

WSU Ombuds proposed Charter

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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; 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.

Adapted from existing CSU and KU charters

- Qualifications
 - IOA membership, training and experience.
- Evaluated annually by Provost who can also receive complaints about violations of standards of conduct

Next steps

- Following Senate approval
 - > submit Charter to General Counsel for review
- Following General Counsel approval
 - > submit to General Faculty for vote in April/May

Next steps

- Secure membership in the International Ombuds Association (IOA) for current Ombudspersons.
- Identify person to fill current vacancy.
- Complete training with the Ombuds Institute on coaching, conflict mapping and analysis, and best practices.
- Take additional steps to increase awareness on campus of services available.

Questions?

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Policy 4.04