
Ombuds and Employee Assistance Office Annual Reports

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Office of the Ombuds Mid-Year Report, February 24, 2016*Visitor Concerns of Hostile and Intimidating Behaviors*

During the first six months of Academic Year 2016, Ombuds identified hostile and intimidating behavior as a factor in 11% of the cases presented to us. These behaviors take place both within evaluative and peer relationships. Departmental climate and supervisory effectiveness appear to be the context in which hostile and intimidating behavior takes place with the evaluative relationships. Communication appears to be the main context in peer relationships. The lack of respect is a common characteristic within both types of relationships. Summary attached.

Distinguishing Services of the Ombuds Office and Employee Assistance

In response to your question last Fall about differences between the services of our office and those of Employee Assistance – or how would employees choose which office to consult – our offices jointly developed the attached document – “Distinguishing the Services of the Employee Assistance and the Ombuds Office.”

The University of Wisconsin-Madison provides the Employee Assistance Office and the Ombuds Office as complementary resources to support employees in managing challenges and conflicts in the workplace....Early consultations – when the employee begins to experience a concern – will offer greater flexibility for achieving success. Employees can start with either office to explore potential campus resources.

We provide details on similarities and differences in services and the unique features of each office. We will post this on our website and include the information in our outreach activities.

Expanded Campus-wide Employee Services

In July 2016, the campus Ombuds expanded its services to include the School of Medicine and Public Health (and the School of Pharmacy) with a fifth Ombuds on the team and an immediate increase in visitor contact. Out of 90 new cases opened between July and December 2015, 21 primary visitors were SMPH employees. Our mid-year report of “Issues by Category” is included with this report.

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**UW Ombuds Mid-Year Evaluation
Hostile & Intimidating Behavior (HIB) Issues
July 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015**

Overview:

- 90 cases
- HIB / Bullying Cases – 10
- HIB / Bullying in 11% of Cases

Corresponding IOA Database Categories of HIB Issues:

(2o) Bullying, Mobbing ~ *Evaluative Relationships* - 7 cases
(abusive, threatening, and/or coercive behaviors)

- 3 - Departmental Climate
(prevailing behaviors, norms, attitudes in dept. - supervisors/faculty responsibility)
- 3 - Supervisory Effectiveness
(management of dept. / unit, failure to address issues)
- 3 - Respect/Treatment
(demonstrations of inappropriate behavior, disregard for people, rudeness, crudeness, etc.)

- 2 - Feedback
(feedback or recognition given, or responses to feedback received)

- 1 - Career Development/Coaching/Mentoring
(varied assignments as training and developmental opportunities)
- 1 - Performance Appraisal
(job performance in formal or informal evaluation)
- 1 - Communication
(quality and/or quantity of communication)
- 1 - Retaliation
(punitive behaviors for previous actions or comments, whistleblower)
- 1 - Equity of Treatment
(favoritism, one or more individuals receive preferential treatment)
- 1 - Work Assignments/Schedules
(appropriateness or fairness of job tasks, responsibilities)

(3f) Bullying, Mobbing ~ *Peer and Colleague Relationships* – 4 cases
(abusive, threatening, and/or coercive behaviors)

- 3 - Communication
(quality and/or quantity of communication)

- 2 - Respect/Treatment
(demonstrations of inappropriate regard for people, not listening, rudeness, crudeness, etc.)

- 1 - Retaliation
(punitive behaviors for previous actions or comments, whistleblower)

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EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE OFFICE (EAO)

Annual Report Fiscal Year 2014-2015

The UW-Madison Employee Assistance Office (EAO) helps faculty and staff maintain and enhance their professional and personal lives by providing counseling and consultation. The EAO is staffed by licensed professional counselors who give timely assistance with personal or work related concerns in order to contribute to the overall performance and well-being of the employee.

Activities

- Total number of new individual cases opened – 246
- Total number of individual return cases – 130
- Total supervisory/management consultations – new 46, follow-up 24
- Total number of telephone consultations – employee 68, supervisor 74
- Total number of human resource consultations – phone 76, meeting 41
- Total number of groups in conflict– 22
- Number of group participants – 322

Client evaluation data

- Average client satisfaction score – 4.5 (scale 1 to 5)
- Average satisfaction score from attendees at EAO presentations – 4.58 (scale 1 to 5)

Client demographics

- 46% Academic Staff
- 40% University Staff
- 11% Faculty
- 1% Temporary Employee
- 1% Limited Appointee
- 1% family member

Top four concerns

- Conflict in the workplace – 20%
- Occupation/career-related– 20%
- Marital/relationship – 15%
- Employee performance – 15%

Specific examples of concerns – layoffs, sexual harassment, elder care, marital/relationships, housing, communication, retirement, policies, discipline, workplace climate

EAO presentations – EAO staff delivered 60 presentations on various topics to 946 attendees. EAO staff also facilitated grief sessions. Presentation topics:

- Communication and Collaboration
- Stress Management
- Managing Change: Beyond Survival
- EAO Orientation
- Fostering a Positive Work Environment
- Conflict Resolution
- Coaching for Difficult Conversations

EAO staff committee involvement

- Anti-bullying training subcommittee
- Chancellor's Advisory Group on Alcohol and Other Drugs
- Title IX (training subcommittee)
- End Violence on Campus (training subcommittee)
- UWell - University Wellness committee

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Distinguishing the Services of the Employee Assistance Office and the Ombuds Office

The University of Wisconsin-Madison provides the Employee Assistance Office and the Ombuds Office as complementary resources to support employees in managing challenges and conflicts in the workplace.

Employee Assistance is a team of internal, licensed professional counselors whose mission is to give timely assistance to all employees with personal or work-related concerns in order to contribute to the overall performance and well-being of the employee.

Ombuds provide a safe opportunity to be heard, explore concerns, and consider resources, options, and strategies for next steps to address workplace concerns. Ombuds are impartial and non-aligned, promoting fairness in the workplace, rather than representing any side in a dispute.

Early consultations – when the employee begins to experience a concern – will offer greater flexibility for achieving success. Employees can start with either office to explore potential campus resources.

<i>Both offices:</i>	
	• Are familiar with campus policies and procedures.
	• Provide services at no cost to the employee.
	• May help to facilitate communication between and among employees and others.
	• Provide confidentiality to all visitors and do not retain formal records of visitor contacts.
	• Are not authorized to accept notice of claims against the University.
	• Campus allows employees to use work time for appointments.
	• Offer an informal process to address conflict/communication.

<i>Differences between the offices:</i>		
	Ombuds	Employee Assistance Office
<i>Staffing</i>	Ombuds are retired faculty, academic and university staff with extensive on-campus experience to provide a collective team perspective.	EAO Consultants are licensed counselors with background and training that includes organizational development/leadership.
<i>Audience and issues addressed</i>	Any campus employee, including student employees and post docs, may initiate contact to consult about workplace dilemmas.	Any campus employee, including student employees and post docs may make appointments to discuss workplace concerns or personal issues. Additionally, family members or significant others are eligible for counseling.
<i>Case initiation</i>	The employee is <i>always</i> the one to initiate contact with the Ombuds Office.	Employees may initiate contact with the EAO. Supervisors can refer but not mandate employees to contact EAO.
<i>Scheduling meetings</i>	Assistance may be provided by telephone or meetings may be scheduled at a time and location convenient to the employee and the Ombuds.	Counseling appointments can be made by phone or email. Counseling sessions occur at the Lowell Center. Consultation can occur across campus at the division or college making the requests.

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<i>Unique Features</i>
<i>Ombuds</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is independent in structure, function, and appearance to the highest degree possible within the organization.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strives for impartiality, fairness and objectivity in the treatment of people and the consideration of issues. The Ombuds advocate for fair and equitably administered processes and does advocate on behalf of any individual within the organization.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is an alternative, informal resource and does not participate in any formal adjudicative or administrative procedure related to concerns brought to its attention.

<i>EAO</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offers group facilitation to resolve conflict, and improve communication and teamwork.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responds to crises and traumatic events with affected employees.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• EAO director is a member of the campus Threat Assessment Team to proactively address concerns before they become disruptive to the workplace.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides coaching for supervisory staff on difficult conversations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offers consultation to unit human resource staff on concerns for employees, supervisors, and groups.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offers educational presentations on many interpersonal workplace dynamic topics such as communication, respect, and dealing with conflict.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offers educational presentations on a variety of wellness related topics such as personal self-awareness and stress management.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data is collected through follow up surveys
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is duty bound to maintain confidentiality unless permission is given in writing.