32.01.01.C0.02 Faculty Ombuds

Revised: March 23, 2026
Next Scheduled Review: November 17, 2030
Revision History

Procedure Summary

This procedure establishes the faculty ombuds position at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi (TAMU-CC) and defines their role. The faculty ombuds will function as a private, neutral resource for faculty to raise and clarify issues and concerns, identify options, and request assistance to informally resolve workplace concerns.

Procedure

1. GENERAL

1.1. The faculty ombuds works with faculty to resolve concerns prior to their escalating to a formal complaint. If this informal resolution of concerns fails, or where informal resolution is not advisable, the faculty ombuds will counsel faculty regarding their options for formal action and direct them to the appropriate university rules, procedures, resources, and offices. Faculty will be able to seek guidance regarding concerns at any time without fear of reprisal.

1.2. Concerns regarding civil rights discrimination, sexual harassment, and/or related retaliation must be filed in accordance with system regulation *08.01.01, Civil Rights Compliance* and university rule *08.01.01.C1, Civil Rights Compliance*. If a claim of illegal discrimination/retaliation is raised to the faculty ombuds, they will immediately report the issue to the Title IX Coordinator/Compliance Services department as directed by university rule *08.01.01.C1, Civil Rights Compliance*. Concerns regarding research, ethics, waste/fraud, and abuse will be addressed in accordance with applicable system regulations and university procedures.

2. ROLE OF THE FACULTY OMBUDS

2.1. The faculty ombuds will provide a private place for faculty to collaboratively explore concerns, clarify issues, and consider options. As appropriate, the faculty ombuds will direct faculty toward available services and resources. Conversations may be kept private as described in section 3.1.3 of this

procedure.

2.2. While the response of the faculty ombuds will be tailored to the dynamics of the situation and the nature of the concerns, generally the faculty ombuds' role will be to assist parties in reaching informal resolutions that are consistent with the university rules and procedures.

2.3. The faculty ombuds may supplement, but not replace or interfere with, formal processes available to the university community.

2.4. The faculty ombuds does not serve notice to the university, cannot impose remedies or sanctions, or enforce or change any university rules or procedures.

2.5. The faculty ombuds will assist with early problem solving to minimize the escalation of conflict. They will encourage and empower employees to find their own solutions to problems; provide support for addressing workplace problems; facilitate communication when conflict arises; and serve as a facilitator in group problem solving. With the interested party's consent, the faculty ombuds will consult with university units and departments to obtain more information about the issue, explore options for conflict resolution, and suggest the redirection of matters to formal channels when appropriate.

2.6. Annually, the faculty ombuds will inform the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (Provost) and the Faculty Advisory Council executive committee of the type, volume, and severity of concerns and issues they observe. Reports will be written so as to maintain the privacy of individuals accessing the services of the faculty ombuds. This information will be used to guide policy decision-making efforts for the continual improvement of management, fairness, and respect at TAMU-CC.

2.7. It should be clearly understood by all parties that the faculty ombuds:

2.7.1. does not have any formal decision-making authority, or the ability to determine, substantiate, or unsubstantiate, "guilt" or "innocence" in any workplace matter;

2.7.2. does not offer legal advice and does not act or appear to act as an advocate or representative of any individual or entity;

2.7.3. does not offer psychological counseling;

2.7.4. steps aside when a formal complaint is filed; and

2.7.5. does not arbitrate or adjudicate formal complaints or disputes.

2.8. Faculty should be aware that seeking assistance from the faculty ombuds does not alter any applicable complaint filing timeframe requirements.

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE FACULTY OMBUDS

3.1. The faculty ombuds will serve as an independent, neutral, impartial, private, and informal resource for faculty at TAMU-CC and in compliance with state and federal laws, system policies and regulations, and university rules and procedures. The faculty ombuds will strive to adhere to the professional ethical principles and best practices as defined by the International Ombudsman Association, as modified and summarized below and when not in conflict with system policies/regulations and university rules/procedures.

3.1.1. INDEPENDENCE: The faculty ombuds is independent in structure, function, and appearance to the highest degree possible within the university.

3.1.2. NEUTRALITY AND IMPARTIALITY: The faculty ombuds, as a designated neutral party, remains unaligned and impartial. The faculty ombuds does not engage in any situation which could create a conflict of interest.

3.1.3. PRIVACY: The faculty ombuds will keep all communications with those seeking assistance private and will not disclose private communications unless given written permission to do so. The only exceptions to this privacy are where there are allegations of civil rights discrimination, sexual harassment, related retaliation, sexual violence, fraud, waste, abuse, imminent risk of serious harm, and/or where required by state or federal law.

3.1.4. INFORMALITY: The faculty ombuds, as an informal resource, does not participate in any formal adjudicative or administrative process related to concerns brought to their attention, but they will acknowledge their efforts to resolve the matter prior to the initiation of the formal process.

4. APPOINTMENT OF THE FACULTY OMBUDS

4.1. The faculty ombuds is appointed by the Provost in consultation with the Faculty Advisory Council.

4.2. Vacancies in the faculty ombuds position will be posted and open to all tenured faculty members. The Faculty Advisory Council will provide the Provost with the names of at least three (3) nominees from whom the Provost will appoint the faculty ombuds.

4.3. Characteristics of nominees include:

(a) Tenured faculty member

(b) Knowledge of university rules, procedures, and resources

(c) Extensive cross-campus experience

(d) Strong communication skills

(e) Ability to be objective and neutral

(f) Strong conflict resolution and interpersonal skills

(g) Commitment to promote ethical conduct in the performance of the faculty ombuds role

4.4. The Provost and executive committee of the Faculty Advisory Council will jointly conduct an annual evaluation of the performance of the faculty ombuds. The continued appointment will be contingent upon a favorable evaluation.

4.5. Appointment as faculty ombuds is for a three-year term and serves at the discretion of the Provost.

4.6. The faculty ombuds will receive three (3) workload credits per long semester and three (3) workload credits during the summer funded by the Office of the Provost.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

System Regulation *08.01.01, Civil Rights Compliance*
System Regulation *32.01.01, Complaint and Appeal Procedures for Faculty Members*
University Rule *08.01.01.C1, Civil Rights Compliance*
University *Procedure* *12.01.99.C0.05, Faculty Dismissals, Administrative Leave, Non-Reappointments, and Terminal Appointments*
University Procedure *32.01.01.C0.01, Complaint and Appeal Process for Faculty Members*

Contact Office

Contact for clarification and interpretation:	Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs 361.825.2722