

NEED TO TALK TO SOMEONE? GIVE US A CALL!

The Office of the University Ombuds has been established to provide an accessible, informal space in which members of the campus community can seek assistance with navigating challenges or conflicts. The Ombudsperson works to help students, faculty and staff think through difficult situations, express concerns, and find answers to questions about University policies, procedures and practices in an independent, impartial and confidential manner. The Ombudsperson also promotes conflict management and cooperation throughout the University community through outreach and trainings. When requested, the Ombuds can facilitate informal conversations between parties who may find themselves in conflict.

Dr. Julia Farmer

Director of Ombuds Services
Row Hall, West Wing, Room 329
678-839-4165
ombuds@westga.edu

Appointments are recommended. Use of email for confidential information is discouraged.

 UWGOmbudsOffice  UWG_Ombuds



OMBUDS

OFFICE OF THE UNIVERSITY OMBUDS



CONFIDENTIAL

INFORMAL

INDEPENDENT

NEUTRAL

OFFICE OF THE UNIVERSITY OMBUDS UNIVERSITY OF WEST GEORGIA



Conflict is a fact of life, but it doesn't have to consume your life. The University of West Georgia has created the University Ombuds Office to help faculty, staff and students resolve issues of conflict on campus. Trained Ombuds staff will offer informal, confidential guidance to visitors to help reach mutually acceptable resolutions of disputes in a non-adversarial process.

WHAT IS AN OMBUDS?

The term, of Swedish origin, refers to a person who has been designated to assist in dispute resolution and to promote conflict management and cooperation throughout the campus community. At UWG, professional Ombuds staff are trained in accordance with the standards of the International Ombudsman Association.

WHAT DOES THE OMBUDS OFFICE DO?

- Operates informally, independent of the formal organizational structure of the university.
- Works to resolve concerns, complaints and questions from faculty, staff and students about university policies, procedures and practices.
- Promotes fairness, equitable treatment and respect throughout the university community.
- Makes recommendations for institutional change.
- Provides feedback with regard to trends or issues.
- Designs and conducts training programs in conflict resolution.

WHAT DOES AN OMBUDS NOT DO?

- Violate a confidence except when there is an imminent threat of physical harm or when required to by court order or law.
- Serve as an advocate or adjudicator or make decisions about university policy.
- Compel anyone to accept a recommendation.
- Subvert administrative procedures.
- Be involved in a formal investigation, hearing, or compliance function.
- Take sides.
- Offer legal advice or serve as an office of notice. Individuals wishing to put the university on notice will be advised of the proper procedure.
- Keep records other than non-identifying statistical data. Informal notes are destroyed promptly.

HOW DOES AN OMBUDS HELP TO SOLVE PROBLEMS?

- Acts in a neutral and impartial manner.
- Listens carefully in confidence.
- Helps visitors consider options and provides information on university policies and procedures.
- Makes inquiries and referrals to other university resources.
- Facilitates communication between parties.

WHEN SHOULD I CONTACT THE OMBUDS OFFICE?

- When you experience an issue or concern that you are not able to resolve through the usual channels of communication.
- When you have a university-related problem that you do not know how to resolve.

University policy provides assurance that you will not suffer reprisal for seeking the services of the office.