

## COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE UC SANTA BARBARA OFFICE OF THE OMBUDS

This document is intended to assist anyone wishing to lodge a complaint against the UCSB Office of the Ombuds.

The Ombuds Advisory Committee, as one of its functions, receives and responds to complaints about the Office of the Ombuds. This is to ensure that the Office is held accountable and that persons who feel unfairly treated by Ombuds staff have recourse.

Complaints may be addressed to any member of the Ombuds Advisory Committee. The membership list is posted on the Office of the Ombuds website and is available upon request at the Office of the Ombuds or at the Executive Vice Chancellor's Office.

When a written complaint is received, the Ombuds Advisory Committee member must notify other members of the Committee and not attempt to respond until the Committee has considered the matter.

The Ombuds Advisory Committee is free to address the complaint in any way it deems appropriate. However, the Committee may only consider the process and behavior of the Office. The issue before the Committee is whether the Office acted in accordance with the International Ombudsman Association (IOA) Standards of Practice in regard to the complainant's matter. The process outlined below is a suggested guideline for the Committee:

- When a verbal complaint is made to a member of the Committee which suggests dissatisfaction with the Office, the member will normally thank the person who made the complaint and ask if the person wishes to put the matter in writing. The Committee will only respond to written complaints.
- The written complaint must state how the IOA Standards of Practice were breached by the Office.
- The complainant must authorize the Office to discuss the complaint with the Committee. If the complainant is unwilling to authorize the Office to discuss the matter, it may not be possible to take any effective action in response to the complaint.
- Once the Committee is satisfied that it should look into the matter, the Committee will notify the Office about the complaint. Additionally, the Committee may:
  - Forward the written complaint to the Office and invite a response to the Committee
  - Convene a meeting to discuss what steps to take, either with or without the Office
  - Convene a meeting with Ombuds staff to discuss the substance of the complaint
  - Convene a meeting with the complainant to gather further information about the complaint
  - Call witnesses if relevant to the investigation of the complaint

- Forward the complaint to the Executive Vice Chancellor's Office for further review
- The Committee will give a written response to the complainant, to the Office, and to the Executive Vice Chancellor's Office once its investigation of the matter is concluded.
- A final appeal may be directed to the Executive Vice Chancellor's Office.