

ANNUAL REPORT
OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY FACULTY OMBUDSMAN
2011 – 2012

The position of faculty ombudsman at Ohio State University started on October 1, 2010. This is the second annual report and it covers the period from July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012. The duties of the faculty ombudsman are defined in university rule 3335-5-45.3 and include: (1) helping faculty assess viability of complaints and issues, (2) directing faculty to appropriate offices, committees, university rules and policies and (3) where appropriate serving as an informal mediator for early-state complaints.

The faculty ombudsman is a member of the International Ombudsman Association and as such operates according to the principles of that association. These principles are: (1) Independence- the faculty ombudsman is not an advocate for the administration or any individual faculty member, (2) Impartiality: the faculty ombudsman remains neutral in all interactions, (3) Confidentiality: interactions with the faculty ombudsman are confidential to the extent permitted by law. The faculty ombudsman's notes are not subject to open records requests. (4) Informality: interactions with the faculty ombudsman are informal wherein the faculty ombudsman listens to a person's concerns and suggests various approaches to resolving the issues. For more information about these operating principles, see the faculty ombudsman webpage at ombudsman.osu.edu.

During the past year, the appointment of the faculty ombudsman was expanded to cover the summer of 2011. Thus the position is now a twelve month appointment. The faculty ombudsman had a total of eighty five interactions (seventy two during the academic year) with fifty nine faculty or groups of faculty (fifty during the academic year) who sought advice or information. The increase in the number of faculty seen during this academic year (thirty five faculty last academic year) is most likely due to a wider recognition of the existence of the position of the faculty ombudsman. The faculty came from thirty different units across the Columbus campus and from two OSU regional campuses. The faculty ranged in rank from lecturer to full professor. Most of the interactions were one-time interactions but some have been on-going throughout the year.

Some of the issues as perceived by the faculty that were discussed this past year included:

- **Conflict with chair/supervisor**
 - Academic freedom and responsibility

- Compensation for voluntary teaching
- Contract dispute
- Disability issue
- Annual evaluation not factual
- Pattern of administration not followed
- Research space
- Retaliation
- Spousal hire agreement
- Teaching assignment
- Toxic environment
- **College issues**
 - Full time equivalent (FTE) policy proposal
 - Lack of interaction with new dean
 - Potential unit closure
 - Promotion requirements
 - Reorganization
 - Rehire policy
 - Workload policy
- **Inappropriate faculty behavior**
- **Promotion/tenure issues**
- **University policies and procedures**
 - Benefits appeal
 - Faculty Professional Leave (FPL) policy
 - Lecturer classification and benefits
- **Bullying**
 - Student bullying faculty
 - Administrative staff bullying faculty
- **Information requests related to**
 - University rules
 - Office of Academic Affairs policies and procedures

- Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility

The faculty ombudsman led a two-session workshop for college faculty on academic freedom and responsibility. The session included presentations by Vice Provost Susan Williams and three senior faculty, two of whom were former department chairs and one who was a former chair of the senate committee on academic freedom and responsibility (CAFR). Presentations were made on academic freedom and responsibility and faculty comments and questions were addressed.

Professor Nancy Rogers, College of Law, has served as an advisor to the faculty ombudsman and her enthusiastic support for the position is greatly appreciated. She has agreed to continue to provide advice during her tenure as an emeritus professor.

The faculty ombudsman became an emeritus professor on July 1, 2012. After the required sixty day hiatus from university activities, the faculty ombudsman will be on duty again from September 1 through August 31, 2013.

Jack A. Rall, Ph.D.
Emeritus Professor