

# AMS Ombuds Year-End Report

2015 — 2016



*Promoting collaborative dispute resolution*

# Role of an Ombudsperson

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

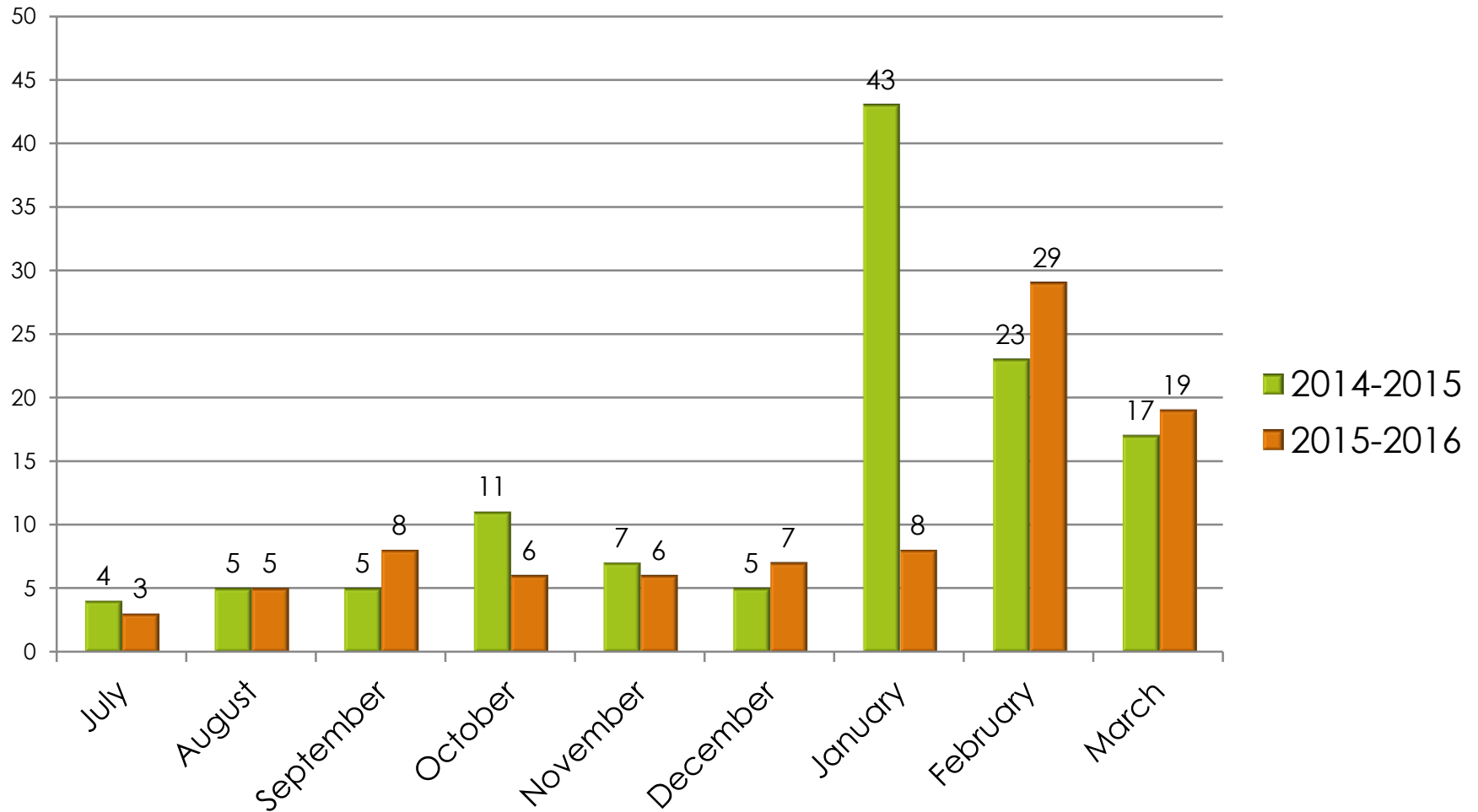
- ▣ Mediation
- ▣ Conflict management
- ▣ Peer support
- ▣ Resources

## IOA Code of Ethics

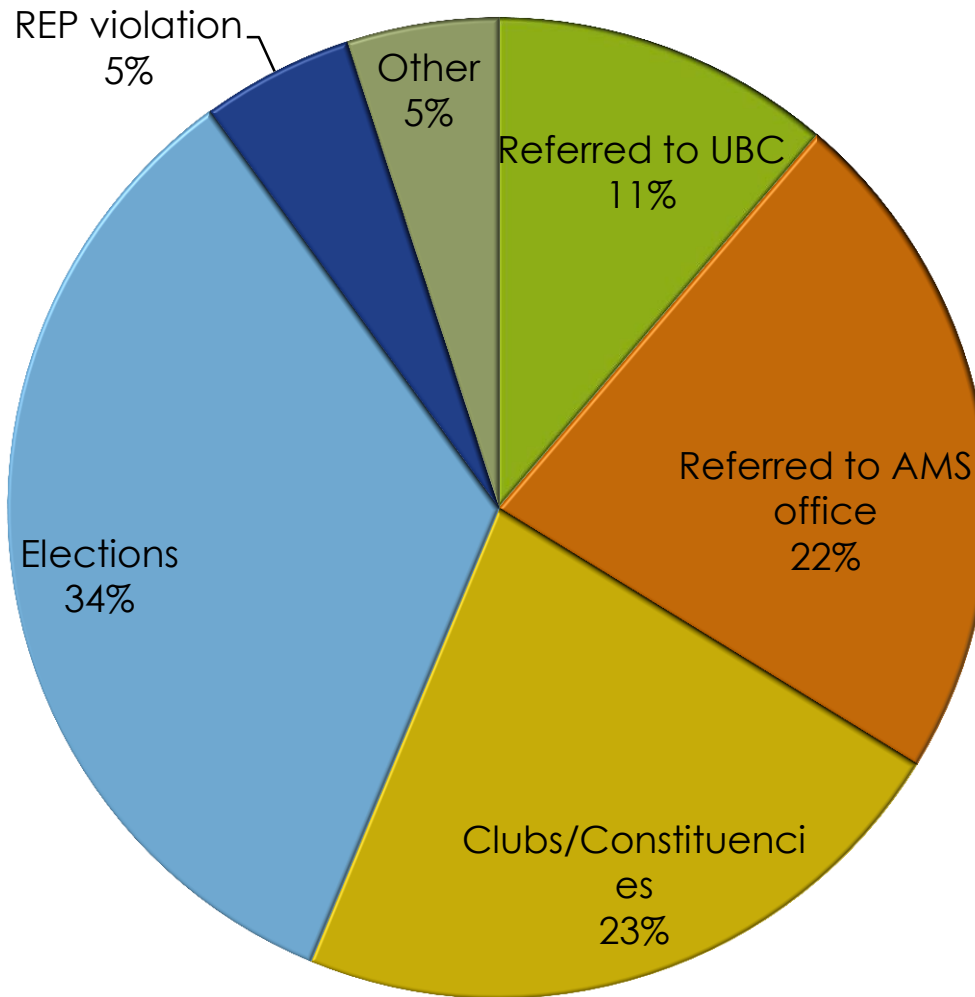
- ▣ Independence
- ▣ Neutrality & Impartiality
  - ▣ Confidentiality
  - ▣ Informality

# Data Comparison

## Visitors to the AMS Ombuds Office



# Breakdown of visitors



# 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

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

## Difficulties

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- 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