

# 2016-2017 Annual Report



Office of the Ombuds  
*University of Colorado Boulder*



## ***A Message from the Director***

This has been a year of new beginnings in the Ombuds Office. We inaugurated a new case management system, revised our data gathering protocols and initiated a strategic marketing plan as well as filled vacant positions.

The Ombuds Office worked with staff, faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, researchers, academic administrators and others to defuse incipient conflicts and to identify ways of sustaining productivity and managing or eliminating conflict in the workplace. We collaborated with other campus efforts to manage or ameliorate conflict. We assisted visitors by obtaining information on university policies and procedures, by offering individual coaching in communication strategies, by working as an intermediary between conflicting parties who were having difficulty engaging in productive conversations, by referring visitors to other campus resources and offices, by acting as an emissary and advocate for procedural fairness and consistency when it appeared bylaws and/or other university policies were not being observed, and by analyzing and consulting about ways to improve formal campus processes and campus climate.

For the first time, we gathered feedback about our case consultations resulting in an overwhelmingly positive response, including comments like:

- “Very knowledgeable and skilled.”
- “Took time necessary to understand issues. Offered helpful suggestions.”
- “Easy to communicate with. Thoughtful listener. Open dialog and no judgement given as I shared my concerns.”

We have enjoyed the support of Chancellor Philip DiStefano, Provost Russ Moore and Senior Vice Chancellor Kelly Fox and we appreciate their continued endorsement of our work in the coming year. We believe our new reporting relationship has supported more business coming to our office and around more serious issues.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kirsi Aulin, MS, LMFT, CO-OP™  
Director, Ombuds Office  
University of Colorado Boulder

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## Staffing

Kirsi Aulin, Ombuds Director

Kirsi continued in the role of Director (Since January 2016). She came to CU Boulder from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and has been an Ombuds for over 10 years. She is a trained mediator, a Certified Organizational Ombudsman Practitioner™ (CO-OP™) and a member of the International Ombudsman Association (IOA). Kirsi is also a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) and has worked with administrators, faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, children, families and AIDS patients. Kirsi is an alumna of Bryn Mawr College and holds an MS in Counseling Psychology from California State University, Northridge.

Jerry Hauser, Professor Emeritus, Faculty Ombuds

Jerry has served CU Boulder faculty in several capacities. He was chair of the Boulder Faculty Assembly for two terms, was chair of the Communication Department for two terms, and served as a faculty mentor for the Faculty Teaching Excellence Program, with responsibility for new faculty in Education, Mass Media, and the Social Sciences. Jerry is a trained mediator and a member of the International Ombudsman Association and the Consortium on Abrasive Conduct in Higher Education. His disciplinary expertise in rhetoric includes rhetorical theory, political rhetoric, and vernacular rhetorics of the public sphere.

Elizabeth “Liz” Hill, Associate Ombuds

Liz joined the Ombuds Office as an Associate Ombuds in May 2016. Before joining the CU Boulder Ombuds Office, Liz served as an Arizona Assistant Attorney General, Assistant Ombudsman for the State of Arizona and Ombudsman for Apollo Education Group. Liz is a graduate of Gonzaga University School of Law and earned her B.S. from Northern Arizona University. She is a trained mediator and Certified Organizational Ombudsman Practitioner™ (CO-OP™). She is member of the State Bar of Arizona, International Ombudsman Association, and the American Bar Association’s Alternative Dispute Resolution Section.

Kerry Tay McLean, Ombuds Program Administrator

Kerry, an alumna of the University of Colorado Boulder, assists the Ombuds Office as the Program Administrator. She strives daily to make our office a safe place to voice and clarify concerns, to understand conflict situations, and to brainstorm action-worthy options and constructive responses.

Lee Potts, Associate Professor Emerita, Faculty Ombuds

Lee has served CU Boulder faculty through participation in numerous college and university committees, as an administrator in the Department of Theatre and Dance, as facilitator for the Faculty Teaching Excellence Program's "Teaching in a Nutshell" and as a leader in numerous campus workshops. Lee is a trained mediator and a member of

the International Ombudsman Association and the Consortium on Abrasive Conduct in Higher Education. Lee also has extensive training in psychotherapy through Boulder Psychotherapy Institute. Her disciplinary expertise is in communication and performance coaching and theatrical directing.

## **Professional Development and Service**

Kirsi Aulin serves on the Board of Directors for the Board of Certification for Certified Organizational Ombudsman Practitioners.™ Kirsi is also one of the founders of the Consortium on Abrasive Conduct in Higher Education (CACHE) and serves as the Chair of the Steering Committee. CACHE is a national organization made up of leaders from all different types of higher education institutions - from Ivy League schools to large public research universities to smaller liberal arts and community colleges. The consortium aims to bring together university leaders from around the country to promote dialogue, research and thought leadership to resolve the problem of abrasive conduct in academia. Kirsi attended the CACHE Annual Colloquium and presented on Campus Protests and Abrasive Conduct. Kirsi also attended the International Ombudsman Association Annual Conference.

Jerry Hauser attended the International Ombudsman Association Annual Conference.

Liz Hill currently serves as the Vice-Chair of the ABA Dispute Resolution Section's Ombuds Committee. Liz attended two conferences: The Consortium on Abrasive Conduct in Higher Education (CACHE) Annual Colloquium and the International Ombudsman Association (IOA) Annual Conference. During the IOA Annual Conference, she presented on the topics of Ombuds neutrality and the influence of different educational and professional backgrounds on the Ombuds profession. Liz also became a certified trainer in Crucial Conversations.

Kerry Tay McLean has completed the International Ombudsman Association's Foundations of Organizational Ombudsman Practice and the VitalSmarts Crucial Conversations Course.

Lee Potts attended the Consortium on Abrasive Conduct in Higher Education (CACHE) Annual Colloquium and presented on Campus Protests and Abrasive Conduct.

## **Physical Space and Operations**

The Ombuds Office is located in Suite N440 in the Center for Community. There is an auxiliary room in the basement of the ARCE building that is available for overflow. The Ombuds 2015 ARPAC review recommended having a single location for the Ombuds Office, and until a larger location is identified, we are working in tight quarters. To compensate for lack of space, our Faculty Ombuds are conducting many cases over the phone. In spite of our efforts, our increasing case load means that there are times that people have to wait for an appointment due to space constraints. We anticipate that this situation will become much more acute in FY 2017-18.

In 2016-17, the Ombuds Office initiated a new method for tracking data. This consists of categories that better reflect what the Ombuds staff learn from their interviews with visitors and their perception of what most concerns those in the CU community who are experiencing workplace difficulties. This new set of categories has been automated to allow generation of reports that better track trends in the data and will permit greater precision in identifying concerns of the constituent groups who visit the Ombuds Office. We also collaborated with other campus offices to align our language with other departments in order to develop a consistent way to identify issues and trends.

However, conversion to a new set of categories and tracking method means that in the short term, comparisons to data reported in prior years would be problematic. To see the new reporting categories, please see Appendix A.



## Demographics

To track our work, we assign a case number to each person who brings a concern to our office. In the course of working with a person to find a resolution to their concern, we often work with multiple people and departments. Although many cases involve only one meeting to assist the visitor in clarifying issues, interests and options, most cases involve seeking additional information on campus policies, follow-up meetings after the visitor has acquired additional information, or meeting with others.

Our case numbering system does not capture the total number of people involved in creating a resolution, nor does it capture the number of people who have benefited from our work. This year, we made an effort to estimate the number of people who felt an impact from our work as a separate category. The number of people who directly benefited from our case consultation services was 1023. And we estimate that 2708 people indirectly benefited. Combining case consultation numbers with the number of people who attended trainings we taught and with whom we conducted individual informational meetings, the Ombuds Office reached an estimated 5443 people this year.

When people come to our office for a case consultation, we ask them to fill in an anonymous post-visit survey. Our response rate for this survey is 38%. In it, we inquire about what the individual had considered doing before coming to the Ombuds Office.

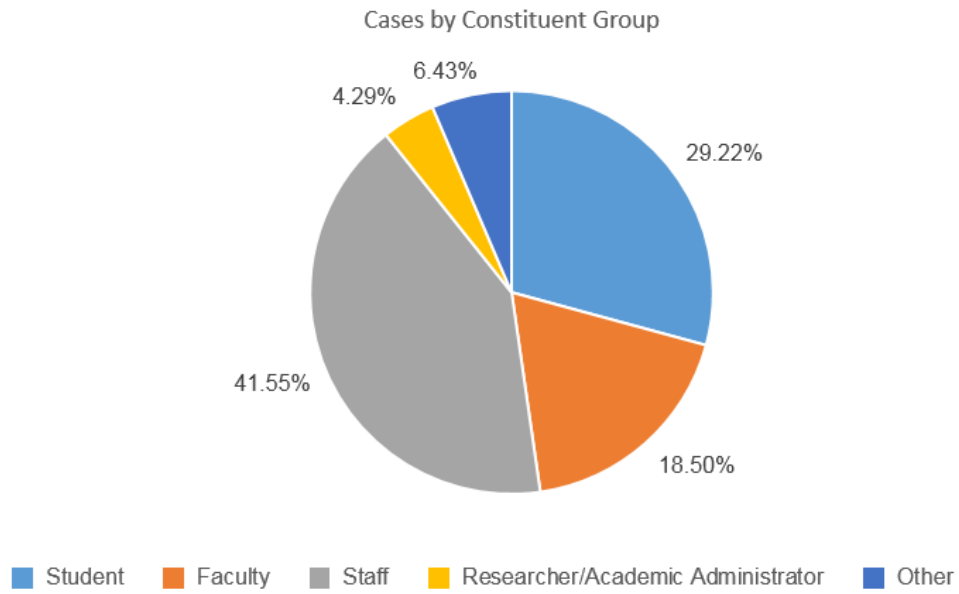
Before I came to the Ombuds Office, I was considering...

29.79%	giving up and remaining disgruntled
29.08%	leaving my position
21.28%	not talking to anyone about the issue
21.28%	filing a grievance or complaint
13.48%	filing a lawsuit

In this survey, we also provide an opportunity for Likert scale feedback on the case consultation. In 2016-2017, the results were overwhelmingly positive:

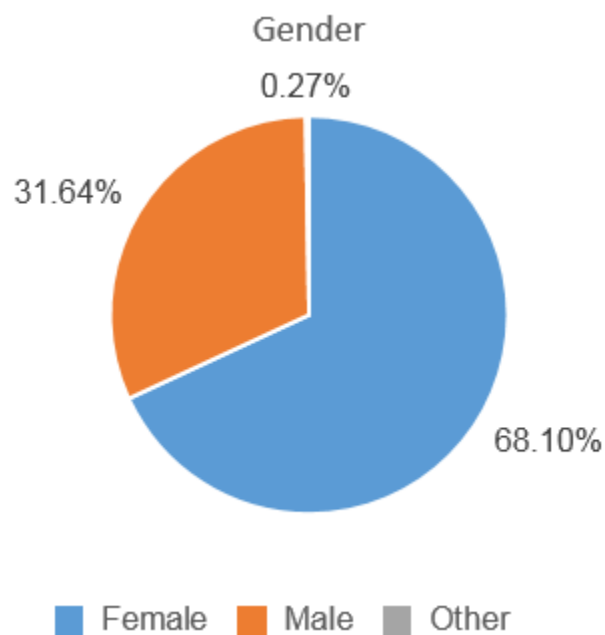
	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
It was easy to contact the Ombuds Office.	78.72%	15.60%	.70%	0%	0%
I would use the Ombuds again or would refer others to the Ombuds Office.	82.27%	10.64%	1.42%	0%	0%
I felt comfortable discussing my problem with the Ombuds and I felt I was treated with respect.	86.53%	7.09%	0%	0%	0%
I felt the physical space contributed to the sense of privacy/safety/confidentiality.	80.14%	12.77%	.71%	.71%	0%
I trust the Ombuds to maintain confidentiality	83.69%	10.64%	0%	0%	0%
The Ombuds carefully listened to and understood my concerns.	83.69%	9.22%	1.42%	0%	0%
The Ombuds helped me identify and evaluated possible options.	77.30%	17.02%	0%	0%	0%

We handled 373 cases over the course of this year. At nearly 42%, staff was the largest group seeking our services. Students comprised 29% of the total cases with graduate students making up 51% and undergraduates 49% of the student constituent group. Faculty made up 18.5% of our cases. "Other" (which included parents, former students, concerned citizens, etc.) was 6% of our caseload. And researchers and academic administrators both came in at 4%. (This year we counted department chairs as faculty as opposed to administrators. We will be shifting chairs into the administrator category next year.)

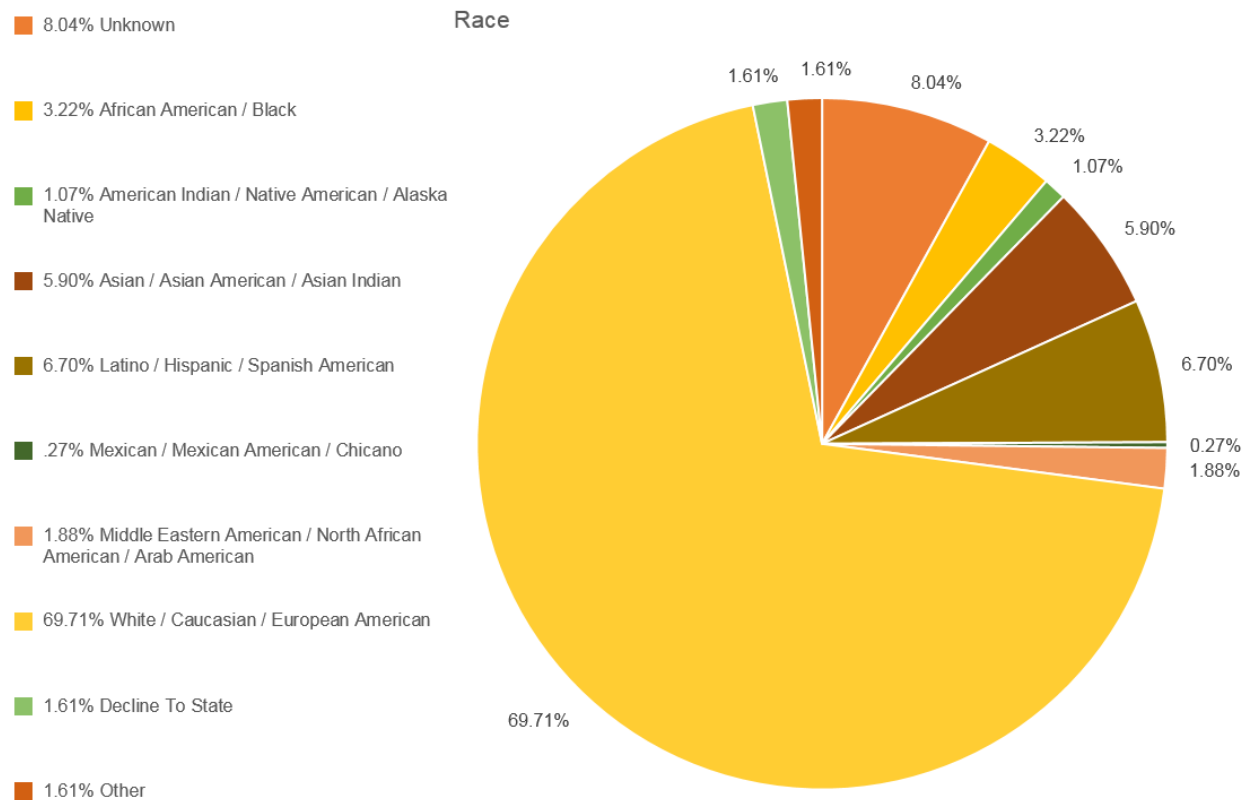


In addition, the Ombuds Office initiated a more conservative method of counting cases. Some statistics that would previously have been included in case numbers will now be reported as the number of cases in which we contacted others to resolve a problem. In FY 16-17, this number was 93.

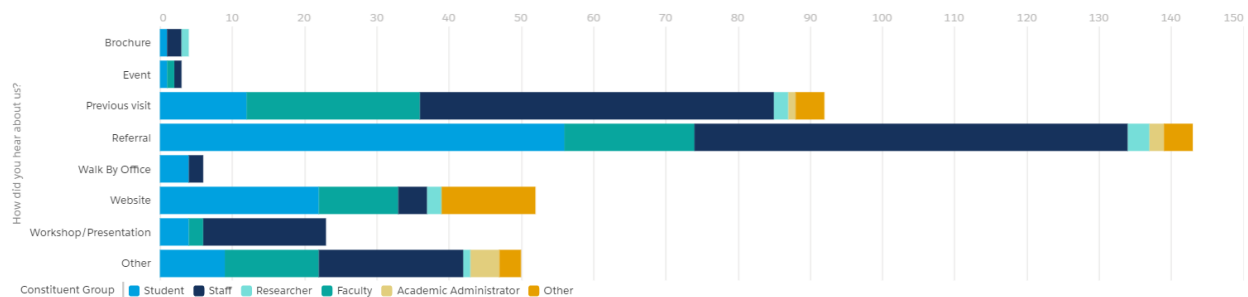
This year, when someone comes to the office, we ask them to fill out some demographic information. The form allows people to define their own gender. However, because the number of people describing a gender other than male or female was so small, we collapsed those responses into a single category of “other.”



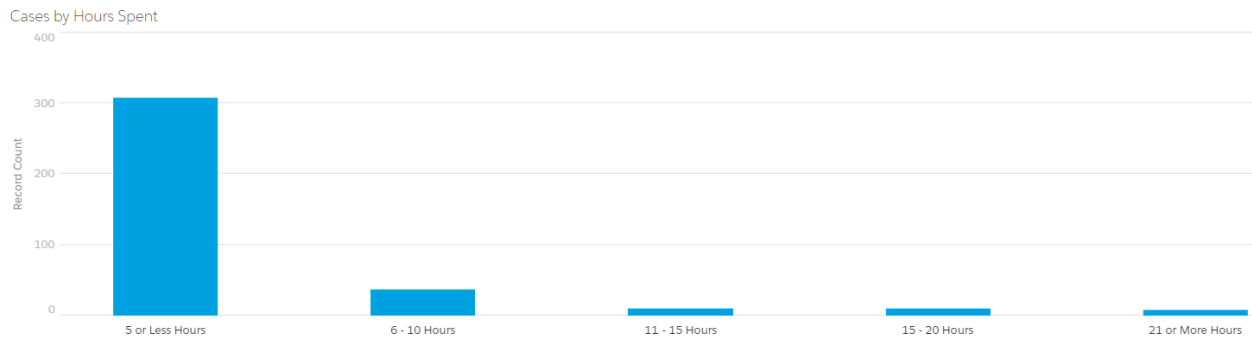
We also initiated collecting information on the racial background of the people who seek our services. We want to assess if we are adequately reaching out to all groups on campus.



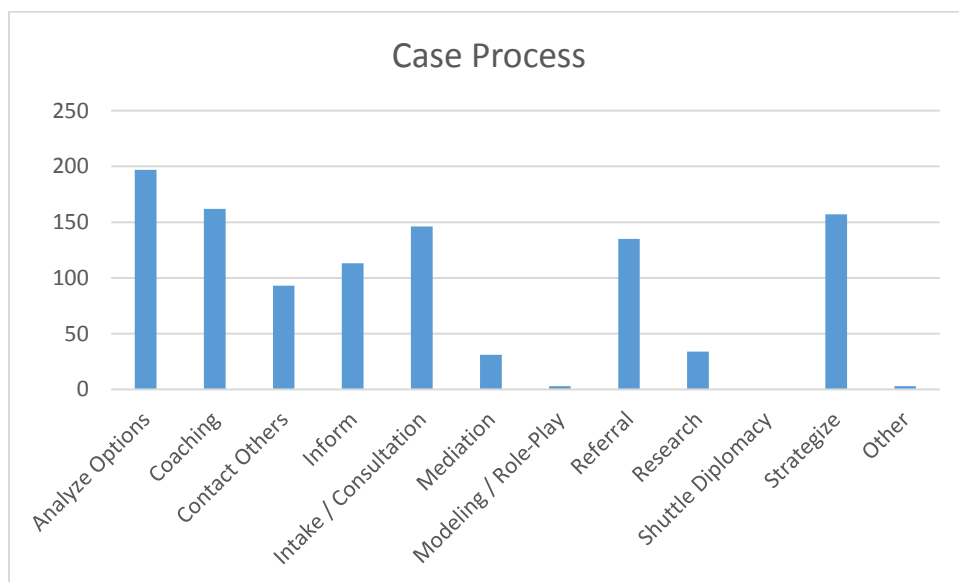
The primary ways people heard about us were: referral, previous visit, and our website. We believe that people returning to our office for a service or referring others is a sign of satisfaction with the consultations we provide.



There is a great range in terms of time spent on each case. Some cases only take an hour or so, and some take months, resulting in more than 20 hours of Ombuds staff time.



In the course of working on a case, people receive a variety of services at the Ombuds Office. We now track the type of work we do with our cases.

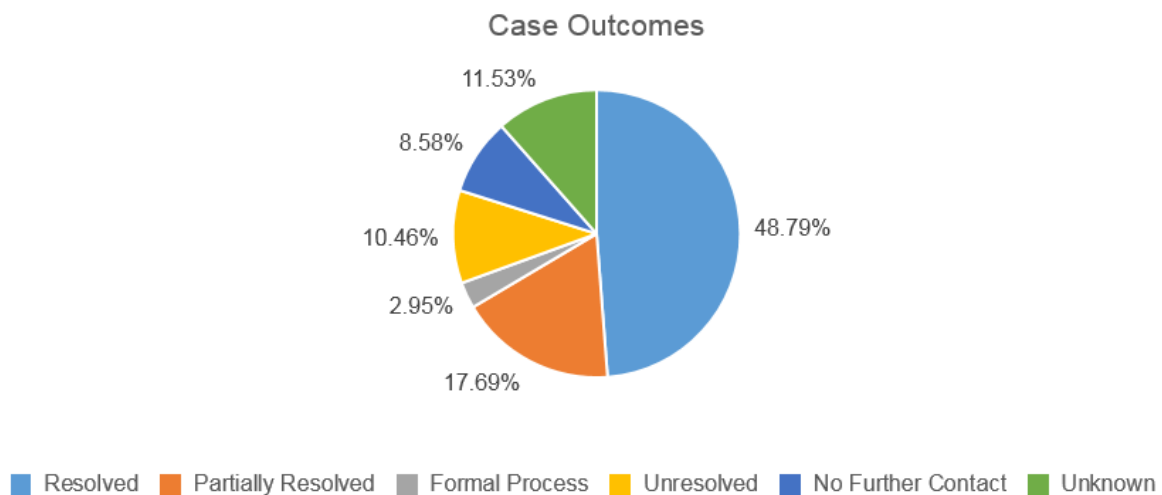


Another innovation this year was noting information on some of the risks posed by the cases we handled. The potential impact of these concerns, if unaddressed, could be very great. The chart below represents the risks posed by a case as assessed by the Ombuds in charge of the case. More than one risk can be present in a single case.

Risk Category and Percent of Cases Which Indicated This Specific Risk:

27.35%	Attrition or transfer
25.47%	Loss of departmental productivity
21.45%	Potential internal or external grievances
17.70%	Violation of policy or code of conduct
14.75%	Negative publicity
14.48%	Litigation potential

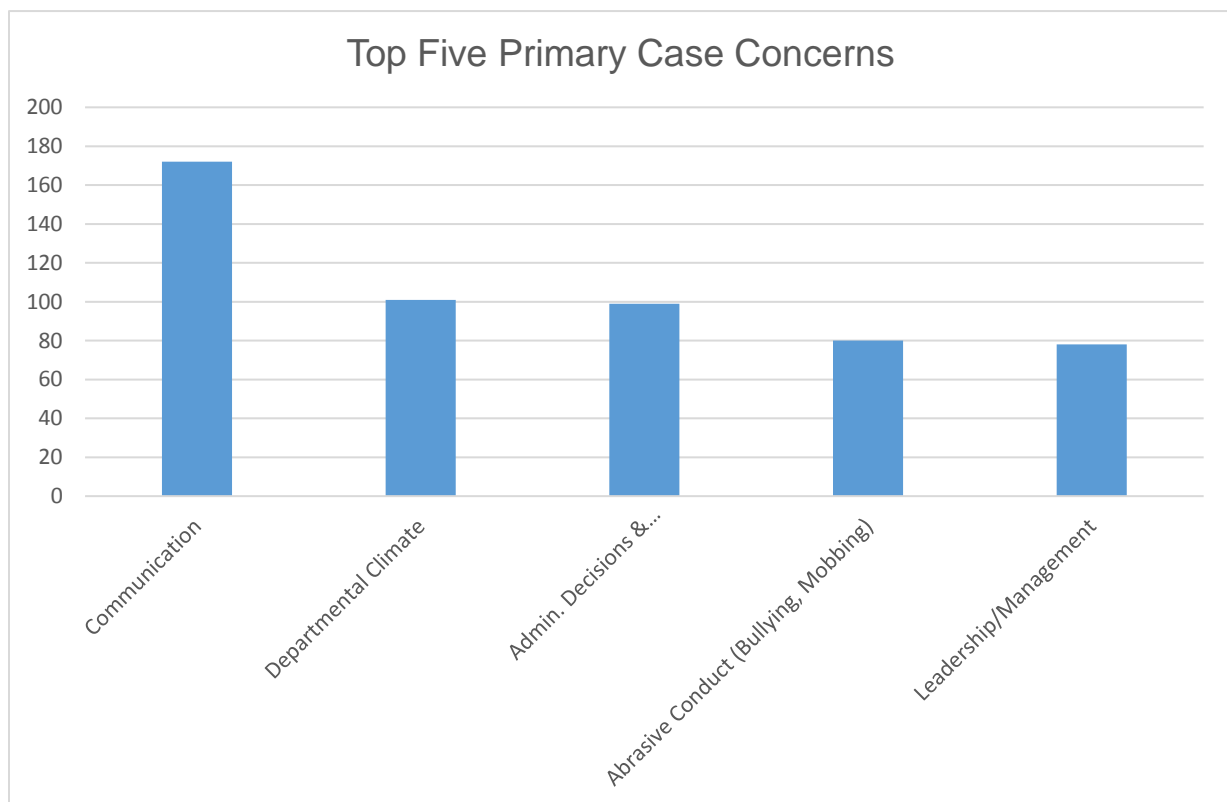
We also instituted a system of tracking case outcomes. Forty-nine percent of our cases were Resolved, and 18% were Partially Resolved. We find this to be a very positive outcome for our visitors.



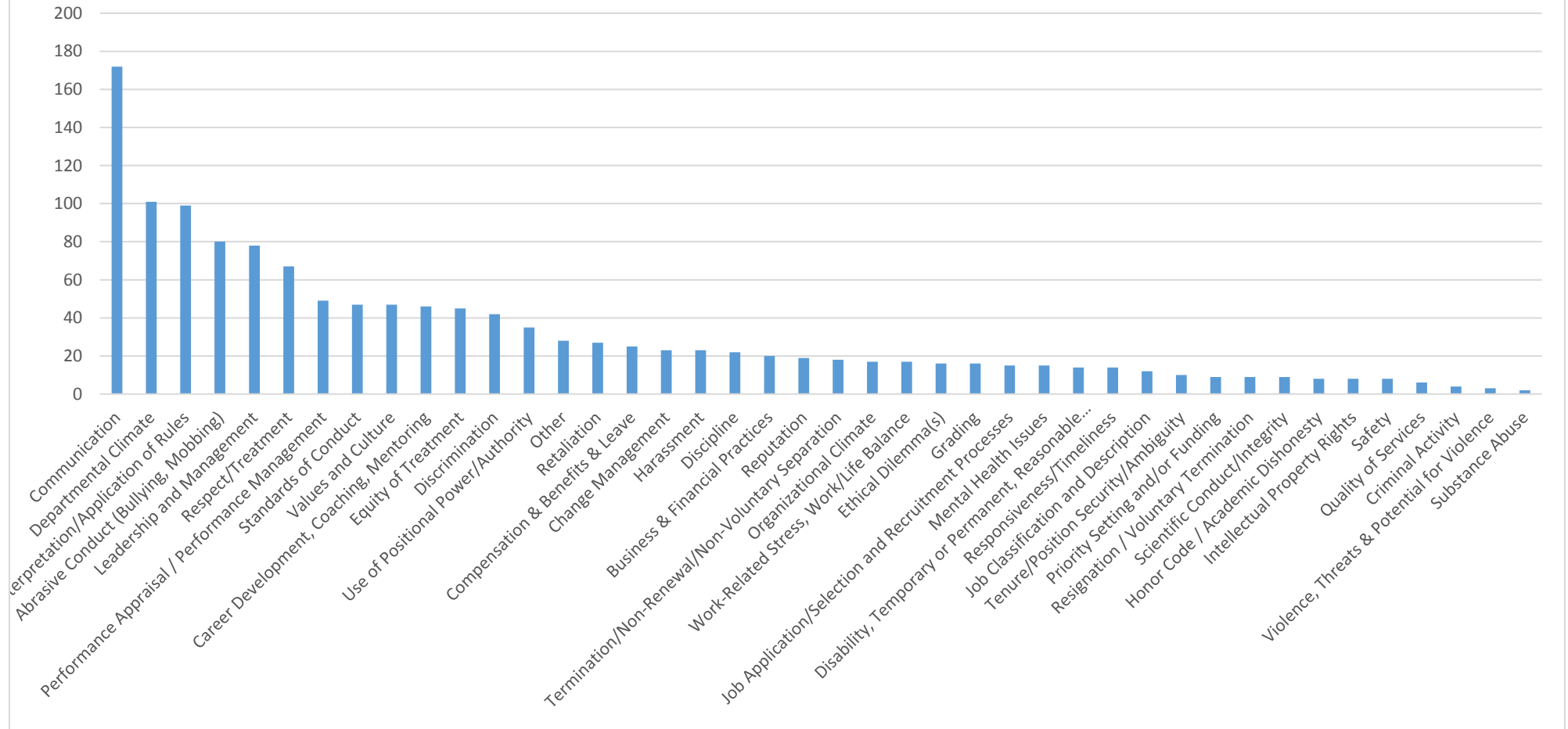
## Primary Case Concerns

Most visitors to our office have a “presenting problem” (e.g. grade dispute, interpersonal conflict, administrative complication) but also have various underlying issues such as management effectiveness, faculty conduct, or policy concern. When we track categories, we note multiple categories per case, if relevant.

When we consider the campus as a whole, the five most common concerns in Fiscal Year 2016-17 were, in order of frequency: Communication, Departmental Climate, Administrative Decisions and Interpretation/Application of Rules, Abrasive Conduct (Bullying, Mobbing), and Leadership/Management.



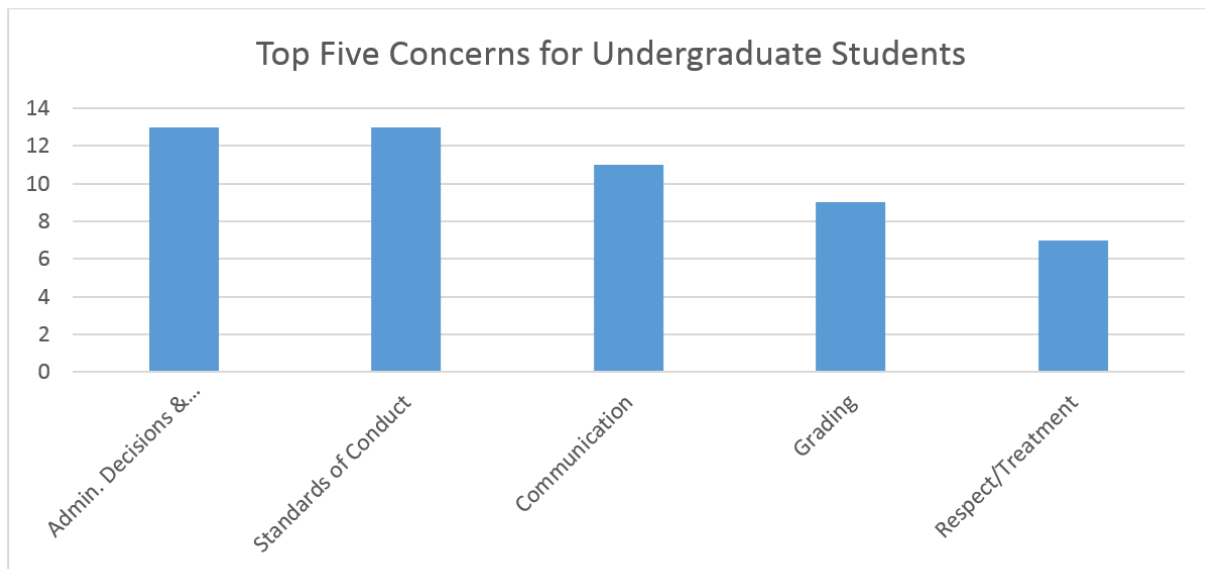
### Number of Cases by Case Concern

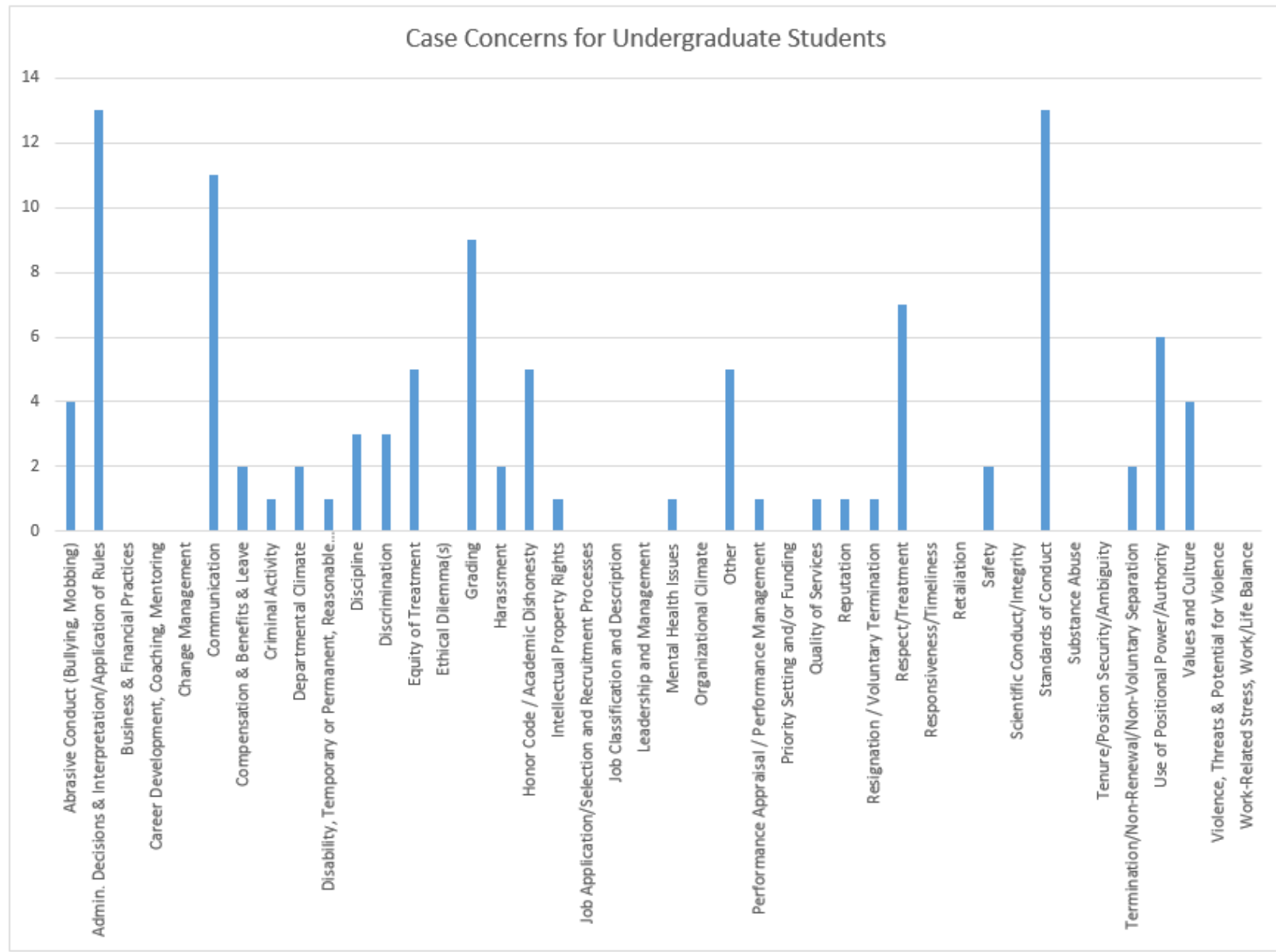




## UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

The five most common concerns for undergraduate students were, in order of frequency: Administrative Decisions/Interpretation of Rules, Standards of Conduct, Communication, Grading, and Respect/Treatment. Considering the number of undergraduate students on campus, the number of undergraduates (53) who found their way to the Ombuds Office last year was very small. We believe this is because they have so many excellent services available to them. We tend to see these students either when they do not know which service to turn to or when they are unhappy with a service or a policy.



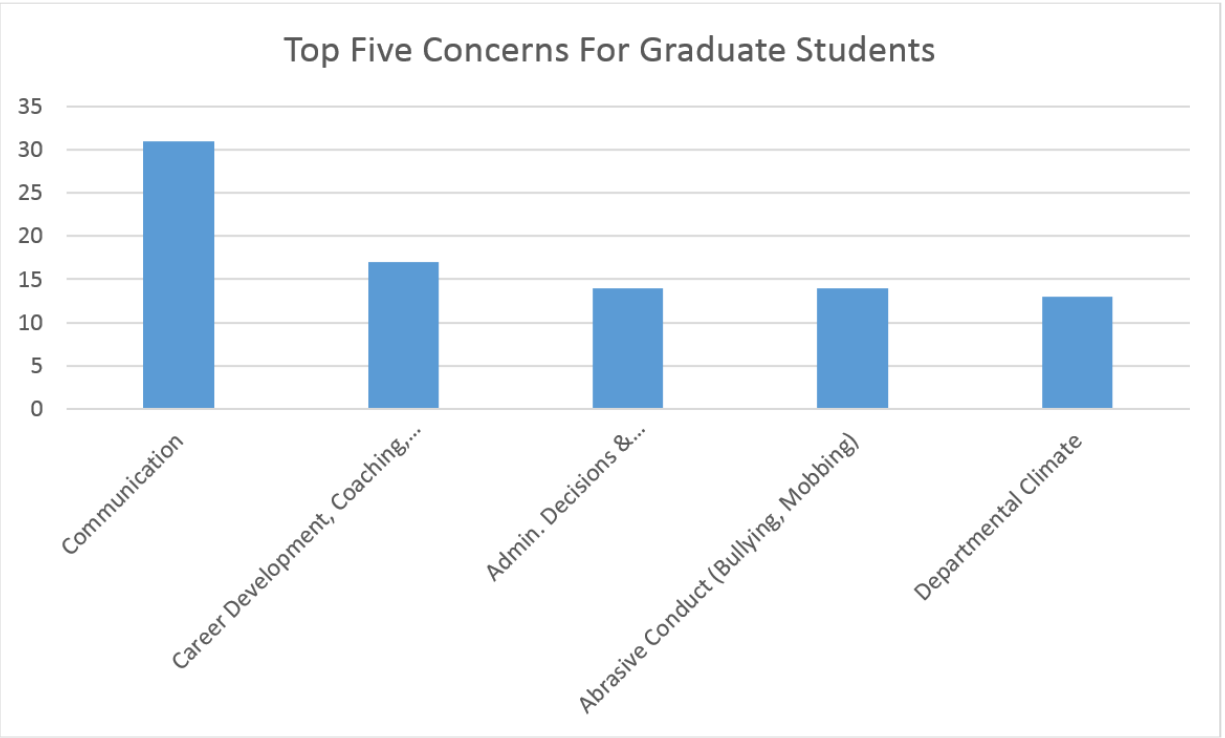


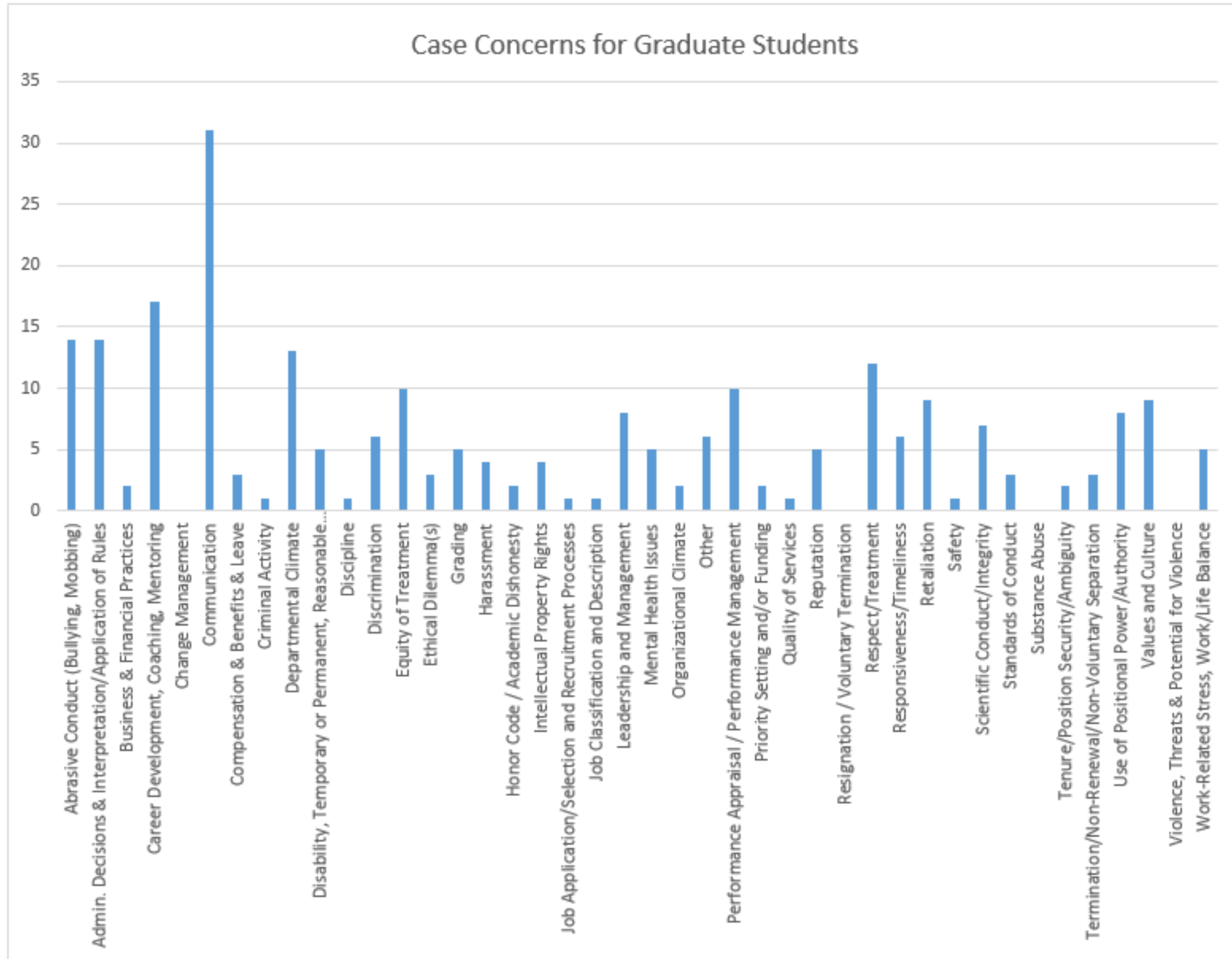
## GRADUATE STUDENTS

The Ombuds Office was visited by 56 graduate students of which the Faculty Ombuds saw 31. We see graduate students as the most vulnerable constituent group on campus. We have observed the following troubling situations in our case work:

- ❖ Graduate students being subjected to capricious abrasive unprofessional conduct, including their inability to complete the doctorate and abusive verbal attacks on graduate students in front of their peers.
- ❖ Graduate students fear retaliation (being ostracized by colleagues, becoming the target of more formal processes, or undermining their ability to complete the doctorate) if they speak out in defense of/to object to unprofessional conduct, criticize campus policies, or discuss sensitive issues.
- ❖ Graduate students not receiving feedback from advisors on their work. We had several cases where students were submitting dissertation chapters that went without advisor comments for months. Doctoral students are fearful of retaliation if they escalate their concern to the department, and are at sea about how to move forward to their defense when repeated attempts to get their advisor's assessment go unanswered.
- ❖ Graduate students receiving late notification they were being discontinued on a research grant. In many cases these students had visa issues and untimely notification prevented making alternative funding arrangements with another faculty member's research grant.
- ❖ Graduate students being asked to perform tasks that are not part of their research assignment. In some cases, this is reported as a catch-22, with the student then evaluated for not making satisfactory progress toward completion of the degree.
- ❖ Graduate students fear reputation being tarnished by rumors and/or explicit claims about their conduct that are factually inaccurate.
- ❖ Lack of consistency in departmental policies, and sometimes the lack of policies to govern graduate student concerns.

Among graduate students, the five most common concerns were, in order of frequency: Communication, Career Development/Coaching, Administrative Decisions/Interpretation/Application of Rules, Abrasive Conduct (Bullying/Mobbing), and Departmental Climate.



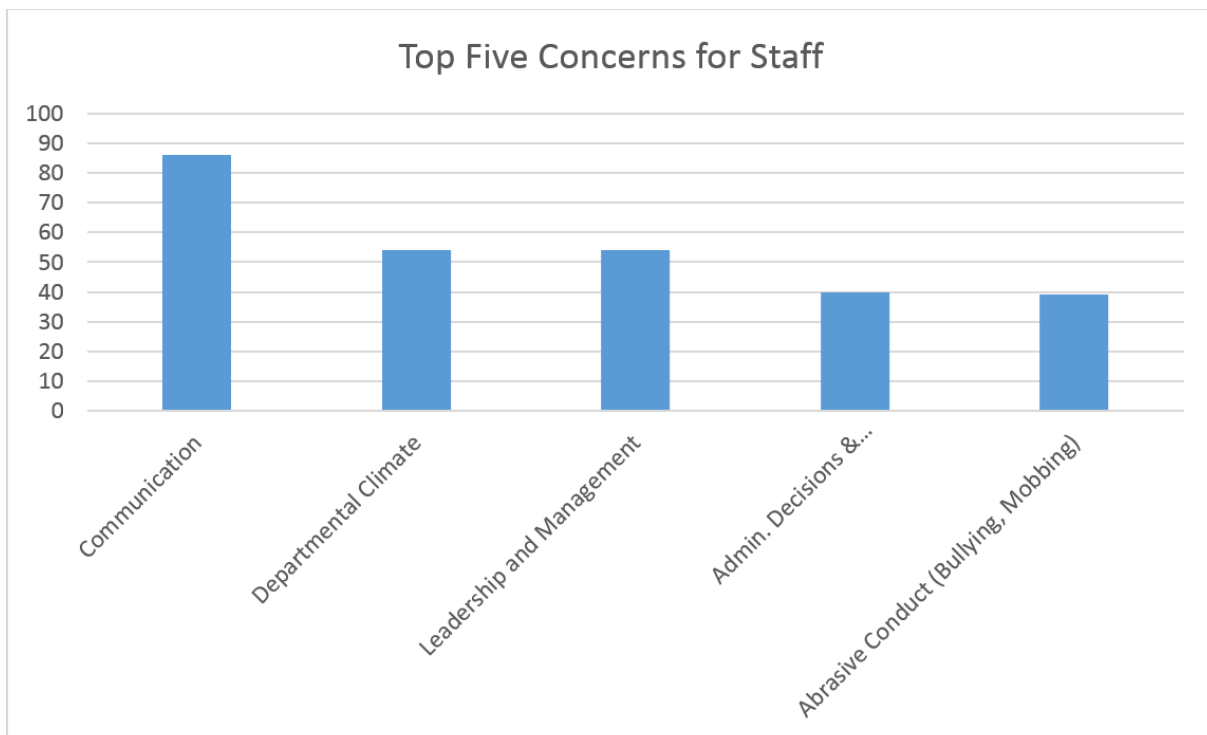


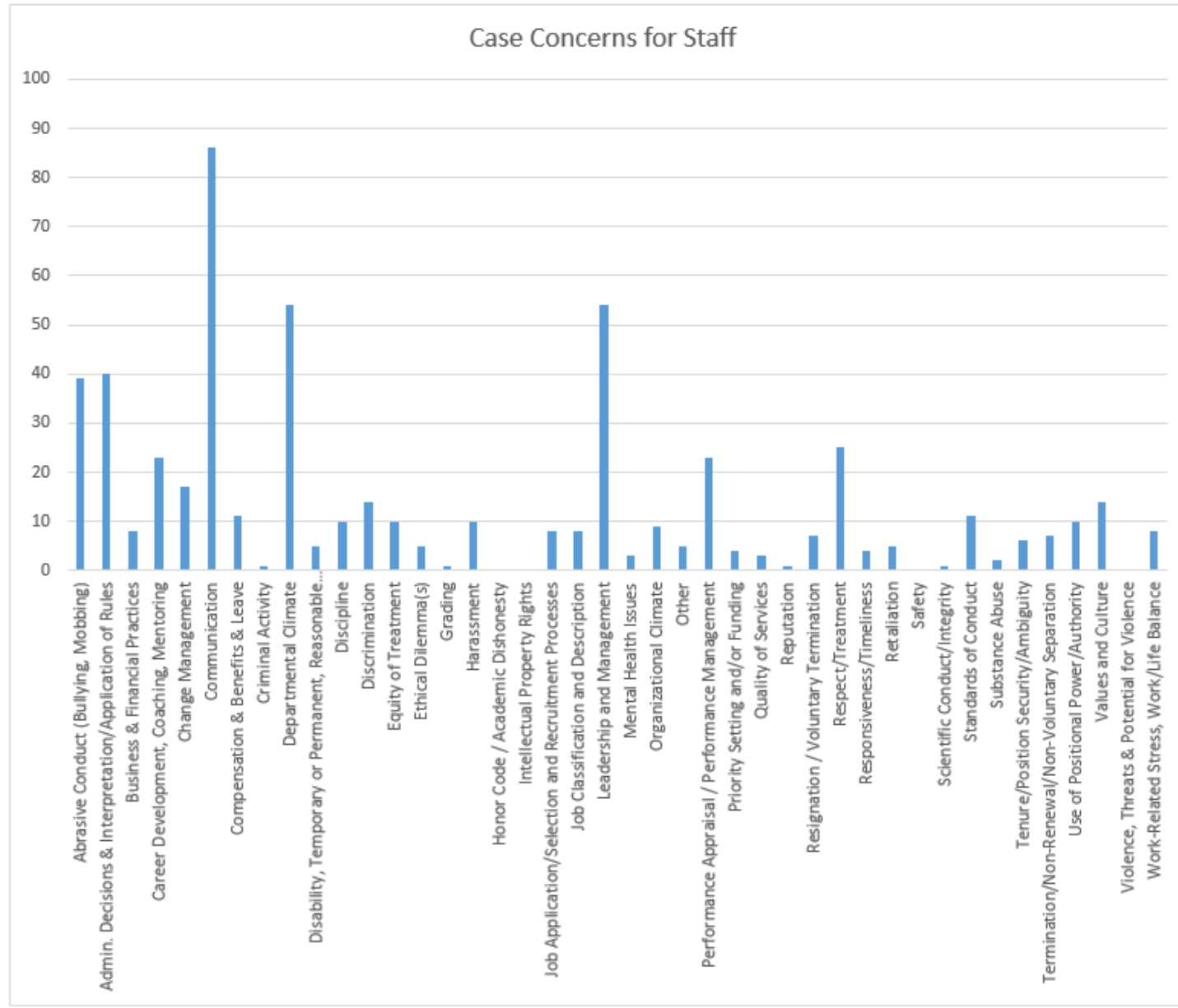
## STAFF

For the 155 staff we served, their top five concerns were, in order of frequency: Communication, Departmental Climate, Leadership & Management, Administrative Decisions/Interpretation/Application of Rules, and Abrasive Conduct (Bullying, Mobbing). We saw a great deal of staff members who are in departments experiencing reorganization or leadership change. We also saw a number of situations involving poorly handled communication between supervisor and supervisee often resulting in a rancorous rift in the relationship. Some reported examples of this are:

- ❖ Unclear expectations
- ❖ Favoritism
- ❖ Differences in communication style
- ❖ Inconsistency
- ❖ Lack of trust
- ❖ Fear
- ❖ Lack of civility and respect
- ❖ Interpersonal disputes

We also want to note that we saw a number of staff who identify as part of a historically underrepresented group (e.g., race, gender, sexual orientation) who feel unwelcome on campus and/or in their departments.





## FACULTY AND RESEARCHERS

Faculty and researcher workplace problems commonly involve the dynamics of human interaction in contexts that can be stressful and reflect the different perspectives related to roles and personal experiences. The five most common concerns for faculty and researchers were, in order of frequency: Communication, Departmental Climate, Administrative Decisions/Interpretation/Application of Rules, Respect/Treatment, and Values and Culture.

The largest single concern among the 78 faculty and researchers who came to see us was Communication. This was a surprise because the Ombuds Office tracked communication in previous years, but it was not a major cause of workplace difficulties. However, communication seems to pair with such factors as Department Climate, Respect & Treatment, Abrasive Conduct, Leadership & Management, and Performance Appraisal, as these are often narrated. Department Climate is often tied to how colleagues communicate on an interpersonal, group or unit basis. Respect & Treatment is commonly a matter of microaggressions that occur in faculty meetings or in meetings with a supervisor who appears dismissive of a colleague's professional work. It is noteworthy that nearly 30% or more of faculty and researcher visitors reporting their unit as hostile in some way and their administrator as a contributing factor.

For example:

- ❖ Faculty who are concerned about personnel processes and decisions in the department are often unaware of departmental policies that pertain to such matters as searches for faculty appointments.
- ❖ Untoward communication in the form of disrespectful conduct toward a colleague, such as cutting them off or speaking over them in faculty meetings, abrasive conduct, personalized accusations, and the like, often in front of witnesses, goes unchecked.

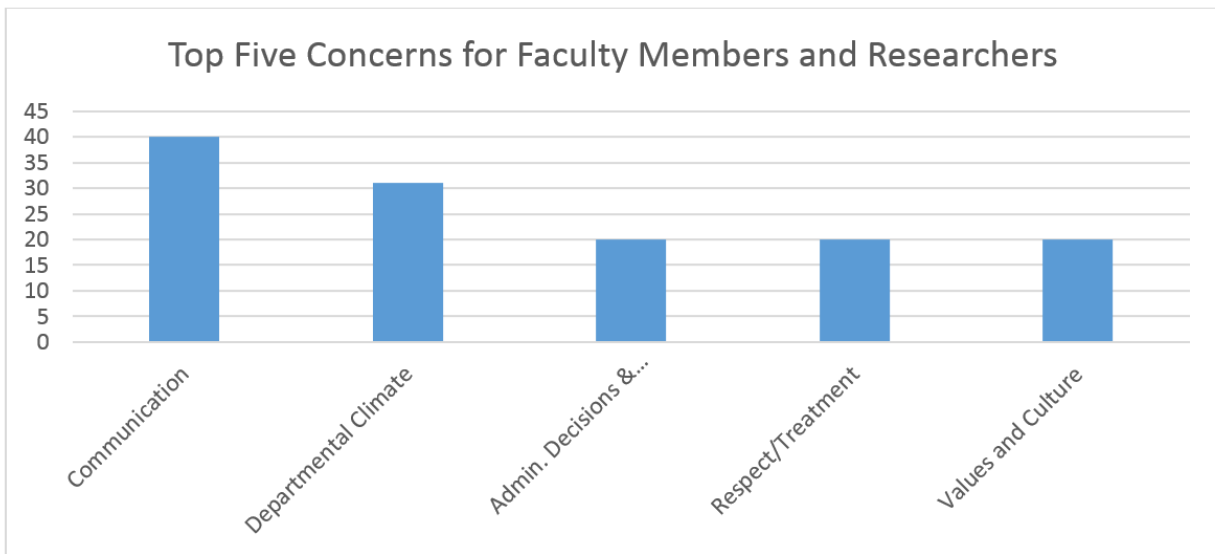
*We observed conflicts arising from a climate of anxiety.* Information from visitors indicate that many members of the academic community are trying to accomplish their goals in an environment that is characterized by anxiety or fear. For example, visitors expressed concerns that reflected:

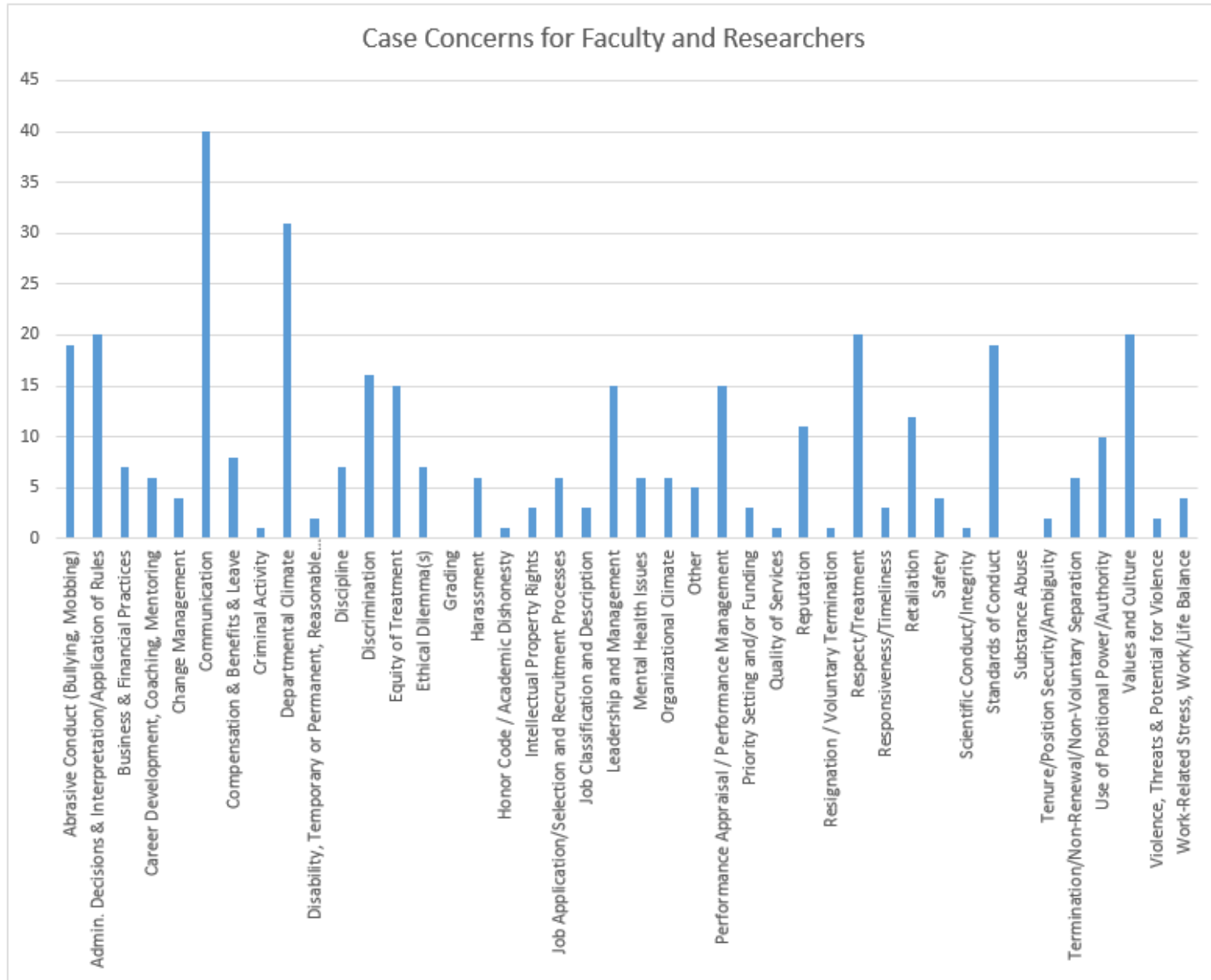
- ❖ Faculty members are uncertain whether they will be supported by colleagues and others if they report unprofessional conduct.
- ❖ Individuals fear retaliation (e.g., being ostracized by colleagues or becoming the target of more formal processes) if they speak out in defense of/to object to a colleague's professional conduct, criticize campus policies, or discuss sensitive issues. This include abusive verbal attacks on graduate students in front of their peers.
- ❖ Individuals fear legal liability or that they may exacerbate a bad situation if they take steps to address difficult behavior; on the other hand, unnecessarily risk-



averse behavior by administrators and others can cause difficulties across campus.

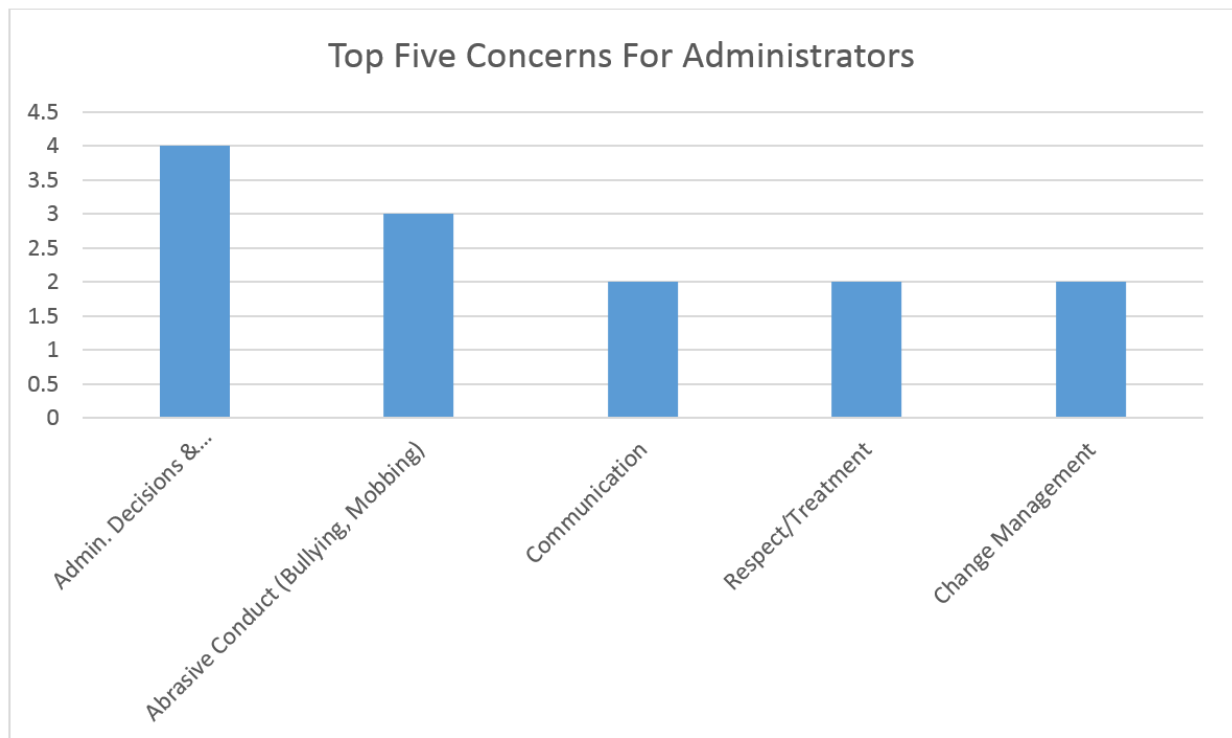
- ❖ Faculty fear their reputation being tarnished by rumors and/or explicit claims about their conduct that are factually inaccurate.
- ❖ Instructors being asked to perform supportive tasks for their unit head on a promise of reciprocity that is not upheld.

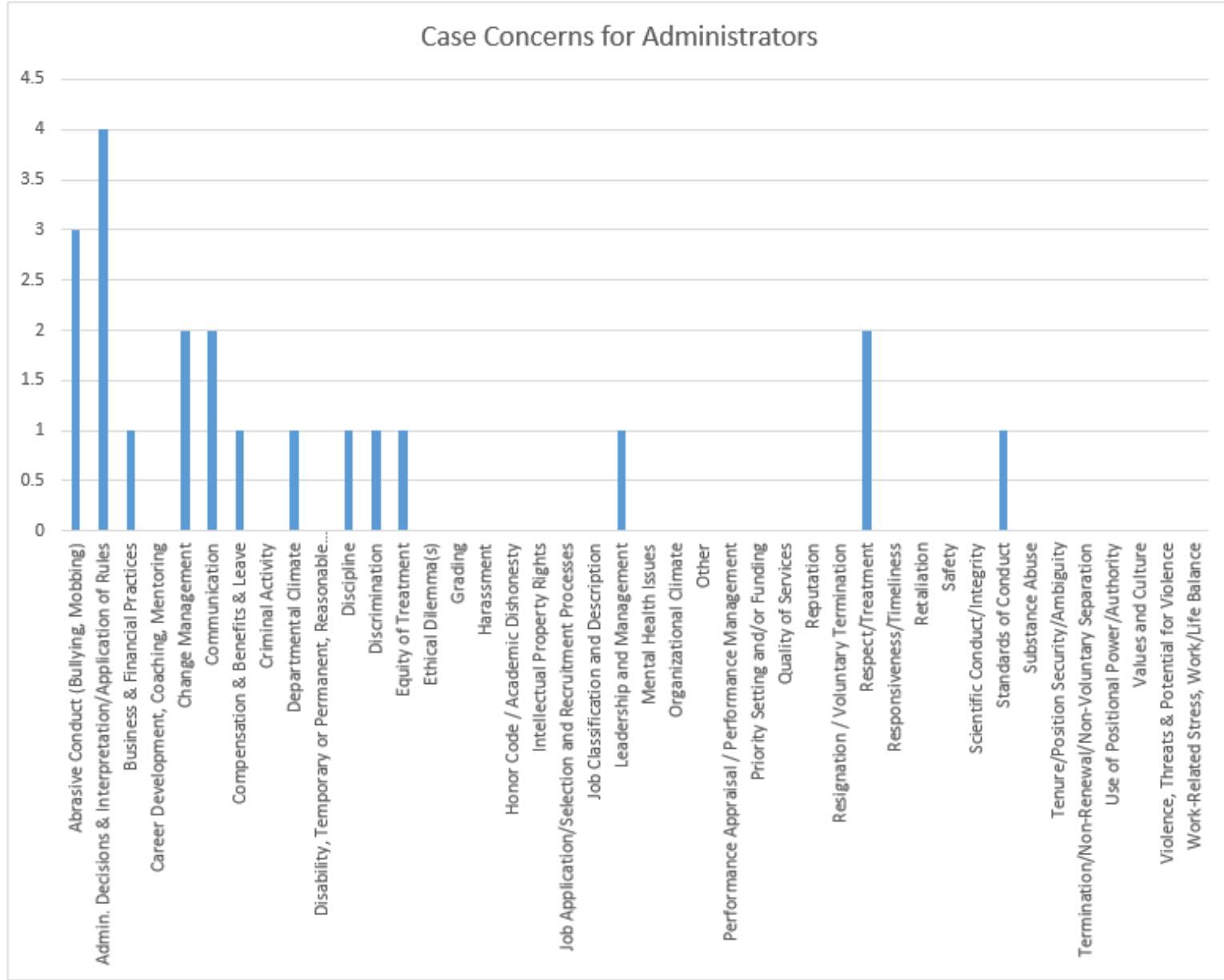




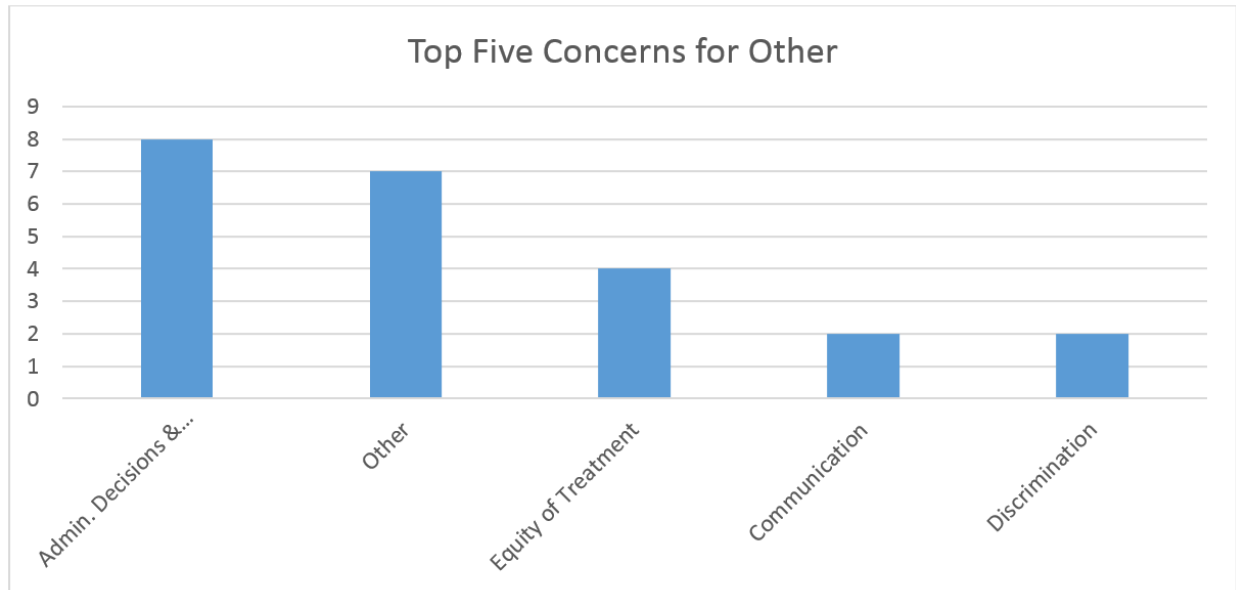
## ADMINISTRATORS

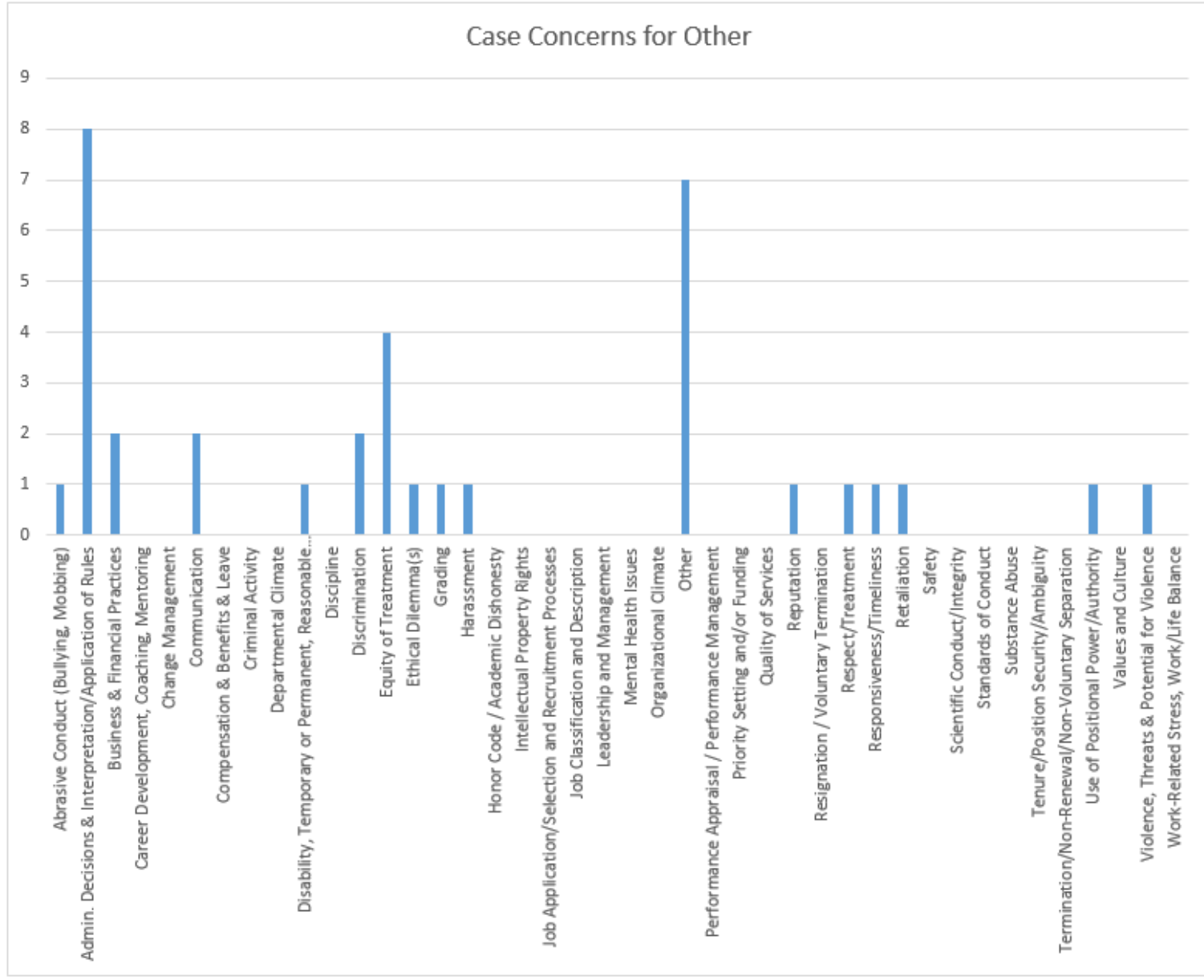
The five most frequent concerns for administrators were, in order of frequency: Administrative Decisions/Interpretation/Application of Rules, Abrasive Conduct (Bullying, Mobbing), Communication, Respect/Treatment, and Change Management. Administrators most frequently contact our office when they are faced with a thorny dilemma in an area they oversee. Often these situations are very sensitive, and administrators have expressed appreciation for the confidential and non-judgmental nature of our service. These dilemmas can involve multiple colleagues, cut across departments, and have to do with structural designs that predispose people to conflict.





Our “Other” category encompasses a diverse group – e.g., parents, former & prospective students, prospective donors, concerned citizens. The top five concerns for Other were, in order of frequency: Administrative Decisions/Interpretation/Application of Rules, Other, Equity of Treatment, Communication, and Discrimination.





## ***A Message from the Faculty Ombuds***

Faculty Ombuds are emeritus faculty who serve in the campus Ombuds Office. Their activities are based on the following understandings. If the Boulder Campus is to achieve its mission and individual faculty are to realize their goals, faculty must be fully engaged in teaching, research, and service. Faculty who are unskilled in the conventions of academic freedom and constructive debate or who do not balance individual entrepreneurship with a commitment to the support of colleagues put these objectives at risk. In addition, the unintended consequences of formal policy implementation, changes in organizational structure, new faculty demographics, and stresses arising out of budgetary constraints can interfere with full engagement. They put academic units and the campus at a disadvantage in recruiting and retaining the best scholars, researchers, creative leaders, teachers, students, and support personnel.

Last year the Faculty Ombuds reported some ominous trends regarding lack of transparency. These included chairs not abiding by bylaws, faculty across ranks expressing anxiety about career advancement and unfamiliarity with unit or college/school policies on personnel decisions and ignorance of where they might be located, conflicting advice about promotion decisions, breaches of confidentiality in conversations with administrators, and graduate students reporting adverse consequences from performance appraisals without advanced notice that their performance was not satisfactory. Some of these continue. Specifically, issues we wish to underscore are discussed in the appropriate Primary Case Concerns sections: graduate students on pages 19-21 and faculty and researchers on pages 24-26.

We suggest that academic administrators be routinely reminded of the disruptive potential of a lack of professional respect in communication among colleagues. In cases where they observe such treatment, we urge that they exercise their responsibility to care for the welfare of the unit by reminding colleagues that CU's Professional Rights and Duties policy does not tolerate such conduct. We further encourage that academic administrators be apprised of CUs resources for learning how to constructively deal with untoward behavior, such as its workshop on "Crucial Conversations".

Beyond these concerns we note that we have had a number of cases where potentially explosive issues, or personal disagreements have been expressed in email. Email is not a reliable channel for dealing with controversial issues in which participants have a personal stake and definitely not advisable for expressing personal disagreements. We call attention to the document "Appropriate Use of Email" found in the "Resources" section of the Ombuds website at <https://www.colorado.edu/ombuds/resources>.

Faculty Ombuds do not systematically track expressions of fear of retaliation, however it is not unusual for graduate student visitors to express reluctance to talk with faculty mentors for fear of retaliation, for assistant professors to report confrontations with

senior colleagues that are perceived as threatening and reluctance to speak either with their colleague or chair for fear of retaliation, or for women to report a climate of subtle discrimination in professional evaluation, merit increases, and fear of additional obstacles to career advancement if they speak out. For colleagues who are down in a power relation, experiencing conflict is framed by expression of mutual distrust and the perception that their corresponding colleague's actions are a form of retaliation for expressed differences. The rise in percentage of complaints related to Communication, when coupled with the high percentage of faculty that expressed concern about Department Climate and graduate students who expressed concern about Career Development, Coaching and Mentoring, coupled with concerns about Abrasive Conduct, reflects this trend. Where fear of retaliation and mistrust are persistent in units, it can parse into multiple forms. Obviously rank is one dynamic, but also differences of gender, research style, and pedagogical commitments can increase anxiety and increase the potential for conflict and dysfunction within the academic community. Although the Ombuds Office continually works to dispel unnecessary anxieties and to promote reasoned decisions and actions by visitors, it is clear to us that addressing the conditions that generate uncertainty and anxiety among faculty cannot be done effectively through ombuds work alone. An effective approach will require a comprehensive, long-term campus strategy. We continue to urge that faculty and academic administrators be given many and repeated opportunities in multiple settings to confront and candidly discuss best practices for sustaining cooperative effort and constructive dissent, even as formal (sometimes disciplinary) processes unfold. In this regard, we applaud the Provost's focus on climate issues and the Chancellor's initiative to improve campus climate as well as the Director of Faculty Relations' new Academic Leaders Institute.

We want to note conflict related to campus demographics. Women, under-represented in many academic units and over-represented in certain faculty categories, have been frequent visitors to the Faculty Ombuds. Their issues suggest that in some areas gendered expectations and judgments color professional communication and evaluation.

The complexity of faculty ombuds work in FY 2016-2017 continued to be high. We note that the following types of cases can be especially complicated:

- ❖ *Cases involving internal power dynamics that create perceived insults due to professional interactions that impact research team performance;*
- ❖ *Cases arising out of program reorganizations;*
- ❖ *Cases arising in units where chairs have ignored established policies and procedures of the unit to achieve a desired outcome that works to the advantage of some and disadvantage of others.*
- ❖ *Cases in which faculty have threatened the careers of graduate students when the Research Assistant has questioned the validity and ethics of abridged research protocols, laboratory procedures, or relational dynamics among the research team.*



- ❖ *Cases in which visitors are concerned about the security of their own status given their (mis)understanding of peer relationships and past conduct.*
- ❖ *Cases in which junior faculty have been given advice by administrators and senior colleagues not to seek tenure without disclosing the rationale behind the advice.*
- ❖ *Cases in which senior faculty and/or administrators have publicly engaged in abrasive communication directed at junior colleagues or subordinates.*
- ❖ *Cases in which cultural differences inflect perceptions of the nature and severity of (untoward) actions and acceptable repairs.*

In addition, a number of individual visits were possibly symptomatic of broader problems within an entire academic unit or research team. Although on occasion we have worked with a full academic unit, unit facilitations or interventions are extremely demanding in terms of time and program resources. Faculty Ombuds lack the resources to become involved in unit or group facilitations and are hesitant to commit to doing so when requests are received. We believe there is an unmet need for conflict management services to academic units. In this regard, we note that organizational development expert, Merna Jacobsen, PhD, has an appointment in HR and has expressed interest in assisting academic units in the way just described. The Faculty Ombuds are open to joining forces in cases involving faculty units.

### **Priorities for AY 2017-2018**

Faculty Ombuds have traditionally helped visitors make informed and reasoned decisions about how to interact with or navigate formal campus processes (e.g., OIEC investigations). We see a particular need, at present, for academic administrators and units to find ways of sustaining collegiality, respect, and productivity as formal campus (or legal) processes unfold.

We will continue to consult with unit heads to explore means for addressing unit problems before they impose major fractures on the unit. Given the recent appointment of new deans in each college and school, we plan to visit with each of these administrative officers to explain our services and explore how we might assist their unit heads.

Faculty Ombuds will continue to participate in discussions, if invited by University Administrators and the Office of Legal Counsel, about improving the policies and procedures that deal with issues of faculty conduct as covered by the Professional Rights and Duties policy and University policies addressing concerns of a safe and welcoming workplace, free of discrimination, harassment, and sexual assault. We have a keen interest in any policies that give academic administrators or units broad discretion to devise or flesh out processes in ad hoc ways. Members of the Ombuds Office have experience with and expertise in academic dispute system implementation and design, and International Ombuds Association (IOA) professional standards encourage ombuds to use their expertise to advocate for constructive institutional

processes. We would like to ensure that our expertise and professional mandates in this area become a resource that department chairs and others feel free to draw on.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jerry Hauser, Professor Emeritus, Faculty Ombuds  
Lee Potts, Associate Professor Emerita, Faculty Ombuds

## Observations and Interpretations

In our case consultations, we observed the following trends this year:

- ❖ *Inaccurate information* can be a primary driver of conflict. We suggest there is a connection between communication and the experiences of faculty, staff, researchers, and graduate & undergraduate students at the unit level.
- ❖ *Lack of transparency* at the unit level generally results in problematic situations when individuals are affected by decisions that seem to be arbitrary, unfair or punitive
- ❖ *Lack of transparency* at a campus system level can contribute to inefficient implementation of leadership decisions
- ❖ *Climate concerns regarding race and LGBTQIA discrimination* are ongoing.
- ❖ *Decentralization of administrative functions, and the resulting inconsistencies and lack of coordination* seem to drive conflict and dissatisfaction in many ways.

## Outreach

We have started to put our strategic outreach plan into place this year. Because we are all relatively new to the Ombuds Office, our first strategic task was to raise the visibility of the Ombuds Office by meeting as many campus stakeholders as possible. We also sought to increase our knowledge about the campus, avoid redundancy and to find ways to collaborate with other departments. To accomplish this, we conducted 191 outreach activities reaching an estimated total of 1712 people. These ranged from individual meetings with campus stakeholders, teaching Crucial Conversations, presenting for the ODECE Diversity and Inclusion Summit, presenting at the All Chairs and Directors Retreat to informational meetings with many departments. Please see Appendix B for a full list of individual meetings and Appendix C for a list of group outreach events.

Our second strategic task was to identify campus groups who were either vulnerable, unaware of our services, or both. We identified two groups - graduate students as well as faculty, staff and students of color. We began developing outreach plans to reach these groups.

We created marketing materials geared towards graduate students. We developed a close outreach collaboration with the Dean of the Graduate School, collaborating on informing graduate students about our services through participation on the Graduate Climate Committee and helping with the launch of the Graduate Student Mentor Program. We also conducted outreach to UGGS executives and presented at an UGGS Assembly meeting.

Reaching out to faculty staff and students of color is a larger task and will take time to fully implement. We started by contacting individuals who spoke out in Town Hall meetings regarding campus climate. Most of these speakers were faculty, and we held many conversations with faculty of color to see how the Ombuds Office can be of service to them. Out of these conversations the Faculty of Color Luncheon was born. The full realization of the luncheon was in collaboration with Faculty Affairs (Daryl Maeda and Martha Hanna). Around 75 faculty attended, and the attendees were in agreement that they want to continue to meet.

The Undergraduate Social Climate Survey showed that African-American and Black identified undergraduate students feel unwelcome on campus. We met with a number of staff members who serve these students to find out what might be the best ways to reach them. We reached out to a number of student groups that serve students of color. We staffed a booth at the CUE Welcome event, we attended CUE Chili Pot lunch presentations, and we presented to the Black Student Alliance.

We also began having conversations with staff of color to see how we can offer assistance. This effort is ongoing.

Our third strategic task was to identify education and prevention opportunities. We identified communication skills as an area of need for the campus, and became involved in teaching Crucial Conversations. In this we are partnering with the Director of Faculty Relations as well as Human Resources in a common effort to offer the Crucial Conversations curriculum on campus. Our staff taught this two-day seminar 11 times this year.

We have developed spreadsheets to track our outreach efforts in order to ensure that we are systematically reaching the entire campus. We are also tracking which outreach efforts bring people to our office and are discontinuing practices that do not bear fruit.

## **PRIORITIES FOR FY 2017-2018**

- ❖ Ombuds will continue to focus on requests and needs of individual visitors as the priority for the program.
- ❖ We hope to deepen our understanding of issues and concerns recurrently voiced by visitors and others with whom we have consulted.
- ❖ The Ombuds will work, as requested and within resource constraints, to support all campus initiatives to sustain, strengthen, and extend respect and productivity within our academic community.
  - Work to find better ways of helping units identify and get access to facilitation resources when formal processes threaten to fracture units.
  - Help units develop and “own” unit-appropriate norms of academic and/or university citizenship, so that they will be prepared to weather formal processes that may affect them. In particular, we support extending campus discussions of academic freedom, freedom of speech, CU’s Professional Rights and Duties policy and academic dishonesty to all academic units, so that they can clarify unit values and norms.
  - Prioritize consultations with academic administrators and faculty about how to implement policies in ways that preserve and do not undermine collegiality, respect, and productivity. The goal is to ensure that policies/decisions are perceived to be fair by all parts of the academic community, are in fact fair to all, and set appropriate examples for the campus.
- ❖ We plan to expand our presentations to graduate student audiences on how to navigate or avoid potentially problematic situations.
- ❖ We will revamp our website to make it ADA compliant.
- ❖ We will continue systematic outreach to campus leaders.
- ❖ We will continue to work with the Provost’s Office to find more space.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **New Reporting Categories:**

1. Abrasive Conduct (Bullying, Mobbing)
2. Admin. Decisions & Interpretation/Application of Rules
3. Business & Financial Practices
4. Career Development, Coaching, Mentoring
5. Change Management
6. Classroom Management
7. Communication
8. Compensation & Benefits & Leave
9. Consultation About Others
10. Criminal Activity
11. Departmental Climate
12. Disability, Temporary or Permanent, Reasonable Accommodation (ADA)
13. Discrimination
14. Discipline
15. Equity of Treatment
16. Ethical Dilemma(s)
17. Grading
18. Harassment
19. Honor Code / Academic Dishonesty
20. Intellectual Property Rights
21. Job Application/Selection and Recruitment Processes
22. Job Classification and Description
23. Leadership and Management
24. Mental Health Issues
25. Organizational Climate
26. Performance Appraisal / Performance Management
27. Priority Setting and/or Funding
28. Quality of Services
29. Reputation
30. Respect/Treatment
31. Responsiveness/Timeliness
32. Resignation / Voluntary Termination
33. Retaliation
34. Safety
35. Scientific Conduct/Integrity
36. Standards of Conduct
37. Substance Abuse
38. Tenure/Position Security/Ambiguity
39. Termination/Non-Renewal/Non-Voluntary Separation
40. Use of Positional Power/Authority
41. Values and Culture
42. Violence, Threats & Potential for Violence

- 43. Work-Related Stress, Work/Life Balance
- 44. Other



## APPENDIX B

The Ombuds Office staff met with these individual campus stakeholders in order to introduce ourselves and share information about our work:

- ❖ Chancellor Philip DiStefano
- ❖ Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor Russell Moore
- ❖ Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity and Community Engagement Robert Boswell
- ❖ Assistant Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Learning and Student Success David Aragon
- ❖ Associate Vice Chancellor in ODECE Alphonse Keasley
- ❖ Director of Disability Services John Meister
- ❖ Executive Director of Institutional Equity and Compliance, Title IX Coordinator Valerie Simons
- ❖ Director of Investigations and Deputy Title IX Coordinator Llen Pomeroy
- ❖ Director of Education and Prevention and Deputy Title IX Coordinator Teresa Wroe
- ❖ Director of Remedial and Protective Measures and Deputy Title IX Coordinator Regina Tirella
- ❖ Director of ADA Compliance Michael Roseberry
- ❖ Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Christina Gonzales
- ❖ Dean of Students and Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Akirah Bradley
- ❖ Associate Vice Chancellor for Auxiliary Services & Student Support Kambiz Khalili
- ❖ Assistant Dean of Students Jennifer McDuffie
- ❖ Director of the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution Jessica Doty
- ❖ Student Services Program Manager Hans Foote
- ❖ Director of the Office of Victims Assistance Jessica Ladd-Webert
- ❖ Director of Career Services Lisa Severy
- ❖ Associate Director, Career Advising Ann Herrmann
- ❖ Student Legal Services Director Philip Bienvenu
- ❖ Women's Resource Center Director Amanda Linsenmeyer
- ❖ Gender & Sexuality Center Director Scarlet Bowen
- ❖ Veteran Services Director Stew Elliott
- ❖ Cultural Unity & Engagement Center Director Tawanda Owens
- ❖ Volunteer Resource Center Director Hannah Wilks
- ❖ Executive Director of Wardenburg Health Services Melissa Lowe
- ❖ Counseling and Psychological Services Director Alan Kent
- ❖ Deputy Director of Housing and Dining Services Deborah Cook
- ❖ Executive Director of Housing & Dining Services Amy Beckstrom
- ❖ Director of Residential Programs & Services Paula Bland
- ❖ Director of Off-Campus Housing & Neighbor Relations Suzanne Stafford

- ❖ Director of the Center for Student Involvement Kristen Rollins
- ❖ Environmental Center Director Dave Newport
- ❖ University Memorial Center Director Andrea Zelinko
- ❖ University of Colorado Student Government Program Assistant Megan Princehouse
- ❖ Director of Recreation Services Anthony Price
- ❖ Vice Provost and Associate Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives William Kuskin
- ❖ Managing Associate University Counsel Elvira Strehle-Henson
- ❖ Assistant University Counsel & Intellectual Property Manager Jennifer Wunsch
- ❖ Chief of Staff and the Ethics and Compliance Director Catherine Shea
- ❖ Athletic Director Rick George
- ❖ Senior Associate Athletic Director Kristi Livingston
- ❖ Vice Chancellor of Advancement Deb Coffin
- ❖ Vice Chancellor for Research & Innovation Terri Fiez
- ❖ Associate Vice Chancellor for Research Integrity & Compliance Joseph Rosse
- ❖ Senior Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer Kelly Fox
- ❖ Vice Chancellor for Strategic Relations Frances Draper
- ❖ Associate Vice Chancellor of Enrollment and Financial Aid Gwen Pomper
- ❖ Director of Admissions Kevin MacLennan
- ❖ Registrar Kristi Wold-McCormick
- ❖ Associate Director of Scholarships, Student Employment and Administration Susan Youtz
- ❖ Vice Chancellor of Infrastructure and Safety David Kang
- ❖ Assistant Vice Chancellor for Safety Melissa Zak
- ❖ CU Police Chief Ken Koch
- ❖ Associate Vice Chancellor for Information Technology, Chief Information Officer Larry Levine
- ❖ Assistant Vice Chancellor for Information Technology and Deputy Chief Information Officer Marin Stanek
- ❖ Information Technology Program Manager Laura Snyder
- ❖ Information Technology Program Manager Mick McTigue
- ❖ Assistant Vice Chancellor of Integrated Planning Stephen Vassallo
- ❖ Chief Human Resource Officer Scott Morris & Katherine Erwin
- ❖ Assistant Vice Chancellor, Deputy Chief Human Resources Officer, Director of Organizational and Employee Development Merna Jacobsen
- ❖ Human Resources Communications Manager Megan Bohn
- ❖ Director of the Faculty and Staff Assistance Program Olga Vera & Paulette Erickson England
- ❖ Director of Talent Management/Recruitment Dana Hotchkiss
- ❖ Manager of Employee Relations Laura Edlin
- ❖ Senior Employee Relations Consultant Jason Shelton
- ❖ Chair of Staff Council Alan Slinkard

- ❖ Director of Compensation and Talent Acquisition Kym Calvo
- ❖ Assistant Director Human Resources Service Center Kenny Nelson
- ❖ Assistant Vice Chancellor and Controller Laura Ragin
- ❖ Bursar Gregory Atkins
- ❖ Assistant Director, Business Operations and Communication, Campus Controller's Office Mirinda Scott
- ❖ Deputy Controller, Director of Sponsored Projects Accounting Leila McCamey
- ❖ Assistant Director of Cost Accounting and Central Operations Stefanie Furman
- ❖ Assistant Director of Sponsored Projects Accounting James Lei
- ❖ Associate Vice Chancellor for Finance and Business Strategy Carla Ho-a
- ❖ Associate Vice Chancellor of Performance Improvement Cynthia Husek
- ❖ Special Projects Coordinator for Campus Controller's Office Kaye Orten
- ❖ Assistant Vice Chancellor for Research & Director of the Office of Contracts & Grants Denitta Ward
- ❖ Executive Director of the Office of International Education Larry Bell
- ❖ Director of the Office of International Education Mary Dando
- ❖ Boulder Faculty Assembly Chair Melinda Piket-May
- ❖ Vice Provost and Associate Vice Chancellor for Faculty Affairs Jeffrey Cox
- ❖ Director of Faculty Relations Suzanne Soled
- ❖ Vice Provost and Associate Vice Chancellor for Undergraduate Education Mary Kraus
- ❖ Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences Steven Leigh
- ❖ Associate Dean for Social Sciences Ann Carlos
- ❖ Associate Dean for Natural Sciences G. Lang Farmer
- ❖ Associate Dean for Arts & Humanities Valerio Ferme
- ❖ Associate Dean for Research Theresa Hernandez
- ❖ Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education Kyle McJunkin
- ❖ Assistant Vice Provost for Advising and Academic Services Shelly Bacon
- ❖ Director of Personnel for the College of Arts & Sciences Bernadette Stewart
- ❖ Faculty Affairs Manager for the College of Arts & Sciences Amanda Misiak
- ❖ Human Resources Manager Shelly Hammonds
- ❖ Dean of the College of Engineering Robert Davis & Bobby Braun
- ❖ Associate Dean for Education Ken Anderson
- ❖ Associate Dean for Research Keith Molenaar
- ❖ Assistant Dean for Inclusiveness Excellence Sarah Miller
- ❖ Assistant Dean for Students Mary Steiner
- ❖ Assistant Dean for Administration Cherie Summers
- ❖ Assistant Dean for Programs and Engagement Doug Smith
- ❖ Founding Dean of College of Media, Communication and Information Lori Bergen
- ❖ Dean of the College of Music Robert Shay
- ❖ Dean Leeds School of Business David Ikenberry & Sharon Matusik
- ❖ Dean of Graduate School and Vice Provost for Graduate Affairs John Stevenson & Ann Schmiesing

- ❖ Senior Assistant Dean of the Graduate School Gretchen O'Connell
- ❖ Graduate School Communications Coordinator Merlyn Holmes
- ❖ Dean of the School of Education Kathy Schultz
- ❖ Dean of the Law School S. James Anaya
- ❖ Dean of Libraries Jim Williams
- ❖ Sr. Associate Dean Leslie Reynolds
- ❖ Interim Associate Dean Jennifer Knievel
- ❖ Dean of the Division of Continuing Education and Vice Provost for Summer Session and Outreach and Engagement Sara Thompson
- ❖ Director of Parking and Transportation Services Tom McGann
- ❖ Professor of Law Scott Peppet
- ❖ Director of the Daniels Fund Ethics Initiative Melanie Kay
- ❖ Chair of History, Elizabeth Fenn
- ❖ Chair of Mathematics, Roger Enoka
- ❖ Chair of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, M. Deane Bowers
- ❖ Chair of Physics, John Cumalat
- ❖ Chair of Civil, Environmental and Architectural Engineering, Rajagopalan Balaji
- ❖ Chair of Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology, Tin Tin Su
- ❖ Chair of Political Science, David S. Brown

## **APPENDIX C**

Group outreach conducted by Ombuds Office staff (courses we taught, events we participated in and departmental “Meet and Greet” we initiated):

- ❖ New Faculty Orientation
- ❖ All Chairs and Directors Retreat
- ❖ Lunch meeting with Housing Managers
- ❖ Dealing with Porcupines: Conflict Management in the Classroom
- ❖ Computer Science Graduate Student Reception
- ❖ Ombuds Booth at CUE Welcome
- ❖ In-person meeting with ALTEC Members
- ❖ International Education’s Staff Meeting
- ❖ Chairs and Directors Breakfasts
- ❖ In-person breakfast meeting with SILC/MENV team members
- ❖ Touch-Base Outreach Phone Call with Residential Academic Programs
- ❖ Unconscious Bias Workshop
- ❖ Angela Knight - Law school tour and introductions
- ❖ Boulder Community Outreach
- ❖ Todd Rogers - Law School, Director Career Services, introductions
- ❖ Alumni Association
- ❖ Crucial Conversations (taught 11 times)
- ❖ Registrar Managers
- ❖ UGGS Assembly
- ❖ SSCM
- ❖ Honor Code Council
- ❖ Mechanical Engineering - Professionalism Seminar
- ❖ ODECE Diversity and Inclusion Summit Presentation
- ❖ Budget Officer Meeting Outreach Presentation
- ❖ University Counsel
- ❖ Tough Conversations
- ❖ Menu of Services Discussion with RAP
- ❖ CUE Chili Pots
- ❖ UCSG general legislative council meeting
- ❖ Leadership Meeting
- ❖ Black Student Alliance General Meeting
- ❖ Faculty of Color Luncheon
- ❖ Wardenberg Staff
- ❖ ISSS
- ❖ Center for Student Involvement
- ❖ Understanding the Roles of Ombuds in Dispute Resolution and Fostering Ethical Organizational Cultures
- ❖ HEM: Techniques and Tools to Improve Conflict Resolution Competence

- ❖ Understanding the Role of Ombuds and How They Promote Ethical Cultures
- ❖ CU Grow: Techniques and Tools to Improve Conflict Resolution Competence
- ❖ Honor Code Board
- ❖ CUPD Directors