Role of an Ombudsperson

Receive, address, and investigate complaints related to the Alma Mater Society

- Mediation
- Conflict management
- Peer support
- Resources

IOA Code of Ethics

- Independence
- Neutrality & Impartiality
- Confidentiality
- Informality
Data Comparison
Visitors to the AMS Ombuds Office

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>2014-2015</th>
<th>2015-2016</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>September</td>
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<tr>
<td>October</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>November</td>
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<tr>
<td>December</td>
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<td>January</td>
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<td>February</td>
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<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
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</tbody>
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Breakdown of visitors

- Elections: 34%
- Clubs/Constituencies: 23%
- Referred to AMS office: 22%
- Referred to UBC: 11%
- REP violation: 5%
- Other: 5%
Cases this year

- Major cases/issues
  - Elections
    - Report complete
  - Clubs
    - Interpersonal conflict
    - Reimbursements
  - Sexual Harassment
Elections

- Full report available

Summary
- Lack of confidence in the impartiality of the Elections Administrator → lack of confidence in fair election
- Lack of evidence that EA purposely helping specific candidates
- BUT steps can be taken to ensure impartiality

Recommendations
- Elections Committee take minutes → accountability
- Penalty decisions be transparent & consistent → develop a policy/guideline on determining penalties & follow Code: Committee voted decision
- Minor issues – better training/support from AMS transitioning into role, familiarity with Code on elections, the All-Candidates’ Handbook, preparing for role BEFORE election period (e.g. VoterMedia)
Clubs/constituency conflicts

- Interpersonal conflicts
- Situations get out of hand
  - Rumors
  - Defamation
- Recommendations:
  - Mediation
  - Accountability
  - Active Listening & Inclusive communication workshops
  - Familiarity with Respectful Environment Policy
Discrimination & Harassment

- Know the Respectful Environment Policy!
- Support the student in distress
  - Responsibility as student leader to ensure safe & respectful environment
  - Refer to relevant office
    - HR / SAC / Constituency / Non-Academic Misconduct (UBC)
    - Ombuds office for peer support and consultation
- Resources:
  - SASC
  - UBC Counseling/SpeakEasy
  - Equity & Inclusion Office
  - Access & Diversity
  - Ombudsperson
Reflections

Positives

- Helping people
- Working with different organizations & student leaders
- Maintaining safe & respectful environment for student learning and engagement
- Empowering others

Difficulties

- Lack of debrief/review structure
- People not responding to emails >:(
- Elections – overworked
- Unsatisfactory outcomes → visitors unhappy
Final thoughts

- Ombudsperson position about equity and inclusion
- Following policy/protocol only the first step
- Don’t get caught up on who is right/wrong
  → it’s about maintaining a respectful environment