

# 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.