

**Position of Ombuds
For Faculty and Post-doctoral Fellows:
Call for Recommendations of Candidates**

The President, Interim Provost and Faculty Senate of MUSC are seeking candidates for the position of Ombuds for Faculty and Post-Doctoral Fellows. This is a 2-year part-time position with a \$20,000 stipend paid to the Ombuds' department to go towards their salary.

What is the role of the Ombuds?

The Ombuds is an independent official to whom concerns, complaints, and grievances related to the workplace can be aired informally and in the strictest of confidence. The role of the Ombuds is to provide confidential and impartial advice and to identify options for resolution. Institutional leaders may also confer with the Ombuds prior to implementation of major decisions that impact faculty. The Ombuds reports to the Provost of MUSC to ensure all levels of authority recognize the authority of the Ombuds.

What are the requirements to be an Ombuds?

An Ombuds must be independent, impartial and trusted by all constituencies. Candidates may be current or retired faculty members, without administrative title or duties that might conflict with perceived objectivity.

An Ombuds office adheres to the International Ombudsman Association (IOA) Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. For more about the role and characteristics of an Ombuds, visit <http://academicdepartments.musc.edu/ombudsman/principles.htm> and <http://www.ombudsassociation.org>

Appropriate training will be provided for the successful candidate.

To learn more about this opportunity or to recommend candidates, please contact the MUSC Provost's Office, Robin Hanckel, at 843-792-3031 or hanckelr@musc.edu . To apply for this position, please submit a CV and a short letter explaining your unique qualifications for this position. Please email the application to Robin Hanckel (above). A review of candidates by the search committee will begin February 28th with an anticipated start date of April 1st 2017. Please be aware that the selected candidate must be available to travel to the IOA annual conference April 24th-26th for training.

OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

Mission:

The Office of the Ombudsman is a neutral, independent, confidential service empowered to investigate concerns or complaints in an impartial and objective manner and to facilitate or negotiate their resolution. The Ombudsman may assist all members of the university community including faculty, staff and administrators. All matters will be kept in the strictest confidence unless permission is granted in writing to do otherwise. The only exception is where there appears to be imminent harm to self or others, a violation of law, public safety, discrimination or sexual harassment.

The Ombudsman will provide feedback to the Office of the Provost without identifying individuals and make recommendations for policy changes, needed training and other procedures to enhance campus climate.

Scope of Services:

The Ombudsman provides an informal and safe venue to discuss situations that interfere with work or study. Access to services provided by the office is voluntary and should be void of coercion from supervisors or others. If attempts to resolve problems are unsuccessful, the individual has the autonomy to request a more formal grievance process. Support regarding how to initiate and navigate the grievance process may be provided but the Ombuds may not participate in the process. The office does not provide legal advice nor assign sanctions, testify in court, keep permanent records, advocate for the part of the institution, participate in any formal process or make decisions or policy.

Mediation:

Confidential mediation may be provided by the office if voluntarily agreed to by both parties and if it is seen that mediation may be a useful resolution to the conflict. There must be no coercion to enter mediation and both parties must sign confidentiality agreements to protect the process. Mediation is an informal process and ground rules must be agreed to in writing by both parties in advance.

Code of Ethics:

The Office of the Ombudsman adheres to the International Ombudsman Association (IOA) Code of Ethics. "The Ombudsman shall be truthful and act with integrity, shall foster respect for all members of the organization he or she serves and shall promote procedural fairness in the content and administration of those organizations' practices, processes, and policies." The ethical principles are: independence, neutrality and impartiality, confidentiality, and informality.

Authority:

The Ombudsman shall be entitled to inquire informally about any issue concerning the university and affecting members of the university community. In addition, he or she may request information related to the visitors' concerns from files and offices of the university and shall respect the confidentiality of that information. The Ombudsman may withdraw or decline to look into a matter if he or she deems it inappropriate for any reason.

The Ombudsman may make recommendations deemed appropriate with regards to resolving problems or improving policies, rules or procedures but shall have no actual authority to impose remedies or sanctions or to enforce or change any policy, rule or procedure.

Types of Services provided: (taken from Harvard U)

Avenues for conflict resolution

Strategize about a conversation with a manager or colleague

Assist in writing a letter or response regarding performance management or disciplinary issues

Facilitate a difficult conversation or negotiation

Facilitate contact with human resources or dean's office

Identify other resources at the university available to the visitor

Clarify policies and practices, provide information

Types of Concerns: (taken from Harvard U)

Academic policies and practices

Academic regulations and requirements

Authorship and intellectual credit

Difficult transitions and reorganizations

Difficult work or academic environment

Disability or illness

Disciplinary process and rulings

Discrimination

Disrespectful or inappropriate behavior

End of job, appointment or school relationship

Faculty//resident/post-doctoral fellow relationships

Harassment or abuse of power

Interpersonal disputes and conflict

Job marginalization

Layoff, change in job responsibilities

Overwork

Performance management

Sexual harassment

Stressful work conditions

Unfair treatment

Unwanted sexual advances

Recommendations:

The Ombudsman should be selected from the ranks of tenured faculty serving a two-year term on a half-time basis.

The Office may be the Ombuds' personal office space rather than a designated Ombuds Office. If workload is sufficient that a designated Ombuds Office is necessary, office space may be requested of the Provost.

The Office should have access to legal assistance outside of the university if needed to protect staff and records of the office.

In addition, the Ombudsman must have access to anyone in the university.

The Ombudsman should not enter into any affiliations or roles that could impact the neutrality of the office.

The Office will maintain resource files on campus policies, services and programs and may provide referrals.

The Ombudsman may conduct forums or workshops or work with policy groups to offer recommendations concerning changes in policies, procedures, and resolution structures.

The budget of the office should be sufficient to provide for training at IOA meetings and to receive certification in basic ombudsmanry (2 ½ days approx. \$2500 + travel in 2017). This training should be received prior to opening the office. Other more advanced courses given by the IOA should be considered for the future.

Limits of Authority:

Communications to the Ombudsman shall not constitute notice to the university. This includes allegations that may be perceived as violations of laws, regulations or policies, such as sexual harassment, issues covered by whistleblower policy, or incidents subject to reporting under the Clery Act (The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics 20 U.S.C. 1092(f) and U.S. Code of Federal Regulations 34 CFR 668.46).

The Ombudsman is not a "Campus Security Authority" as defined in the Clery Act and therefore not required to report such allegations to the university. The Ombudsman may provide the visitor with guidance on the recognized process to notify the University of a formal concern or complaint. However, in order to protect public safety, harm to self or others, violations of the law, discrimination or sexual harassment, the Ombudsman may have the ethical obligation to make the university aware of the complaint or concern. Notifications to the University must be submitted in writing to the Provost.

Note:

The term Ombudsman arose from its use in Sweden where it is a common word meaning people's representative or agent. The origin of the word is found in the Old Norse words ombuds man, meaning representative. It is also found in Norwegian (Ombudsmann) and Danish (Ombudsmand). The first ombudsman was appointed in 1809 to designate a public official who was appointed to investigate citizen's complaints against government agencies.

The concept spread throughout Scandinavian nations and has become an international concept. The U.N. views ombudsing as a tool to help protect and promote international rights.

Today, ombuds in many different kinds of organizations provide information, options, and impartial review for anyone within an organization, and they offer feedback and recommendations for system change to senior management.