
THE ROLE OF THE OMBUDSPERSON

The Ombudsperson at U.P.E.I. is an elected, non-voting member of the Students' Union. This person serves as a source of aid for students who are unable to get help elsewhere, or who are confused about where to go for the help that they need. The Ombudsperson works as a referral/information officer, as well as a mediator/negotiator where necessary. The Ombudsperson is a neutral body with a predominant interest in justice. They are a confidential source (within the boundaries of law) and are independent from both the Students' Union and the Administration. The Office of the Ombudsperson is an advisory position and relies on the entire campus body in the resolution of problems and the incorporation of change on campus. This Office is also a member of The Association of Canadian College and University Ombudspersons. Generally, any problems which one may encounter on the University campus are easily and quickly resolved by the appropriate departments. In some cases however, general procedures may fail and/or students may be unsure of the correct procedure to follow. In cases as this, the Ombudsperson may be a valuable source of information. The Ombudsperson is available for discussion and consultation of any problems. At this time, if necessary, information, appropriate solutions, or methods of recourse may be offered. Likewise, in the event that the Ombudsperson finds there to be no substantial case, the student will be informed of this as well. (Students should realize that the involvement of the Ombudsperson does not ensure a favourable outcome. There will be times when the student must accept responsibility for their actions.)

FUNCTIONS OF THE OMBUDSPERSON :

1. TO ACT AS AN INFORMATION/REFERRAL SOURCE - If you do not know where to go for help about a University - related matter, you may go to the Ombudsperson. (Grade Appeals, Regulations, Harassment, etc.)
2. TO ACT AS A MEDIATOR/FACILITATOR - When necessary or requested, the Ombudsperson may be able to aid in finding feasible solutions for problems or for acting as a communicator between students and another body.
3. TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS - In specific

cases and where it is appropriate, the Ombudsperson may make recommendations about general procedures affecting students and about cases in which they may be involved.

WHEN TO CONSULT THE OMBUDSPERSON :

- If you are unsure of where to go.
- If the appropriate University procedures have failed to yield any results in your case.
- If you feel that the present procedures will not apply in your case.
- If you feel that a procedure or regulation has been applied incorrectly or unjustly.
- If you need unbiased help, as with mediating an issue or reviewing a written appeal.
- If you feel that you have been the victim of sexual harassment/assault and are unable to contact one of the counsellors.

WHERE TO CONTACT THE OMBUDSPERSON :

Presently, the Ombudsperson may be contacted by leaving messages at the Student Union Office. (566-0530)

This Office will be in Marian Hall beginning sometime in October. At this time, office hours will be made available to students.

Watch the Express for future information!

HELPFUL REMINDERS :

Always attempt to resolve an issue within the appropriate department prior to seeking help from the Ombudsperson. (Often problems have simple solutions and can be managed by the student.)
Read your University calendar for the academic/general regulations. This may avoid future problems!
Always keep your copies of documentation, receipts, and the like as well as carrying your Student I.D..
Take the time to understand both sides of an issue. Many problems can be avoided simply by communication!

Have a Great Semester!

Nici Carbone
Ombudsperson