

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE UNIVERSITY FACULTY OMBUDSPERSON FOR 2016-2017

The Office of the University Faculty Ombudsperson (ombuds) provides faculty with a prompt and professional way to resolve conflicts, disputes, or complaints beyond turning to their supervisors. The office offers a confidential place to voice concerns, clarify desired outcomes, think through difficult situations, develop options, and problem-solve. Administratively, the ombuds reports to the Provost through the Senior Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, meeting monthly to discuss any areas of concern and ideas for positive change across campus.

During the academic year 2016-2017, the faculty ombuds visited with 109 faculty from 14 different colleges or schools representing 50 different departments. Reasons for visiting with the ombuds included to seek advice related to promotion and tenure, annual or comprehensive periodic reviews, student-related concerns, professional conflicts, help having a difficult conversation, nonrenewal of appointment, disciplinary actions, compensation, concerns regarding appropriate procedures being followed, and issues related to Title IX. Informal mediation involved assistance from staff in the Office for Inclusion and Equity, the Employee Assistance Program, the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, Legal Affairs, other administrative officials, and faculty colleagues. The vast majority of cases were resolved through informal mediation, informational counseling, and coaching, although two grievances were submitted to the Faculty Grievance Committee. Ombuds-related activities averaged approximately ten hours a week during the fall and spring semesters, and five hours a week during the summer. The ombuds office also conducted a campus-wide Qualtrics survey seeking anonymous faculty feedback for the continuous improvement of the office.

In addition to the activities noted above, ombuds-related work included numerous telephone conferences with various University officials, faculty and staff to seek help or clarification of University policies, consultations with other Universities regarding their current or planned ombuds office, and attending the California Caucus of College and University Ombuds – a professional gathering of academic ombuds. Outreach activities included participation in several brown bag lunch sessions for faculty focused on promotion and tenure, effective communication, and having a difficult conversation, hosted by the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost. The faculty ombuds also works closely with the staff and student ombuds, serves as *ex officio* member of the Council for Racial and Ethnic Equity and Diversity (CREED), the Title IX Task Force, and the Non-Tenure Faculty Taskforce.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

Submitted by Mary Steinhardt for the December 11, 2017 Faculty Council meeting.

Mary A. Steinhardt

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