

# OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSPERSON

## 2017/2018 ANNUAL REPORT

### AND FIVE-YEAR STATISTICAL DEMOGRAPHIC REVIEW



C. KEVIN COONROD  
OMBUDSPERSON  
AUBURN UNIVERSITY  
ombuds@auburn.edu  
(334) 844-7170  
Quad Center, Suite 005



## I. INTRODUCTION

This year's total of 300 new office visitors to the Office of the Ombudsperson constituted an 11% increase over the previous year, and a 64% increase over this Ombuds' first year at Auburn University, 2013 – 2014. This annual report will provide general information regarding the 2017 – 2018 academic year, as well as a statistical review of office visitor demographic information for the past five years.

In this report, statistics for all constituency categories of the ombuds office -- students, faculty, staff, and Administrative & Professional -- will be set forth. Each category will have statistical breakdowns of usage by gender and race, as well as totals of office visitors. The faculty category has separate entries for tenured and non-tenured individuals, and the section for students has graduate and undergraduate student subdivisions. Each constituent category will conclude with a five-year review of total new office visitors to the ombuds office.

Notably, faculty usage of the ombuds office has risen practically 300% since this ombudsperson's first year at the university. The other constituencies have risen as well and office visitor usership has become significantly more diverse since that first year, which began in 2013. A continued need to expand student and staff visitorship exists and is being addressed via marketing efforts and word-of-mouth referrals.

As in all previous years, the dominant complaints brought to the ombuds office pertained to interactions between human beings. Positional issues such as compensation, promotion, and benefits in the workplace were certainly discussed by employees. Additionally, guidance on confronting grade, academic honesty, and student conduct issues was sought by both students and professors. The overwhelming number of office visitor topics, however, dealt with how we communicate constructively with each other as individuals.

Very often these communication impasses involve a power dynamic between supervisor and supervisee, or professor and student. In most instances, interests such as respect, dignity and fairness were articulated as being infringed upon. As is set forth in this report, the top seven specific categories of complaints were communication, respect and treatment, trust and integrity, bullying or mobbing, equity of treatment, supervisory effectiveness, and departmental climate.

The Office of the Ombudsperson helps all members of the community work through troubles and obstacles such as those. Through confidential discussions, the ombuds helps his office visitors brainstorm ways with which to proceed strategically. As part of his practice, the ombuds provides coaching and mediation services, guidance on university policies, and relates non-confidential trend information to appropriate administrators that may assist in the creation of systemic change. Additionally, the ombuds provides educational workshops designed to help community members work and relate with each other productively and respectfully.

Each annual report features an educational component of the practice of ombudsing. The Office of the Ombudsperson operates under four interrelated principles: 1) Independence;

2) Neutrality; 3) Confidentiality; and 4) Informality. This report will discuss the second of these principles, “Neutrality”.

Presented after the section on Neutrality is a non-confidential statistical report of issues and demographics heard and seen by the ombuds during the 2017 – 2018 academic year. As stated above, this year’s report also contains a statistical overview of the academic years from 2013/2014 through 2017/2018. Concluding the report will be lists of last year’s accomplishments, involvement with professional organizations, and educational outreach designed to help our university members work together more amicably and cohesively.

## II. NEUTRALITY

“Every visitor to the Ombuds office is treated with respect, dignity, and honor.” This concluding sentence of the Ombudsperson’s Mission Statement projects a philosophy and office culture where all parties to a conflict are supported positively, in a non-judgmental, benevolent manner. As a neutral, the ombuds does not personally become engaged in the conflict or dispute between individuals, but does offer services as a third party to help one or all of those parties work through the difficult problem.

The neutrality required of and promised by the ombudsperson assists him or her to work with individuals with deeply disparate viewpoints. The ombuds’ ability and commitment to treat all office visitors fairly helps them construct reasonable resolutions of their own making, without pressure from the ombuds.

As a neutral, the ombuds does not advocate for any person or act as their representative. The ombudsman can relate information to others with the permission of the office visitor, but does so for the purpose of facilitating or furthering a dialogue. Additionally, the ombuds can advocate for fair process in an effort to safeguard the consistent application of the university’s procedures and policies.

In accordance with his or her neutral role, the ombudsperson does not act as an arbiter or judge over issues or arguments. As an informal resource, the ombuds does not have the authority to make decisions over any matter. Other neutral third parties we are accustomed to are referees and umpires at sporting events, and judges in our courts. Like the ombuds, these individuals strive to be free of conflicts of interest, avoid having a stake in the outcome of a dispute, and are independent of both the parties and the particular situation under which a conflict has arisen.

In contrast, the ombuds does not have the enforcement authority or decision-making bailiwick of an official. The ombuds is not an official of Auburn University and has no conferred authority to direct the actions of individuals, other than when overseeing the operational aspects of the ombuds office. Because he or she is objective and lacks decision-making power or authority to give directives, the ombuds is available to assist all parties in a dispute without bias or judgment.

As part of that process, the ombuds listens actively and constructively to each party who has consented to being involved, and offers guidance in accordance with the interests and goals stated or manifested by each person. As a disinterested person, the ombuds can

often enrich this process by offering reality testing questions that can help an office visitor understand different perspectives and then evaluate and possibly reframe expectations.

Some office visitors prefer to keep their visits to the office confidential and do not wish for the other person in a dispute to become involved with the ombuds process. Other times the second party does not wish to participate, as is their right under university policy. In those instances, the ombuds can provide guidance on university policy, brainstorm options, and coach the initial visitor(s) in various ways to approach their conflict. In fact, the majority of office visits consist of confidential listening, coaching, and guidance sessions with only one visitor present.

Being neutral also helps the ombuds earn trust within the various constituencies of the office. The ombuds takes an egalitarian approach toward all visitors, with no person preferred over another regardless of their status within the organization. As a result, the ombuds does not associate or align him or herself with campus members, other than as part of the ombuds role.

The ombuds does not socialize, other than at university-sponsored events, with members of the university community. This practice is intended to avoid entering into personal relationships or fostering the appearance of favoritism. The author of this report does strive to enter into amicable, professional relationships with everyone associated with campus. To this end he extends invitations for coffee or lunch meetings during university hours, and makes that practice known. He does not interact on social media with members of the organization, nor does he entertain guests at his residence. Finally, the ombuds does not seek membership in groups or associations and does not enjoy voting privileges anywhere on campus. The purpose of these restrictions is to avoid circumstances in which the ombudsperson is or appears to be entangled with the interests of others.

Because of his or her neutrality, the ombuds is sometimes asked to sit in on meetings between disputants. The ombuds will not attend such meetings as a witness, because that implies he or she is present to document a conversation and then relate recollections, perceptions, and judgments to a third person or persons on a future date. That would violate principles of neutrality and confidentiality. The ombuds can participate as an objective, third party facilitator of a conversation between parties with divergent interests, however, as long as it is understood the ombuds maintains confidentiality throughout and afterwards. A facilitated meeting may promote a balanced, safe, and productive conversation, and the ombuds' neutral and confidential role can induce the parties to engage transparently and constructively.

Even the location of the ombudsperson's office reflects neutrality, and is deliberately functional. Ideally, an ombuds office should be geographically detached from the organization's administrative, legal, and human resources offices. The purpose of this separation is to avoid confusing the ombuds as someone intertwined with individuals in authority, to alleviate fears the ombuds will impart confidential information to those in close proximity to him or her, and to protect the anonymity of office visitors meeting with the ombuds.

The physical office should be centrally located and easily accessible on campus, with protections for persons wishing to enter and exit discretely. The ombudsperson's office at Auburn University is located on the ground floor of the Quad Center Building, far from the administrative and legal offices in Samford Hall, and many miles from the university's Human Resources office at Glenn Avenue and University Drive.

More preferably for its purpose, the office is situated within a block of the Student Center and the major campus classroom buildings. In addition to the three front doors to the building, visitors can access the building from a side door and, since the building is on a hill, from entrances on the other side, via the top floor. Visitors can then inconspicuously take staircases or an elevator down to the ombuds office.

Per the Charter of the Auburn University Ombudsperson, the ombuds considers the interests and concerns of all persons involved in a situation with the aim of facilitating communication and assisting them reach mutually acceptable agreements that are fair and equitable, and consistent with the mission and policies of the University. The principle of neutrality, operating in conjunction with the other three ethical tenets of the office, enables the ombudsperson to simultaneously work with office visitors with opposing points of view. As a third party neutral, the ombuds is positioned to help each party understand the interests of the other and to help them open their minds as a predicate to the creation of alternative resolutions.

### **III. REPORT**

The following report consists of pie charts and statistical information regarding the different types of visitors and issues presented to the ombudsperson's office. The information contained in this report is purposely general so as to maintain the confidentiality of statements made by office visitors to the ombuds. The issue categories are derived from the International Ombudsman Association's Uniform Reporting Categories, a copy of which is attached to this report.

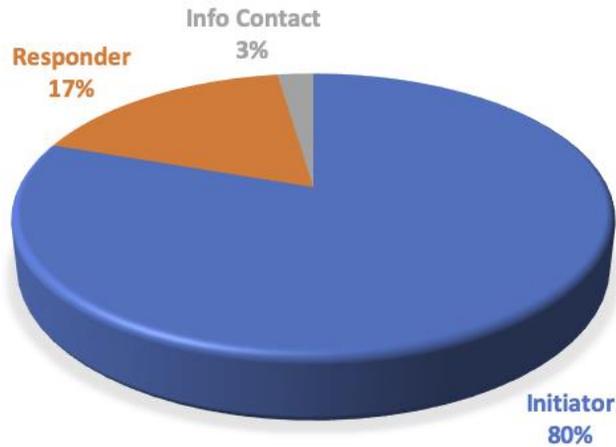
#### **A. NEW OFFICE VISITORS<sup>1</sup>**

##### **1. Type of Contact, 2017 - 2018**

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<sup>1</sup> "New office visitors" are defined as visitors who bring an initial new matter to the ombuds. The office visitor can be a repeat visitor, but does not appear statistically in this report unless the subject matter of the subsequent visit arose from a new set of facts and circumstances. For purposes of this report, multiple succeeding appointments regarding the same facts and circumstances are not counted.

## OFFICE VISITORS

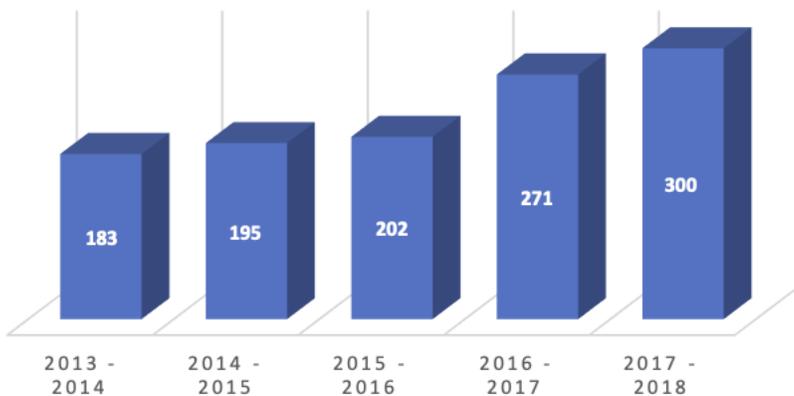


| Types of Visitors   | Number | Percentage |
|---------------------|--------|------------|
| Initiators          | 241    | 80%        |
| Responders          | 52     | 17%        |
| Information Contact | 7      | 3%         |
| Total               | 300    | 100%       |

## 2. Overall New Office Visitors Five-Year Review, Academic Years 2013 - 2014 through 2017- 2018

This particular annual report will include five-year column chart summaries of new office visitors, generally and within the different constituencies of the ombuds office: faculty, students, Administrative & Professional and staff members.

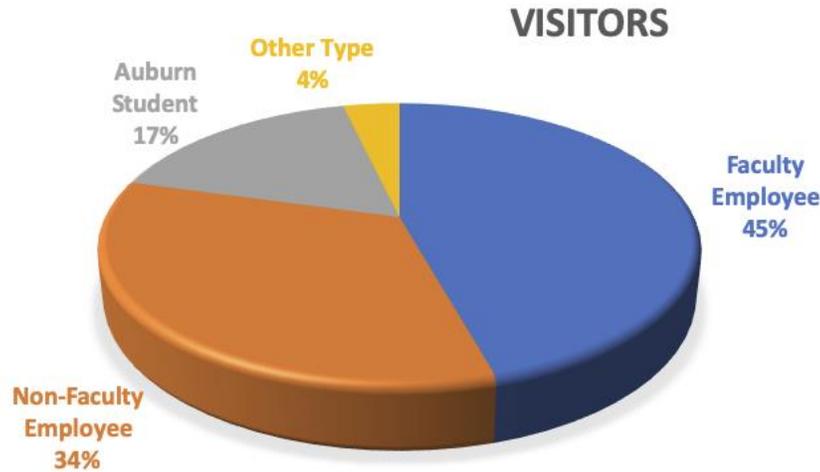
### OVERALL OFFICE VISITORS FIVE-YEAR REVIEW



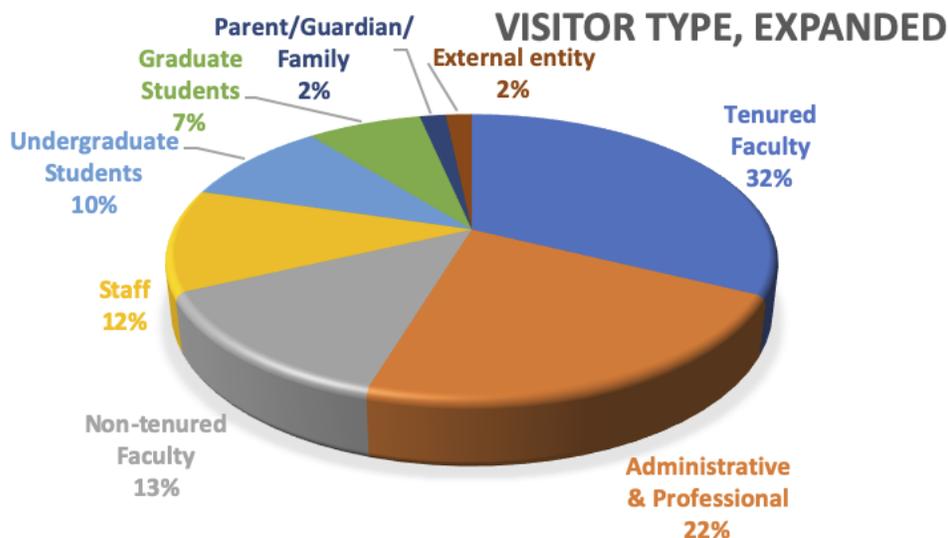
| Overall visitors, Five-Year Review | Number |
|------------------------------------|--------|
|                                    |        |

| Overall visitors, Five-Year Review | Number |
|------------------------------------|--------|
| 2013 - 2014                        | 183    |
| 2014 - 2015                        | 195    |
| 2015 - 2016                        | 202    |
| 2016 - 2017                        | 271    |
| 2017 - 2018                        | 300    |

### 3. 2017 - 2018 Office Visitor Category Statistics



| Visitor Classification | Number | Percentage |
|------------------------|--------|------------|
| Faculty Employee       | 137    | 45%        |
| Non-Faculty Employee   | 101    | 34%        |
| Students               | 51     | 17%        |
| Other                  | 11     | 4%         |
| Total                  | 300    | 100%       |



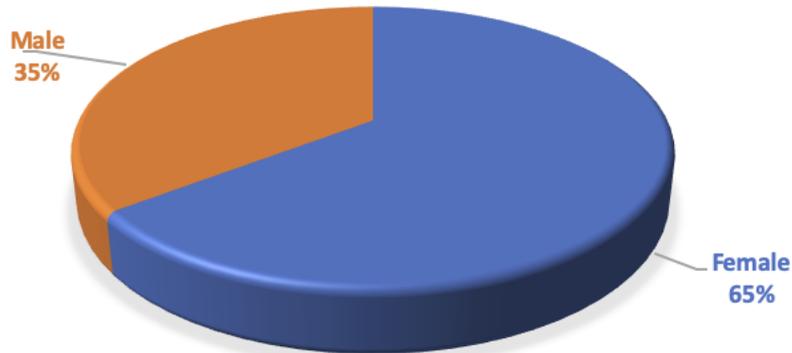
| <b>Office Visitor Type, Expanded</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Tenured Faculty                      | 97            | 32%               |
| Administrative & Professional        | 67            | 22%               |
| Non-tenured Faculty                  | 40            | 13%               |
| Staff                                | 35            | 12%               |
| Undergraduate Students               | 29            | 10%               |
| Graduate Students                    | 22            | 7%                |
| Parent/Guardian/Family               | 5             | 2%                |
| External entity                      | 5             | 2%                |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>300</b>    | <b>100%</b>       |

## B. VISITOR DEMOGRAPHICS

### 1. Overall Gender and Race/Ethnicity

#### a. Overall Gender, 2017 - 2018

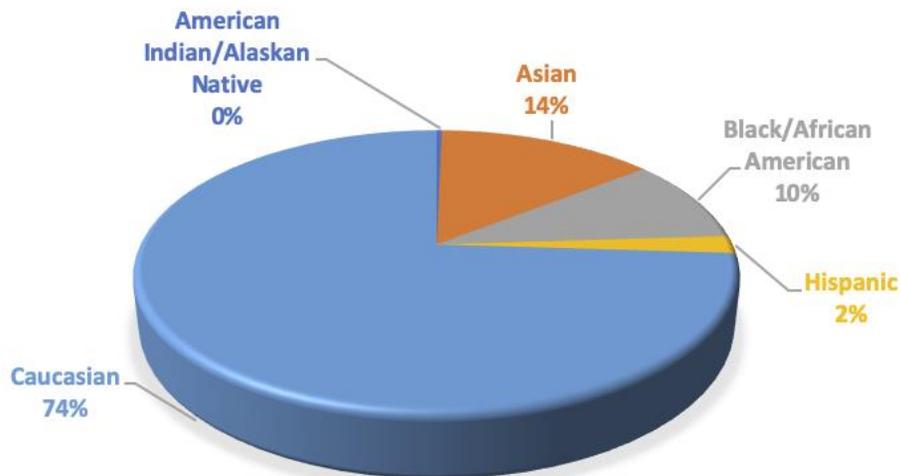
##### OVERALL GENDER



| Gender - All visitors | Number | Percentage |
|-----------------------|--------|------------|
| Female                | 194    | 65%        |
| Male                  | 106    | 35%        |
| Total                 | 300    | 100%       |

#### b. Overall Race/Ethnicity, 2017 - 2018

##### RACE/ETHNICITY



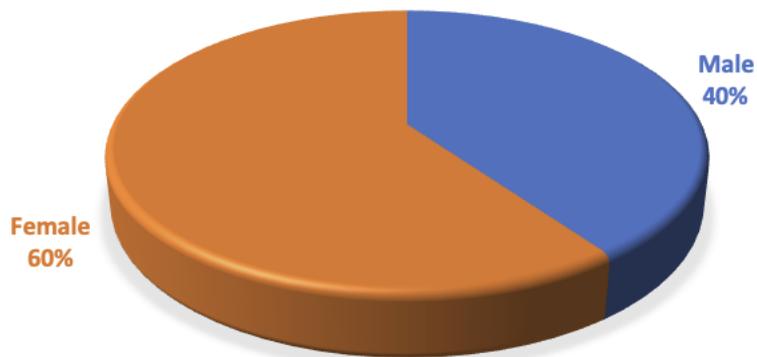
| Race/Ethnicity | Number | Percentage |
|----------------|--------|------------|
| Caucasian      | 222    | 74%        |

| Race/Ethnicity         | Number | Percentage |
|------------------------|--------|------------|
| Asian                  | 42     | 14%        |
| Black/African American | 29     | 10%        |
| Hispanic               | 6      | 2%         |
| American Indian        | 1      | 0%         |
| Total                  | 300    | 100%       |

## 2. General Faculty Demographics

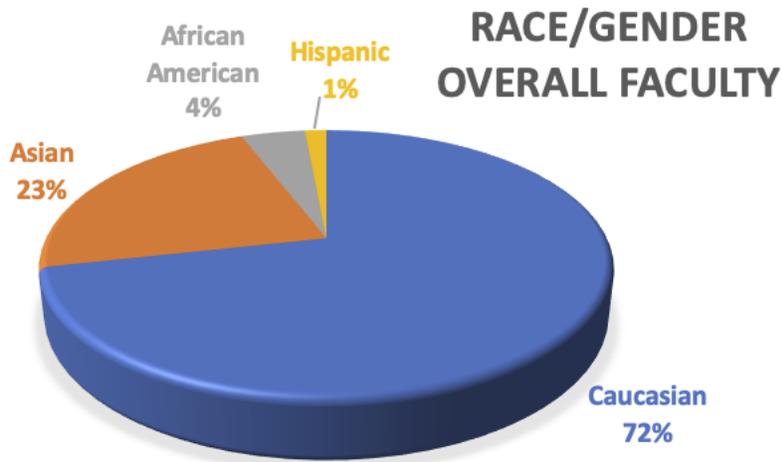
### a. Overall Faculty Gender, 2017 - 2018

#### OVERALL FACULTY GENDER



| Gender - Faculty | Number | Percentage |
|------------------|--------|------------|
| Female           | 82     | 60%        |
| Male             | 55     | 40%        |
| Total            | 137    | 100%       |

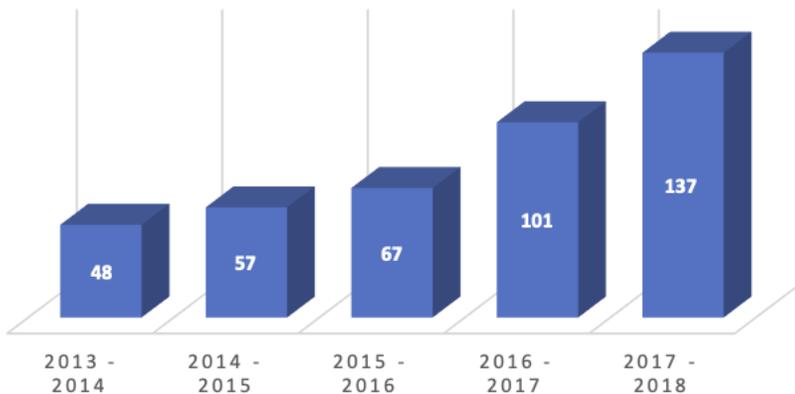
**b. Overall Faculty Race/Ethnicity, 2017 - 2018**



| Race/Ethnicity Overall Faculty | Number | Percentage |
|--------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Caucasian                      | 98     | 72%        |
| Asian                          | 31     | 23%        |
| Black/African American         | 6      | 4%         |
| Hispanic                       | 2      | 1%         |
| Total                          | 137    | 100%       |

**c. Overall Faculty New Office Visitor Five-Year Review**

**OVERALL FACULTY FIVE-YEAR REVIEW**



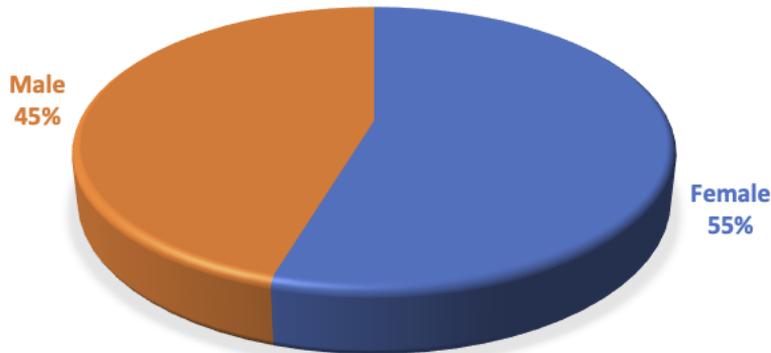
| Overall Faculty, Five-Year Review | Number |
|-----------------------------------|--------|
| 2013 - 2014                       | 48     |
| 2014 - 2015                       | 57     |
| 2015 - 2016                       | 67     |

| Overall Faculty, Five-Year Review | Number |
|-----------------------------------|--------|
| 2016 - 2017                       | 101    |
| 2017 - 2018                       | 137    |

### 3. Tenured Faculty Demographics

#### a. Tenured Faculty Gender, 2017 - 2018

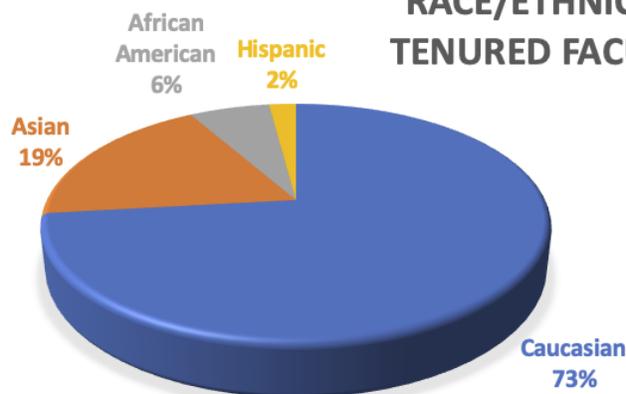
##### TENURED FACULTY GENDER



| Gender - Tenured Faculty | Number | Percentage |
|--------------------------|--------|------------|
| Female                   | 53     | 55%        |
| Male                     | 44     | 45%        |
| Total                    | 97     | 100%       |

#### b. Tenured Faculty Race/Ethnicity

##### RACE/ETHNICITY TENURED FACULTY

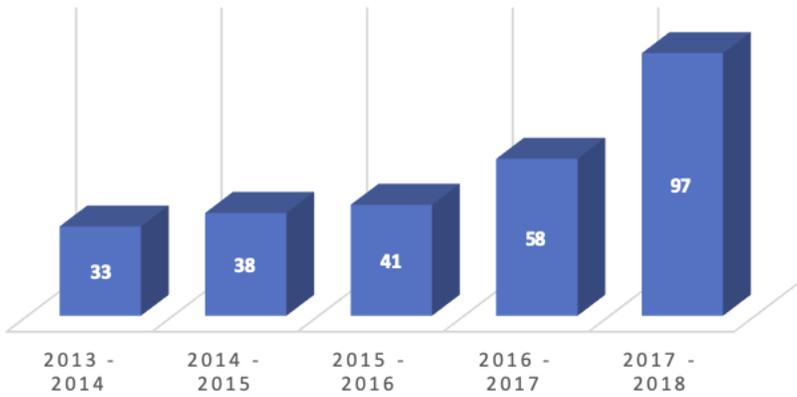


| Tenured Faculty | Number | Percentage |
|-----------------|--------|------------|
| Caucasian       | 71     | 73%        |
| Asian           | 18     | 19%        |

| Tenured Faculty        | Number | Percentage |
|------------------------|--------|------------|
| Black/African American | 6      | 6%         |
| Hispanic               | 2      | 2%         |
| Total                  | 97     | 100%       |

**c. Tenured Faculty New Office Visitor Five-Year Review**

**TENURED FACULTY FIVE-YEAR REVIEW**

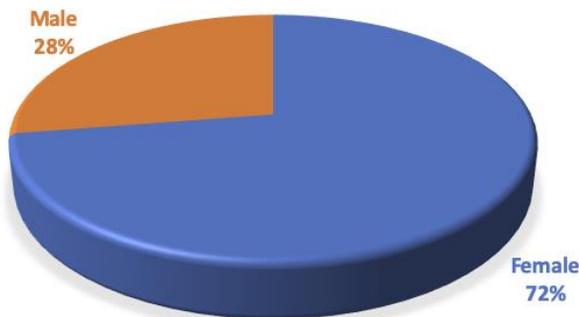


| Overall Tenured Faculty, Five-Year Review | Number |
|-------------------------------------------|--------|
| 2013 - 2014                               | 33     |
| 2014 - 2015                               | 38     |
| 2015 - 2016                               | 41     |
| 2016 - 2017                               | 58     |
| 2017 - 2018                               | 97     |

**4. Non-Tenured Faculty Demographics**

**a. Non-Tenured Faculty Gender**

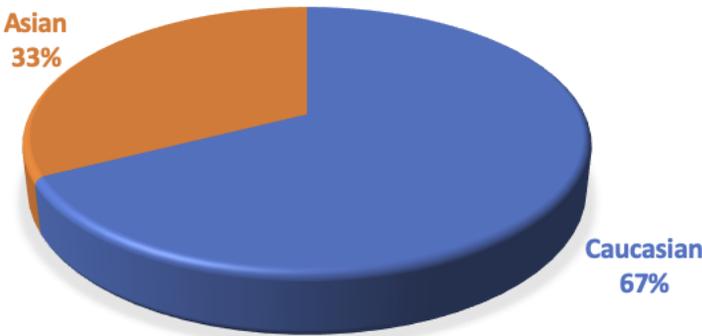
**NON-TENURED FACULTY GENDER**



| <b>Gender – Non-Tenured Faculty</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Female                              | 29            | 72%               |
| Male                                | 11            | 28%               |
| Total                               | 40            | 100%              |

**b. Non-tenured Faculty Race/Ethnicity**

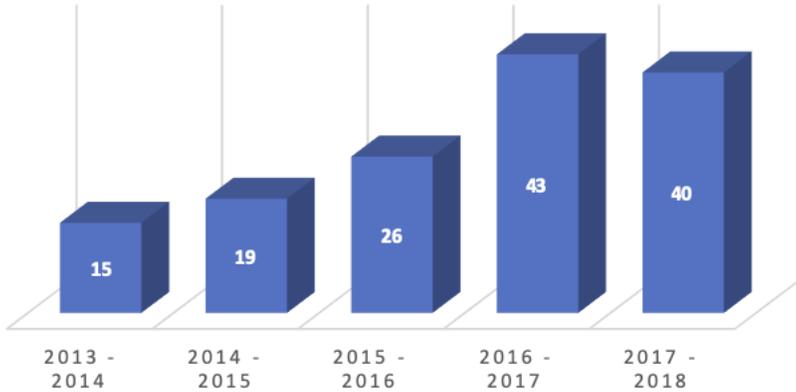
**RACE/ETHNICITY  
NON-TENURED FACULTY**



| <b>Non-tenured Faculty</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|----------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Caucasian                  | 27            | 67%               |
| Asian                      | 13            | 33%               |
| Total                      | 40            | 100%              |

c. Non-tenured Faculty New Office Visitor Five-Year Review

**NON-TENURED FACULTY  
FIVE-YEAR REVIEW**

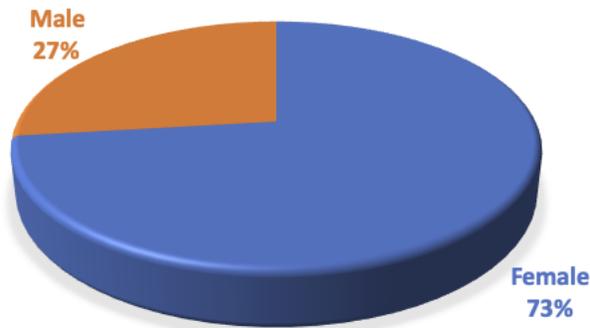


| <b>Overall Non-tenured Faculty,<br/>Five-Year Review</b> | <b>Number</b> |
|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| 2013 – 2014                                              | 15            |
| 2014 – 2015                                              | 19            |
| 2015 – 2016                                              | 26            |
| 2016 – 2017                                              | 43            |
| 2017 - 2018                                              | 40            |

5. Administrative & Professional Demographics, and Five-Year Review

a. Administrative & Professional Gender

**ADMINISTRATIVE & PROFESSIONAL  
GENDER**

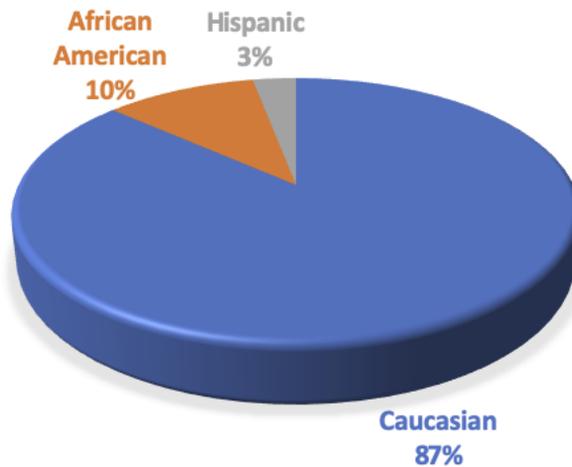


| <b>Gender – A &amp; P</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
|---------------------------|---------------|-------------------|

| Gender - A & P | Number | Percentage |
|----------------|--------|------------|
| Female         | 49     | 73%        |
| Male           | 18     | 27%        |
| Total          | 67     | 100%       |

**b. Administrative & Professional Race/Ethnicity**

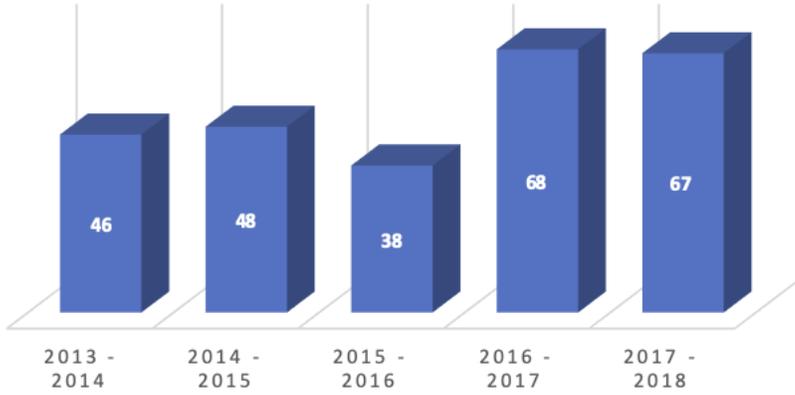
**RACE/ETHNICITY  
ADMINISTRATIVE & PROFESSIONAL**



| Administrative & Professional | Number | Percentage |
|-------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Caucasian                     | 58     | 87%        |
| Black/African American        | 7      | 10%        |
| Hispanic                      | 2      | 3%         |
| Total                         | 67     | 100%       |

c. Administrative & Professional New Office Visitor Five-Year Review

**ADMINISTRATIVE & PROFESSIONAL  
FIVE-YEAR REVIEW**

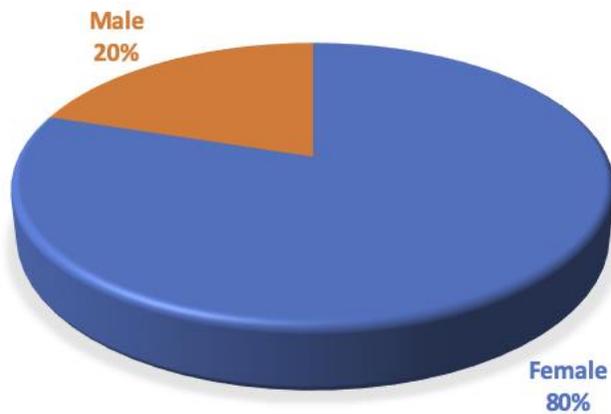


| Overall Administrative & Professional, Five-Year Review | Number |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| 2013 - 2014                                             | 46     |
| 2014 - 2015                                             | 48     |
| 2015 - 2016                                             | 38     |
| 2016 - 2017                                             | 68     |
| 2017 - 2018                                             | 67     |

**6. Staff Demographics, and Five-Year Review**

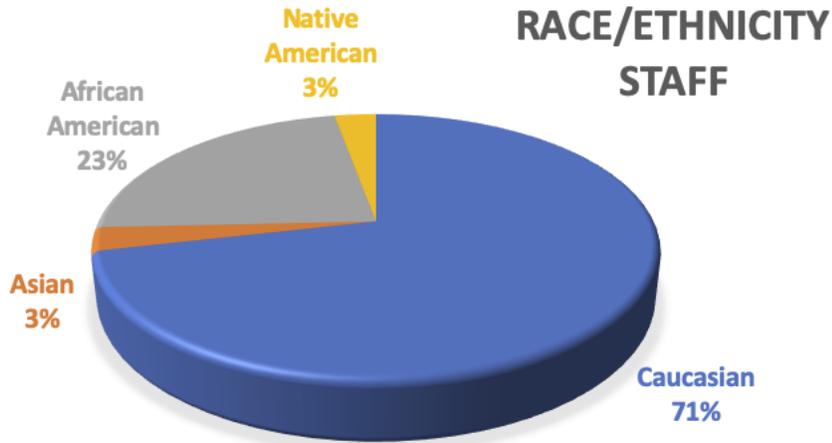
a. Staff Gender

**STAFF GENDER**



| Gender - Staff | Number | Percentage |
|----------------|--------|------------|
| Female         | 28     | 80%        |
| Male           | 7      | 20%        |
| Total          | 35     | 100%       |

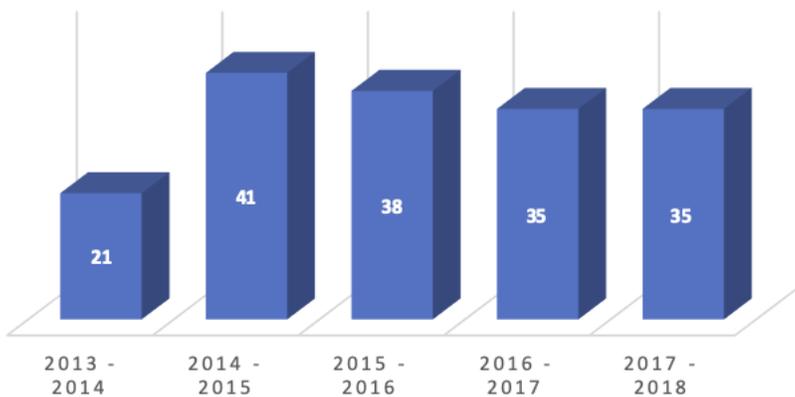
**b. Staff Race/Ethnicity**



| Staff                  | Number | Percentage |
|------------------------|--------|------------|
| Caucasian              | 25     | 71%        |
| Black/African American | 8      | 23%        |
| Asian                  | 1      | 3%         |
| Native American        | 1      | 3%         |
| Total                  | 35     | 100%       |

**c. Staff New Office Visitor Five-Year Review**

**STAFF FIVE-YEAR REVIEW**

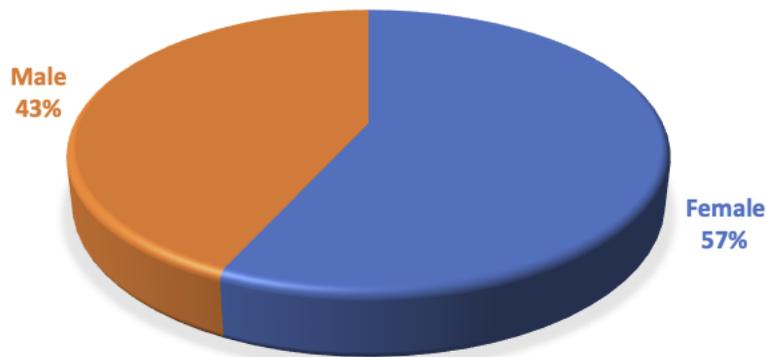


| Overall Staff, Five-Year Review | Number |
|---------------------------------|--------|
| 2013 - 2014                     | 21     |
| 2014 - 2015                     | 41     |
| 2015 - 2016                     | 38     |
| 2016 - 2017                     | 35     |
| 2017 - 2018                     | 35     |

## 7. Overall Student Demographics, and Five-Year Review

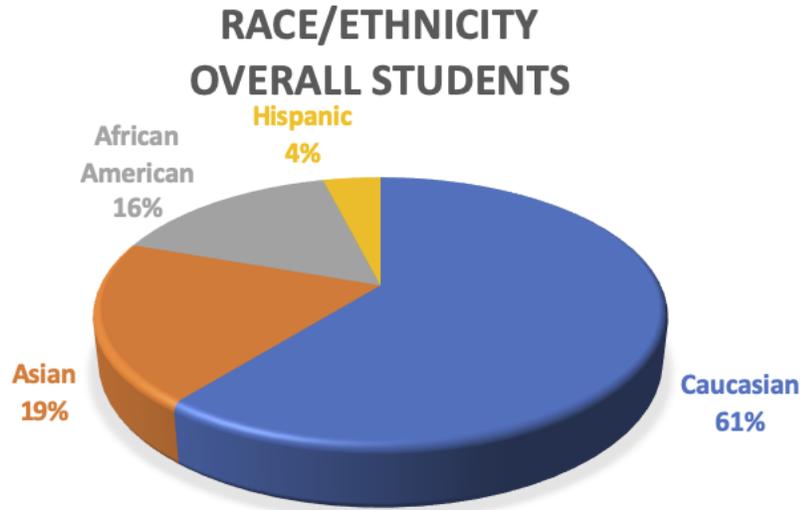
### a. Overall Student Gender

#### OVERALL STUDENT GENDER



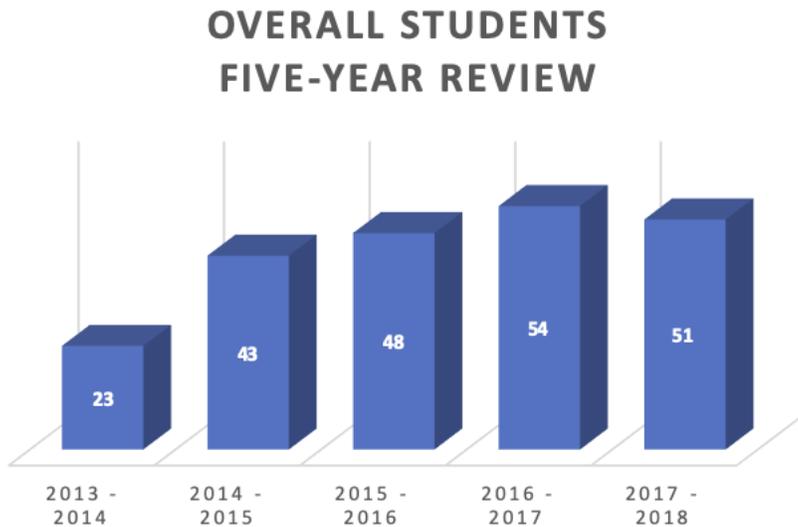
| Gender - Students | Number | Percentage |
|-------------------|--------|------------|
| Female            | 29     | 57%        |
| Male              | 22     | 43%        |
| Total             | 51     | 100%       |

**b. Overall Student Race/Ethnicity**



| Students               | Number | Percentage |
|------------------------|--------|------------|
| Caucasian              | 31     | 61%        |
| Asian                  | 10     | 19%        |
| Black/African American | 8      | 16%        |
| Hispanic               | 2      | 4%         |
| Total                  | 51     | 100%       |

**c. Overall Student New Office Visitor, Five Year Review**

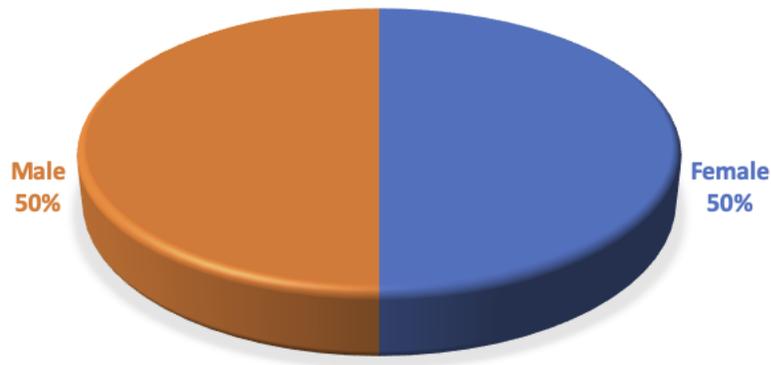


| Overall Students, Five-Year Review | Number |
|------------------------------------|--------|
| 2013 - 2014                        | 23     |
| 2014 - 2015                        | 43     |
| 2015 - 2016                        | 48     |
| 2016 - 2017                        | 54     |
| 2017 - 2018                        | 51     |

## 8. Graduate Student Demographics, and Five-Year Review

### a. Graduate Student Gender

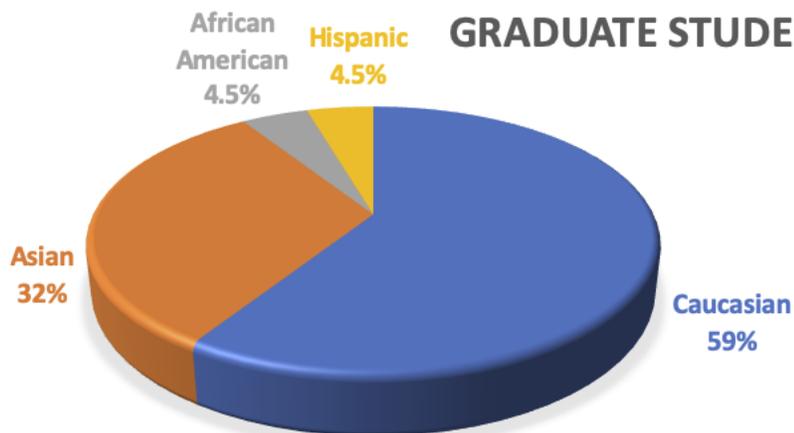
#### GRADUATE STUDENT GENDER



| Gender - Graduate Students | Number | Percentage |
|----------------------------|--------|------------|
| Female                     | 11     | 50%        |
| Male                       | 11     | 50%        |
| Total                      | 22     | 100%       |

### Graduate Student Race/Ethnicity

#### RACE/ETHNICITY GRADUATE STUDENTS

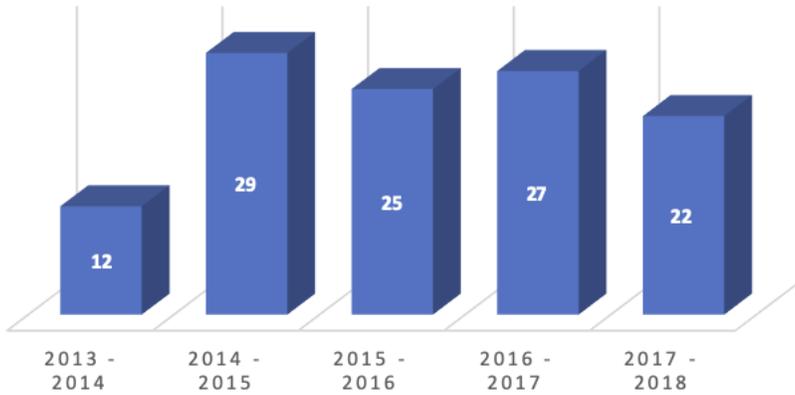


| Graduate Students | Number | Percentage |
|-------------------|--------|------------|
| Caucasian         | 13     | 59%        |
| Asian             | 7      | 32%        |
| Black/African     | 1      | 4.5%       |

| Graduate Students | Number | Percentage |
|-------------------|--------|------------|
| American          |        |            |
| Hispanic          | 1      | 4.5%       |
| Total             | 22     | 100%       |

**b. Graduate Student New Office Visitor Five-Year Review**

**GRADUATE STUDENTS  
FIVE-YEAR REVIEW**

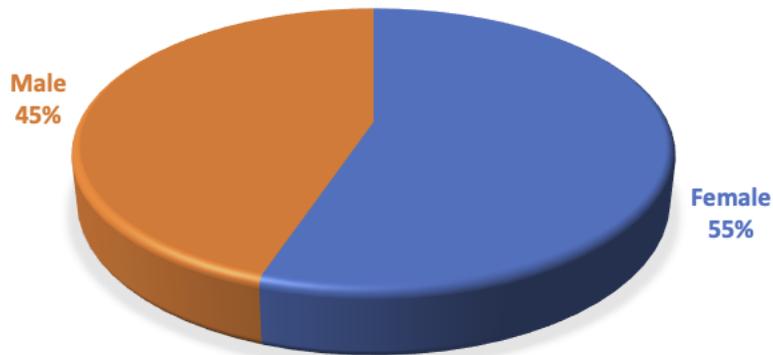


| Graduate Students, Five-Year Review | Number |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| 2013 - 2014                         | 12     |
| 2014 - 2015                         | 29     |
| 2015 - 2016                         | 25     |
| 2016 - 2017                         | 27     |
| 2017 - 2018                         | 22     |

## 9. Undergraduate Student Demographics and Five-Year Review

### a. Undergraduate Student Gender

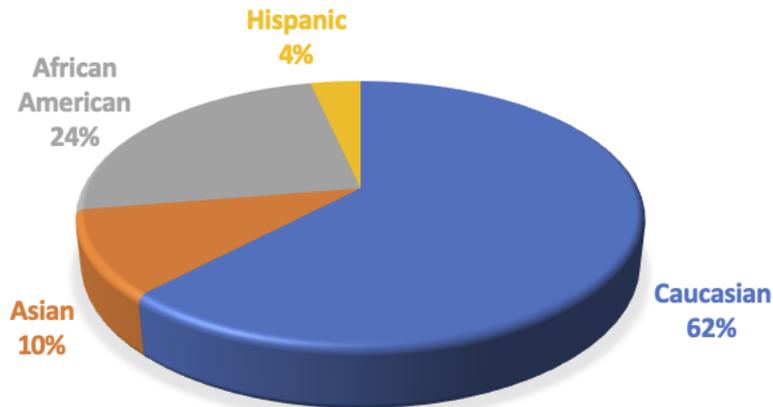
#### UNDERGRADUATE GENDER



| Gender - Undergraduate Students | Number | Percentage |
|---------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Female                          | 16     | 55%        |
| Male                            | 13     | 45%        |
| Total                           | 29     | 100%       |

### b. Undergraduate Student Race/Ethnicity

#### RACE/ETHNICITY UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

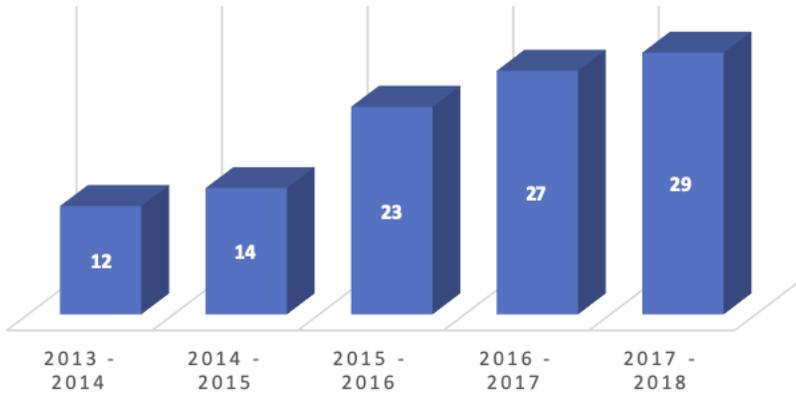


| Undergraduate Students | Number | Percentage |
|------------------------|--------|------------|
| Caucasian              | 18     | 62%        |
| Black/African American | 7      | 24%        |
| Asian                  | 3      | 10%        |

| <b>Undergraduate Students</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Hispanic                      | 1             | 4%                |
| Total                         | 29            | 100%              |

**c. Undergraduate Student New Office Visitor Five-Year Review**

**UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS  
FIVE-YEAR REVIEW**

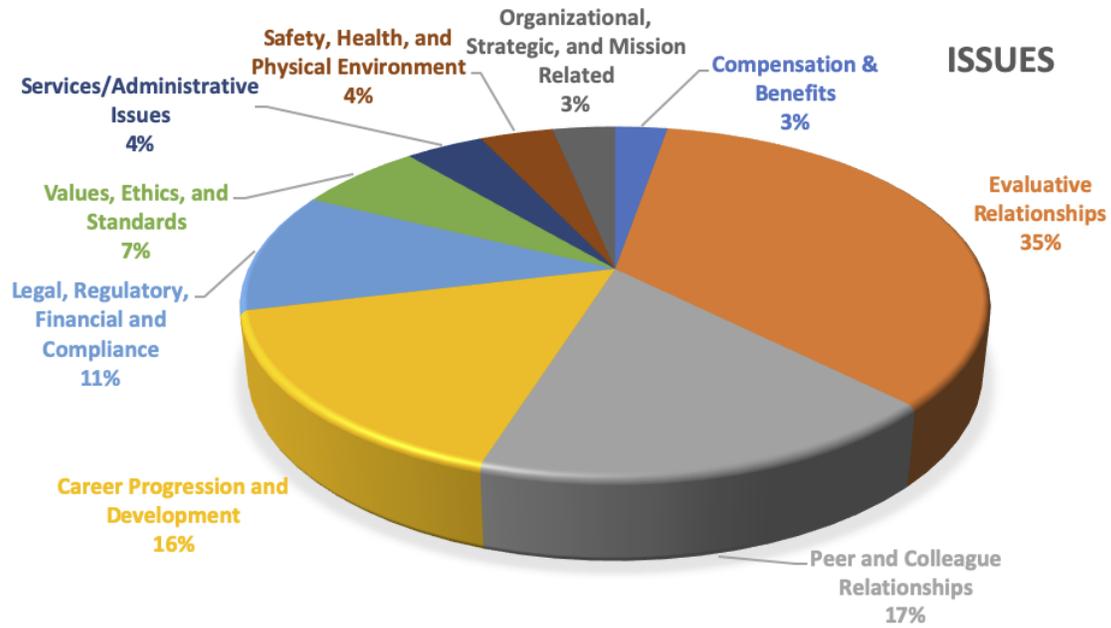


| <b>Undergraduate Students, Five-Year Review</b> | <b>Number</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| 2013 - 2014                                     | 12            |
| 2014 - 2015                                     | 14            |
| 2015 - 2016                                     | 23            |
| 2016 - 2017                                     | 27            |
| 2017 - 2018                                     | 29            |

**C. GENERAL ISSUE CATEGORIES**

This report provides statistics on the types of broad concerns brought to the ombuds, such as evaluative relationships in the employment and classroom context, career challenges and progression through school, as well as legal, safety and ethical issues.

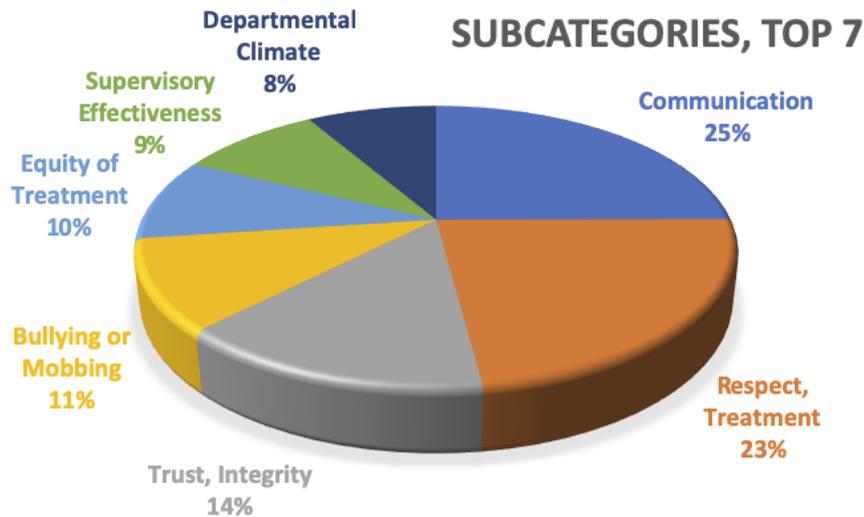
## 1. Broad Issues, 2017 - 2018



| Issue                                          | Number | Percentage |
|------------------------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Evaluative Relationships                       | 128    | 35%        |
| Peer and Colleague Relationships               | 64     | 17%        |
| Career Progression and Development             | 60     | 16%        |
| Legal, Regulatory, Financial and Compliance    | 41     | 11%        |
| Values, Ethics, and Standards                  | 24     | 7%         |
| Services/Administrative Issues                 | 15     | 4%         |
| Safety, Health, and Physical Environment       | 14     | 4%         |
| Organizational, Strategic, and Mission Related | 12     | 3%         |
| Compensation and Benefits                      | 10     | 3%         |
| Total Discussions of General Themes            | 368    | 100%       |

## 2. Top 7 Subcategory Issues (Common Themes)

This entry highlights common themes on the more specific complaints heard by the ombudsperson. These entries reflect many underlying human interests, such as need for respect, fairness, integrity, dignity, trust, and safety.



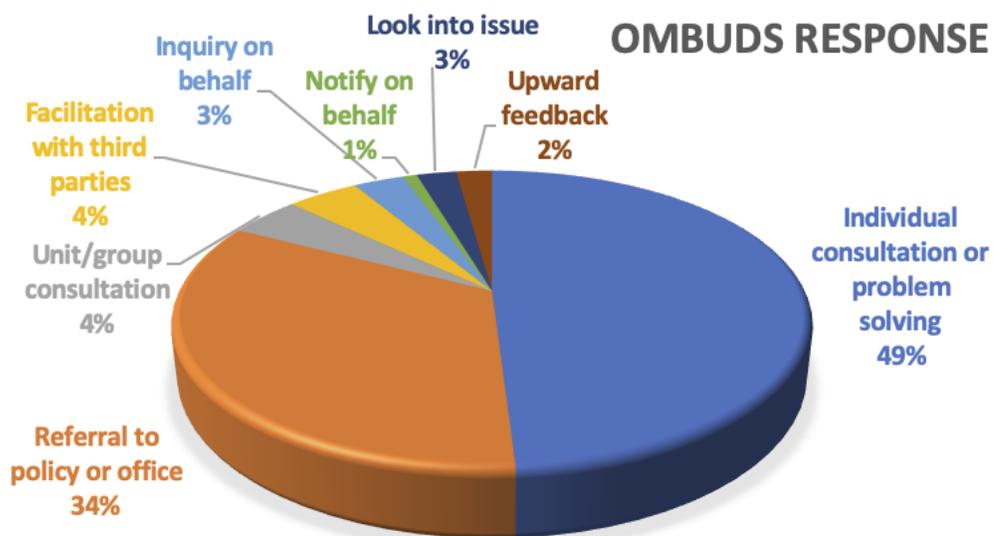
| Top 7 Subcategories                      | Number | Percentage |
|------------------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Communication                            | 145    | 25%        |
| Respect                                  | 134    | 23%        |
| Trust/Integrity                          | 84     | 14%        |
| Bullying/Mobbing                         | 61     | 11%        |
| Equity of Treatment                      | 55     | 10%        |
| Supervisory Effectiveness                | 54     | 9%         |
| Departmental Climate                     | 49     | 8%         |
| Total Discussions of Top 7 Common Themes | 582    | 100%       |

### OTHER SUBCATEGORIES

| Other Subcategories                     | Number |
|-----------------------------------------|--------|
| Performance Appraisal/Grading           | 43     |
| Diversity Related                       | 42     |
| Assignments, Schedules                  | 36     |
| Feedback                                | 26     |
| Career Development, Coaching, Mentoring | 23     |
| Priorities, Values, Beliefs             | 20     |
| Retaliation                             | 18     |
| Reputation                              | 23     |
| Standards of Conduct                    | 15     |
| Tenure/Position Security/Ambiguity      | 14     |
| Harassment                              | 13     |

| Other Subcategories                                               | Number |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| Discrimination                                                    | 11     |
| Values and Culture                                                | 11     |
| Administrative Decisions and Interpretations/Application of Rules | 11     |
| Involuntary Transfer/Change of Assignment                         | 10     |
| Discipline                                                        | 10     |
| Job Application/Selection and Recruitment                         | 10     |
| Leadership and Management                                         | 9      |
| Business and Financial Practices                                  | 8      |
| Safety                                                            | 7      |
| Termination/Non-renewal                                           | 7      |
| Scientific Conduct/Integrity                                      | 6      |
| Use of Positional Power/Authority                                 | 6      |
| Behavior of Service Provider(s)                                   | 5      |
| Job Classification and Description                                | 5      |
| Disability, Temporary or Permanent, Reasonable Accommodation      | 5      |
| Student Conduct                                                   | 5      |
| Organizational Climate                                            | 5      |
| Resignation                                                       | 4      |
| Restructuring and Relocation                                      | 4      |

### 3. Ombuds Response



| Ombuds Response                         | Number | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Individual Consultation/Problem solving | 223    | 49%        |
| Referral to policy or office            | 153    | 34%        |
| Unit/Group Consultation                 | 20     | 4%         |
| Facilitation with third parties         | 20     | 4%         |
| Inquiry on Behalf                       | 14     | 3%         |

| Ombuds Response  | Number | Percentage |
|------------------|--------|------------|
| Look into issue  | 11     | 3%         |
| Upward feedback  | 10     | 3%         |
| Notify on behalf | 4      | 1%         |
| Total response   | 455    | 100%       |

#### IV. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Featured speaker, Florida Gulf Coast University Conflict Resolution Day
- Endorsed *A New Pathway to Peace*, by retired Auburn University Political Science Professor Dr. Ted Becker, and Brian Polkington, (2017), Resource Publications, back cover.
- Interviewed by *The Plainsman*, April 29, 2018 edition.
- Presented *Working with High Conflict Persons* at Truman-Pierce Anti-Bullying Summit, Peachtree City, Georgia.
- Speaker, *Productive Teamwork through Trust and Respectful Communication*, Computer and Software Engineering Faculty and Staff Retreat, Pebble Hill
- Speaker, National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences and ACES Annual Conference, Orange Beach, Alabama

#### V. PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, AND SELECTED CONFERENCES ATTENDED

- Member, International Ombudsman Association
  - Co-chair for 13<sup>th</sup> Annual IOA Conference in Richmond, Virginia, with 430 attendees
  - Certified Organizational Ombudsman Practitioner
- Member, California Caucus of College and University Ombuds
  - Attended 44th Annual Conference in Pacific Grove, California
  - Member, CCCUO Board of Directors
- Member, Alabama State Court Mediator Roster

#### VI. EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

The Ombudsperson speaks to numerous groups throughout the year to inform them of the services offered by the Ombuds office, and to provide educational seminars and workshops. The Ombuds is available for and solicits invitations from all groups to appear as a speaker or to present conflict resolution seminars. Seminars and workshops presented in the 2017/2018 academic year were:

- *Teamwork: Building Results Collaboratively and Amicably*
- *Understanding Bullying and Mobbing in the Workplace and Academe*
- *Working with High Conflict Persons*

- *The Art and Productive Capacity of Active Listening*
- *Identifying Underlying Interests: Tips from Nature, History, and the Cinema*
- *NBZ – The No Bullying Zone* (for AU camp counselors)
- *Cooperative Negotiation Strategy*, with Dr. Stefan Eisen of the Maxwell AFB War College

## **VII. COMMUNITY SERVICE**

Mediate civil cases once monthly at Lee County District Court.

## **VIII. CONCLUSION**

Per university policy, the Office of the Ombudsperson is the one place on campus where an office visitor can confidentially and freely talk about any issue (subject to vary narrow exceptions consisting of visitor permission or imminent threat of extraordinarily serious harm), without worry of another person's or unit's agenda being impressed upon them. The ombuds' neutrality is one of four important foundational cornerstones that allow such conversations to safely take place. As the five-year review in this report indicates, confidence in the Office of the Ombudsperson to operate effectively within the principles of neutrality, independence, confidentiality, and informality has grown each year.