POP QUIZ

What is the correct gender-neutral term?

- A) Ombudsman
- B) Ombuds
- C) Ombudsperson
- D) All of the above
OVERVIEW OF THE OMBUDS OFFICE

New Chair Orientation
Friday October 12th, 2012

University of California, Riverside
Office of the Ombuds
390 Surge Building
(951) 827-3213
MEET THE UCR OMBUDS: 
ANDREW LARRATT-SMITH

- Juris Doctor, UCLAW
- Masters in Dispute Resolution, Straus Institute for Dispute Resolution, Pepperdine Law
- Active in field of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) since 2004
- Served briefly in UCLA Ombuds Office prior to coming to UCR in January 2011
MISSION OF THE UCR OMBUDS OFFICE

- By providing *confidential*, *impartial*, *informal* and *independent* assistance, the Ombuds Office creates a safe environment for UCR community members to address disputes or university-related concerns.
WHO UTILIZES THE OMBUDS OFFICE?

Visitors to the UCR Ombuds Office, July 2011 - June 2012, by Visitor’s Constituency

- Staff, 70
- Undergraduates, 40
- Graduate Students, 19
- Academic Appointments, 37
- Post Docs, 1
- Student Unknown, 6
- Student Other, 0
- Community Members, 10
- Unknown, 1

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Who Utilizes the Ombuds Office?

Approximate Usage Rate Ratios July 2011 – June 2012
WHAT DOES A TYPICAL CONSULTATION LOOK LIKE?

- Introduction & orientation
- Ombuds (O) listens & seeks to understand Visitor (V)
- O & V discuss V's goals, values, & priorities
- O & V brainstorm & weigh pros & cons of various options
- V decides upon next steps - If O action, O’s permission required
- Possible next steps (not an exhaustive list):
  - Nothing
  - Time to reflect
  - Further meetings
  - V to take action, O to follow up
  - O to acquire information
  - O to engage in shuttle diplomacy with other party
  - O to initiate facilitated discussion with V & other party
OMBUDS OFFICE PRIMARY FUNCTIONS

- 1 on 1 Consultations with visitors
- Policy clarification with administrators
- Facilitation between multiple parties
- Upward Feedback
- Training
Ethical Standards: The Pillars of the Ombud’s Practice

- Independence
- Impartiality
- Confidentiality
- Informality

Trust
OMBUDS ETHICAL STANDARDS CONT.
GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

- UCR Ombuds Office Charter
- Declaration of Best Practices for the UC Ombuds Offices
- International Ombudsman Association (IOA) Code of Ethics
- IOA Standards of Practice
- IOA Best Practices
- Additionally the American Bar Association (ABA) publishes guidance.
Opportunities for Resolution: The Dispute Resolution Continuum

- Informal → Formal
- Fewer # of Participants in Process → Greater # of Participants in Process
- More Confidentiality → Less or No Confidentiality
- Greater Party Control (Over Process and Outcome) → Less or No Party Control
- No Guarantee of Resolution → “Resolution” Guaranteed

Internal Informal Dispute Resolution: Office of the Ombuds
BENEFITS OF INFORMAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- Promotion of a healthy culture / environment
- Preservation of relationships and networks
- Reduction in costly formal processes / lawsuits
- Increase in productivity & efficiency
- Higher retention of personnel
- Publicity / Reputation
- Time savings
- Increased likelihood of creative solutions
IMPORTANCE OF ROLE OF DEPARTMENT CHAIR IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Types of conflicts Chairs become involved in:
- Undergraduate Student – Graduate Student
- Undergraduate Student – Faculty
- Graduate Student – Faculty
- Staff – Student
- Staff – Faculty
- Faculty – Faculty
- Department - College
HOW OFFICE OF OMBUDS CAN BE A RESOURCE FOR DEPARTMENT CHAIRS

- Serve as a confidential sounding board to you on challenging matters.
- Resource that you can refer others to.
- Provide anonymous upward feedback on systemic and emerging issues.
- Impartially mediate conflicts within the department.
- Serve as an independent 3rd party facilitator at retreat / planning meetings.
- Provide training & workshops on conflict resolution.

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THE OMBUDS OFFICE MAY ALSO CONTACT YOU: PLEASE REMEMBER

- Please do not hesitate to ask questions but be mindful that the Ombuds may be limited in what he can share due to confidentiality requirements.
- The Ombuds is impartial. Although the Ombuds may present the perspective of a concerned party, that does not mean the Ombuds agrees with that perspective or takes that party’s side.
- You are entitled to consult confidentially with Ombuds yourself.
- Ombuds is likely calling to see if an informal resolution is possible. So even if the issue is challenging, it can often be defused.
- Ombuds has no authority to tell you what to do. He can explore and suggest options but is not the decision-maker.
TOP CHAIR RELATED ISSUES THAT COME TO THE OMBUDS

- Undergraduate Grade Appeals / Concern about Instructor
- Departmental Staff – Faculty relationship
- Conflicts between Departmental Faculty members
POP QUIZ #2

What year was the UCR Ombuds Office founded?

- A) 1954
- B) 1968
- C) 1979
- D) 1992
- E) 2001
Q & A

- Questions?
- Comments?
- THANK YOU!