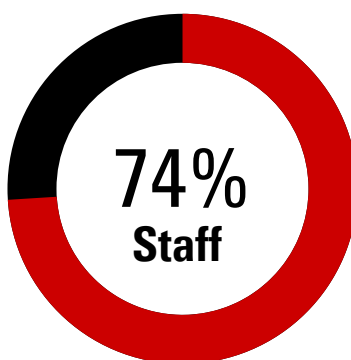
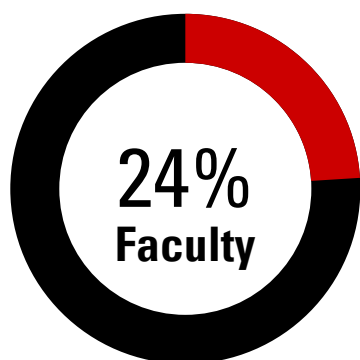
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# Visitor Usage Data

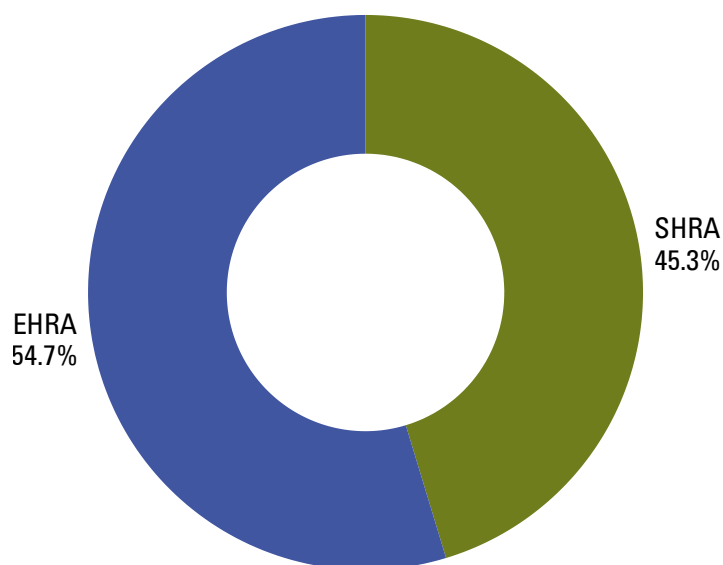
July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025

**Total Visitors: 172**

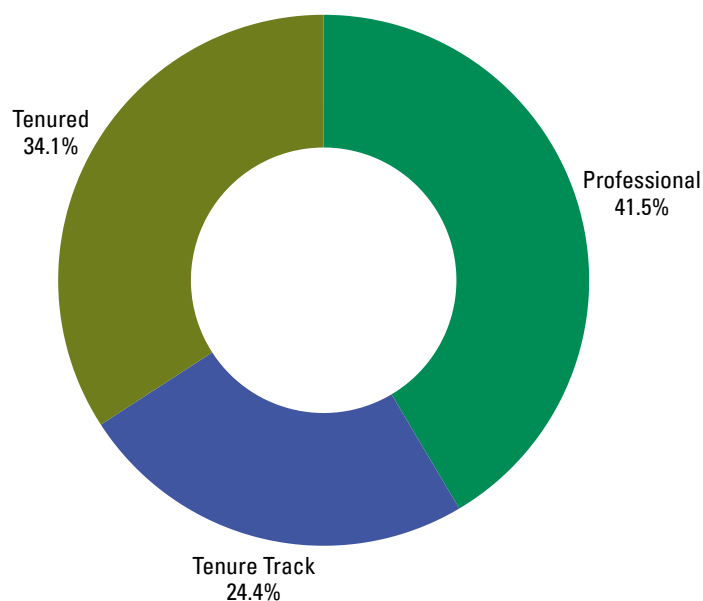


The total number of visitors for the Faculty & Staff Ombuds Office increased by 69% from the 2023-2024 academic year (102). The total number of visitors from the 2023-2024 (102) are reflective of the total number of visitors seen by the current Faculty & Staff Ombuds, Bradley Davis, who began in the role on August 28, 2023. For the 2024-2025 academic year, the total number of faculty visitors increased from 36 to 41, staff visitors increased from 66 to 128 representing a significant increase from the previous academic year. The Faculty & Staff Ombuds met with student visitors in the absence of the Student Ombuds, totaling 3 student visitors.

## Staff

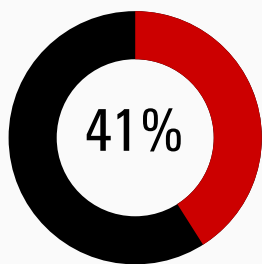


## Faculty



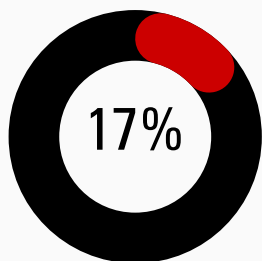
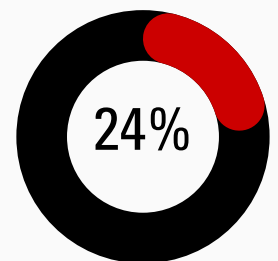
# Reported Concerns/Issues

*When working with visitors, the Faculty and Staff Ombuds uses the International Ombuds Association's Unified Reporting Categories to identify the main concern being shared during a visit. The Unified Reporting Categories each have respective sub-categories used to identify the specific concern being reported. Below are the top categories reported by visitors during the 2024-2025 academic year.*



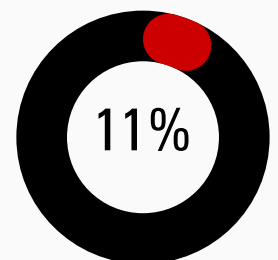
**Evaluative Relationships were reported by 41% of all visitors.** Questions, concerns, issues, and inquiries involving individuals in evaluative relationships, i.e. supervisor-supervisee. Concerns related to lack of trust, lack of respect, poor communication, and feelings of mistreatment were reported. Faculty and staff shared concerns of unfair evaluative practices and misalignment with annual performance evaluations.

**Peer and Colleague Relationships were reported by 24% of all visitors.** Questions, concerns, issues, and inquiries involving individuals who do not have a supervisory relationship. Concerns related to poor communication, lack of trust, and lack of integrity were reported by faculty and staff. Faculty who shared concerns related to this category often indicated the perceived power dynamics between junior and senior faculty.



**Career Progress & Development concerns were reported by 17% of all visitors.** Visitors raised concerns about job classifications and disagreements over job responsibilities and tasks. Visitors also shared concerns related to perceived fairness of job processes where they were internal candidates and were not selected. Visitors brought questions related to the RPT process as well as questions related to "at-will" discontinuations.

**Compensation & Benefits concerns were reported by 11% of all visitors.** Visitors brought concerns about additional/supplemental pay processes, pay inequities amongst colleagues, and retirement benefits. Visitors shared concerns related to delayed payment as well as inquiries related to FMLA and worker's compensation.

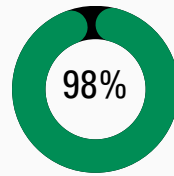


# Visitor Feedback

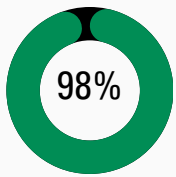
The following data represents visitor feedback collected through an NCSU Qualtrics survey. Visitors are emailed the survey link and encouraged to provide feedback that can be used to improve ombuds services. Of the 172 visitors seen by the Faculty and Staff Ombuds, a total of 41 responses were received for a 24% response rate.



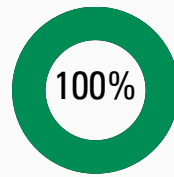
**100% of visitors** reported being able to meet and speak with the Faculty & Staff Ombuds in a timely manner about their concerns.



**98% of visitors** reported feeling comfortable discussing their concerns/issues with the Faculty & Staff Ombuds.



**98% of visitors** reported the Faculty & Staff Ombuds explained the role and helped identify options and resources to address the reported concerns.



**100% of visitors** reported being treated with courtesy and respect by the Faculty & Staff Ombuds.

*Below are quotes provided by visitors related to their experience working with the Faculty & Staff Ombuds Office.*

*"The Ombudsman did a great job in preparing for our discussion and offering alternatives to help me resolve my situation. He also followed up at a later date to see what the disposition of my situation was and to offer future assistance as needed. I was very satisfied with my experience and have recommended him to other faculty/staff."*

*"We spoke with both the faculty ombuds (Bradley) and the student ombuds (Mike). Both of you were incredibly helpful and professional as we navigated an issue with a student."*

*"Bradley was highly effective and listened actively."*

*"I have been extremely grateful for Bradley Davis's support as Ombuds person. I've now met with him twice and he was effective in listening, making helpful suggestions, and ultimately serving as one of very few options at NCSU for me to navigate a complicated set of circumstances. My ratings were unanimously positive in the survey Qs, but I responded "neutral" to the question about "handling" the concern I have because it is relatively complicated, and no Ombudsperson could realistically help in significant ways with handling that. However, Bradley was consistently supportive and he has been one of the most appreciated supports I've been able to access as an NCSU employee. I hope NCSU will continue to let faculty know about the Ombuds services and I think Bradley has been excellent in that role."*

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# Professional Development

*Below are three professional development opportunities and accomplishments from 2024-2025 academic year. These opportunities and trainings can be facilitated to the campus community upon request.*

## **Crucial Conversations for Mastering Dialogue**

This course is offered through Crucial Learning and was completed in April 2025. In June 2025, the Faculty & Staff Ombuds completed the certification training in order to facilitate training for interested participants.



## **Certified Workplace Mediator & Trainer Program**

This training program is offered through the Mediation Training Institute via Eckerd College. The Faculty & Staff Ombuds completed this training virtually over the course of three weeks. The Faculty & Staff Ombuds successfully completed the course and certification.



## **Conflicts Dynamics Profile (CDP)**

The CDP is an assessment tool that focuses specifically on conflict behaviors, rather than styles. It helps individuals and teams understand how they respond to conflict, what triggers can escalate conflict, and how to manage conflict more effectively. The Faculty & Staff Ombuds is now certified to administer the CDP and discuss assessment result with participants.



# NC STATE UNIVERSITY

Faculty & Staff Ombuds Office

[go.ncsu.edu/facstaffombuds](http://go.ncsu.edu/facstaffombuds)

919-515-7685