

Ombuds Academic Appeals Advisor: Role Description

Summary

The role of Ombuds Academic Appeals Advisors reflects that of the Office of the Ombudsperson - to assist students with understanding policies and procedures of the university. They are not advocates but rather, advisors who help students navigate academic systems. As faculty members, they play an important supportive role to students as they offer unique expertise and insight into academic structures that students may not possess.

The Office will make best effort to have Faculty representation from a variety of Faculties and Schools and guarantee that an advisor will never work with a student from their home Faculty or School. Appointments to the role will be for two-year renewable terms.

In appropriate circumstances and subject to availability, the Office of the University Ombudsperson will use their discretion to assign an Ombuds Academic Appeals Advisor to assist a student who is facing serious adverse academic consequences. The assignment of an Ombuds Academic Appeals Advisor is generally reserved for situations such as those in which a student:

- could be required to withdraw for academic reasons;
- has received a decision requiring them to withdraw for academic reasons;
- is facing an allegation(s) about a departure from academic integrity; or
- is seeking to appeal a decision that the student engaged in a departure from academic integrity.

Ombuds Academic Appeal Advisors will not be assigned to cases of grade appeals, unless the grade will result in the application of an academic regulation requiring the student to withdraw for academic reasons.

Ombuds Academic Appeal Advisors are permitted to be present at any meeting between a student and a decision-maker but does not directly advocate on behalf of a student. The role of an Ombuds Academic Appeal Advisor is to ensure that students are aware of their rights and responsibilities and to counsel students about opportunities to resolve their matter.

Ombuds Academic Appeal Advisors are expected to be familiar with the academic rules and regulations that apply to the student so they can provide appropriate assistance and advice to the student.

OFFICE of the UNIVERSITY Ombudsperson

Key Responsibilities

Ombuds Faculty Advisors are expected to be familiar with the academic rules and regulations that apply to the student so they can provide appropriate assistance and advice to the student.

The role of a Faculty Advisor is to ensure that students are aware of their rights and responsibilities and to counsel students about opportunities to resolve their matter.

Advisors shall provide guidance, advice, and support to students. More specifically, an advisor may:

- Meet one-on-one with assigned student in advance of their scheduled meeting (with the decision maker) in-person, via telephone, or through virtual means
- Communicate, as needed, with the assigned student via appropriate means
- Provide information, facts, and support for the process
- Support the informed interpretation of the process, which may require communication between both parties
- Review draft letters composed by the student; ensuring they convey the appropriate information and that all viewpoints have been considered
- Explain possible consequences and outcomes based on the circumstances
- Assist the student with developing a plan of action as they advance through the process
- Be present at any meeting between the student and a decision-maker but does not directly advocate on behalf of the student

Additional responsibilities include:

- Participate in training offered by the Office of the University Ombudsperson
- Meet quarterly with the Office of the Ombudsperson and other Faculty Advisors
- Engage in regular communication with the Office
- Acknowledge that most policies and procedures follow a set timeline; ensure responsiveness (within reason)