



# Ombuds Office

Unprofessional **Mistreatment** **Fairness**  
**Confidential** Facilitate **Harassment** Confusion  
Career advancement **Conflict** **Opportunities**  
Workplace challenges **OMBUDS** **Bullying**  
Policies & procedures Risk assessment **Listen**  
**Strategies** **Climate** **Communication** **Disrespect**  
**Early consultation** **Unfair**

Lezli Redmond  
Gery Essenmacher

November 9, 2020

# What do Ombuds Do?



- The Ombuds provide a safe place for all UW Madison employees including Faculty, Academic Staff, University Staff, Post-docs, and Graduate Students.
- We listen and explore concerns.
- We offer resources, options and strategies to address workplace concerns.

# Who we are....



- We are five emerti UW Faculty, Academic Staff and University Staff from across the University.
  - We are hired 25% time for (staggered) three-year terms.
  - Collectively, we have over 150 years of UW-Madison experience.
  - Unique among academic Ombuds offices in US.
- Visitors contact us through our Ombuds email or our Ombuds phone.

# Ombuds Guiding Principles



- **Confidential**

Nothing a Visitor relays to us will ever go “outside” the Ombuds office without specific authorization from the Visitor.

- **Independent**

We nominally report to the Provost but we set our own working conditions. Our mission is to assist our Visitors.

- **Non-formal**

We have no formal authority to make decisions. We give advice to our Visitors and, where appropriate, provide options for further steps the Visitor might take.

- **Impartial**

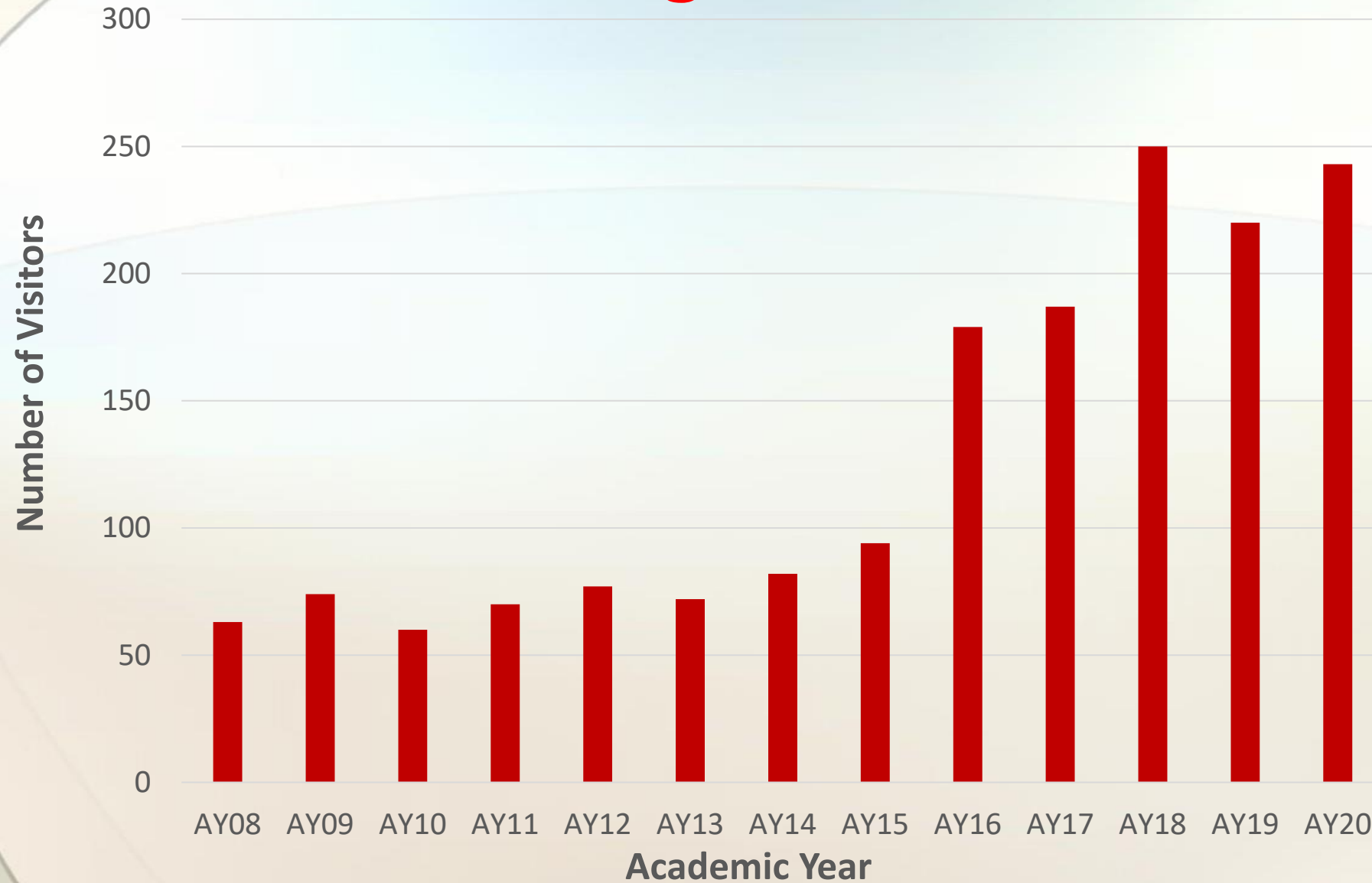
We do not serve as advocates for our Visitors. Our goal is to empower them to make the best decisions they can regarding their concerns.

# How We See Ourselves Helping the Campus

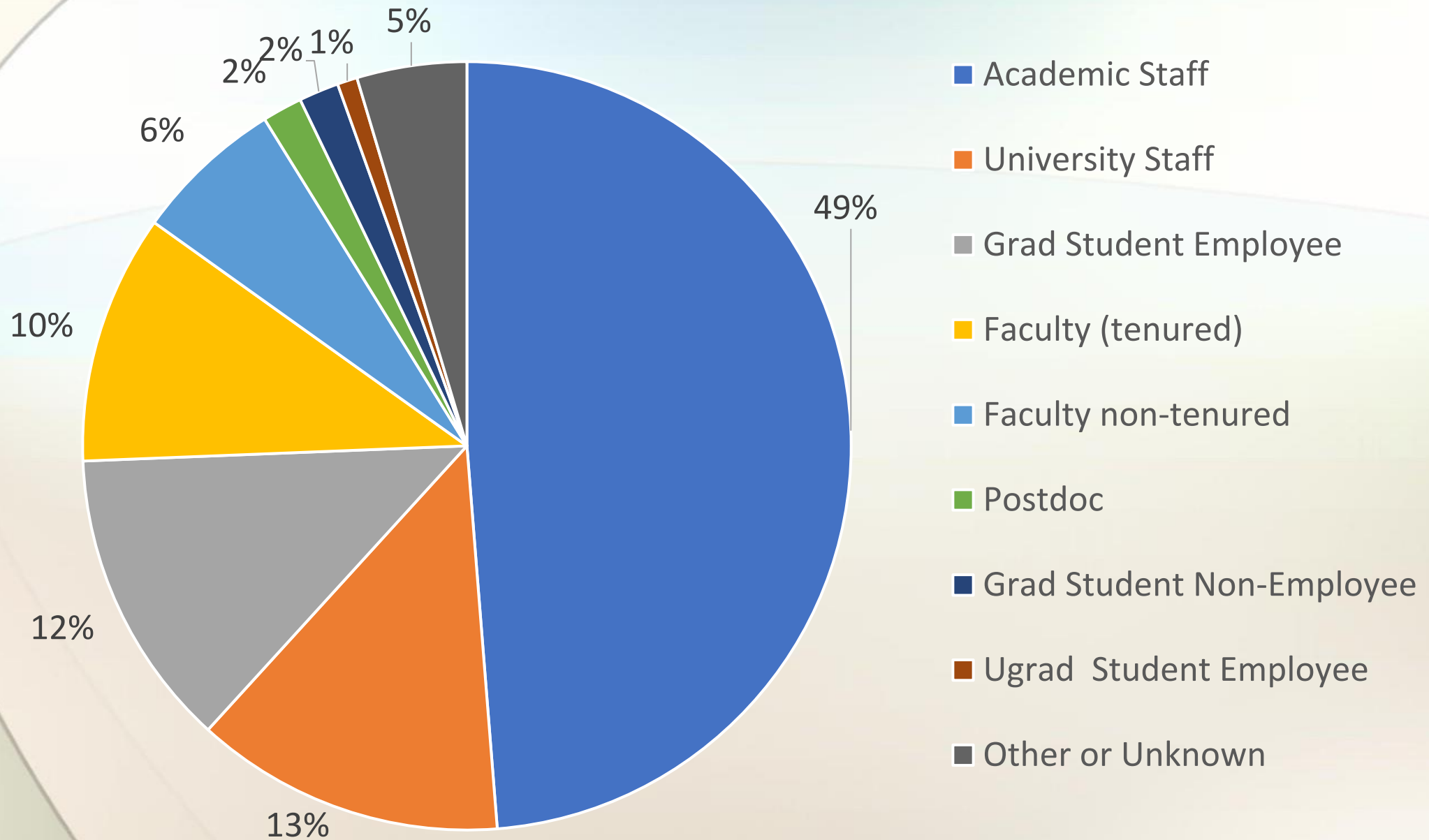


- Provide a place for UW employees to discuss work-related problems informally and to ensure that they will have a sympathetic ear.
- Empower Visitors to seek out most appropriate resources and personal action plans.
- Help solve “small” work-related problems (where possible) before they become “large.”
- Keep an open ear out for systemic problems that need to be addressed by University administration.

# Increasing Number of Visitors

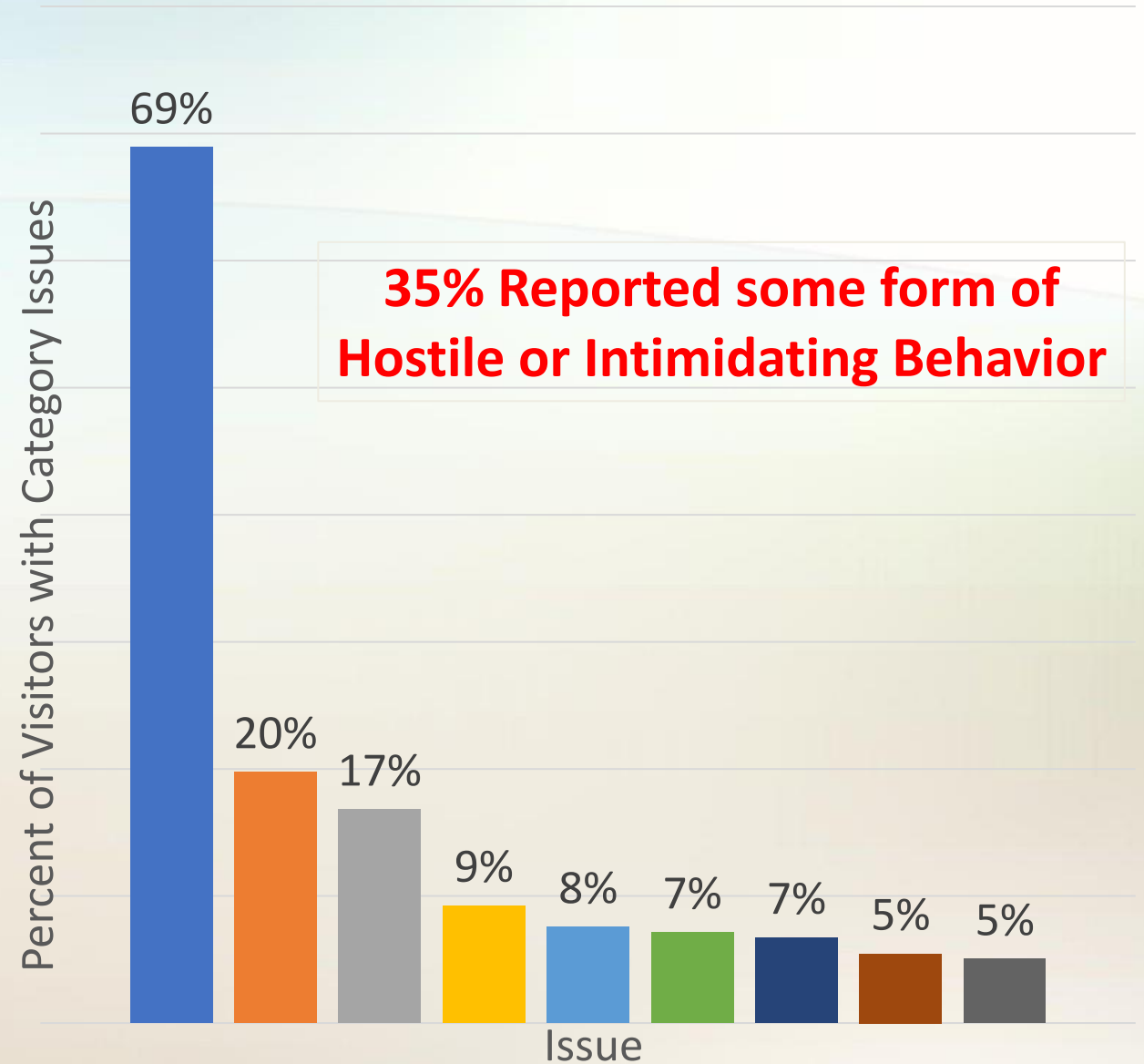


# Who we served (AY20)



# What were the issues?

- Evaluative Relationships
- Peer and Colleague Relationships
- Career Progression & Development
- Legal, Regulatory, Financial & Compliance
- Organizational, Strategic, & Mission Related
- Compensation & Benefits
- Safety, Health, & Physical Environment
- Services/Administrative Issues
- Values, Ethics, & Standards





# What were the issues?



- About 35% indicated that Hostile and Intimidating Behavior (HIB) was involved – need statistics on cases across campus, investigators often are from same unit as complaint, stress for respondents.
- Using classifications from the International Ombudsman Association, **69% reported issues with “Evaluative Relationships”** These are relationships such as supervisor-employee or faculty-student – need more supervisor training, including faculty.
- Lack of employee understanding of University policies - FMLA, benefits, emeritus, insurances, retirement or termination benefit questions

# Ombuds: Who we are



Mike Ashmore retired from the School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) in 2015 after nearly 30 years in service



Gery Essenmacher retired in 2015 after over 30 years as a UW-Madison academic staff member in the Chemistry Department and as an Associate Dean in L&S



Ann Hoyt retired in 2014 after nearly 30 years as a professor in consumer science and UW-Extension

Rick Nordheim retired in January 2017 after 40 years as a UW-Madison faculty in the Department of Statistics



Lezli Redmond retired in 2018 after 26 years as a public health professional and an academic staff member at the School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH).



# Ombuds.....We Listen

Unprofessional **Mistreatment** **Fairness**  
**Confidential** Facilitate **Harassment** Confusion  
Career advancement **Conflict** **Opportunities**  
Workplace challenges **OMBUDS** **Bullying**  
Policies & procedures Risk assessment **Listen**  
**Strategies** **Climate** **Communication** Disrespect  
**Early consultation** **Unfair**

Contact us:  
608-265-9992  
uwombuds@mailplus.wisc.edu  
<https://ombuds.wisc.edu/>