

# WSU Ombuds proposed Charter

Dr. Carolyn Shaw, Ombuds Coordinator

# Ombuds in WSU Policy 4.04

- 4 Ombuds serving in staggered 4 yr terms
- Expected to complete regular training
- Providing informal dispute resolution services to try to mitigate issues before they reach a formal grievance process.

# Rationale for a Charter

- Standard practice in universities with longstanding Ombuds offices.
- Recommended next step to:
  - Establish formal standards of practice
  - Assure independent function
  - Further develop quality services
- Complements and codifies Policy 4.04

# Adapted from existing CSU and KU charters

- Introduction
  - “office” > change to “program”
  - Constituents limited to faculty / instructors
- Purpose / Mission / Scope
  - Standard language from International Ombuds Association (IOA)
  - Not offering “facilitation” or “mediation” – these are specialized terms in ombuds practice.

# Adapted from existing CSU and KU charters

- Standards of Practice
  - Standard IOA language:
    1. Independence – free from interference in its services; still adhere to university policy; includes budget for ongoing professional development
    2. Impartiality – facilitate problem solving that does not take sides or favor a particular outcome
    3. Confidentiality - (WSU policy has been updated to exempt Ombuds from being mandatory reporters)
    4. Informality – will not participate in formal investigative procedures

# Adapted from existing CSU and KU charters

- Authority
  - May initiate informal inquiries and request access to information related to visitors' concerns
- Limitations
  - Not mandatory reporters
  - Cannot conduct formal investigations
  - Will not maintain records
- Reporting
  - May issue annual reports – on statistics, trends, systemic issues, but without revealing identifying information.

# Adapted from existing CSU and KU charters

- Qualifications
  - IOA membership, training and experience.
- Provost can receive complaints about violations of standards of conduct

# Approval Process

- Senate approval Feb 26, 2024
- General Counsel approval April 5, 2024
- Pending approval by General Faculty April 29, 2024 > taking effect immediately.



# Current Ombuds

- Bayram Yildirim, 2022 – 2025\*
  - Carolyn Shaw, 2022 – 2026
  - Stephanie Nicks, 2024 – 2027\*
  - Mehmet Barut, 2024 – 2028
- 
- \*Serving adjusted terms to achieve staggered annual rotation.

# Questions?

[Carolyn.Shaw@wichita.edu](mailto:Carolyn.Shaw@wichita.edu)

[www.wichita.edu/ombuds](http://www.wichita.edu/ombuds)

Policy 4.04