FACULTY OMBUDSPERSON POSITION DESCRIPTION

Definition

The Ombudsperson is a dispute resolution practitioner whose major function is to provide confidential and informal assistance to the faculty.

Reporting Relationship

The Ombudsperson holds an autonomous position, reporting solely to the President. The appointment is for one year, renewable annually at the discretion of the President.

Function

To provide the faculty and faculty leadership with a resource to assist them in resolution of conflict in its earliest stages. The Ombudsperson is neither an advocate for faculty nor an agent of UTMB. Rather, the Ombudsperson is a resource and an advocate for fair processes. The Ombudsperson remains neutral, considers all sides of a question in an objective, impartial manner, and then assists in conflict resolution.

Conflict Resolution Responsibilities

- Adheres to the ethical principles of the University and College Ombudsman Association (see *Ethical Principles* Attachment);
- Assists in clarifying issues that have created conflict or concern;
- Researches, and analyzes concerns and means for resolving issues;
- Frames issues and explores possible remedies;
- Provides information regarding available options and resources;
- Facilitates informal meetings and mutual resolution of concerns;
- Maintains confidentiality and impartiality;
- Develops and promotes positive, informal problem solving methods;
- Provides follow-up;
- Educates the UTMB community by promoting awareness of services and ongoing issues; and
- Makes recommendations for the continuous improvement of informal early conflict resolution.

Administrative Responsibilities

The Ombudsperson:

- Publishes annual statistical reports;
- Recommends corrections to policies and procedures at any institutional level.

What the Ombudsperson Does Not Do:

- Intervene in any formal disciplinary process or termination;
- Advocate for any party;
- Participate in the conclusive stage of the conflict management process;
- Make administrative decisions for the institution;
- Determine guilt or innocence;
- Deal with complaints of sexual harassment;
- Deal with issues involving alleged violation of state or federal law;
- Assist when legal counsel is engaged;
- Receive official notice for the institution about issues;
- Become involved in legal issues.

Experience

Required: Tenured Associate Professor or Professor or a retired professor who held the rank of Associate Professor or Professor and was tenured

Currently holds or previously held a faculty appointment in a university outside of UTMB.

A record of prior contributions in providing institutional service in a private or public sector health care setting.

Preferred: Formal training in conflict management or alternative dispute resolution.

Other Characteristics

- Strong interpersonal skills
- A thorough knowledge of institutional processes
- Excellent written and verbal communications
- Must be able to work effectively with a variety of executives, administrators and support staff, as well as faculty from each divisional area

Percent Effort

The Ombudsperson position represents a 20% effort for a full-time faculty member.