

THE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY OMBUDS:

• LISTENING

- Works to solve problems as a neutral party.
- Works to allay frustration.
- Provides advice/guidance to those who requested it.
- Cannot change, set aside or supersede existing rules and regulations.
- Mediates disputes, negotiations and facilitations.
- Coaching on effective conflict management or asking/responding to difficult questions.
- Shuttle diplomacy or serving as a go-between to resolve problems.

ETHICAL PRINCIPLES:

- Neutrality – the Ombuds hears complaints neutrally with particular attention to all available perspectives of an issue.
- Informal – no official investigation is conducted, nor is formal notice received.
- Independence – the Ombuds is not within the chain of command and acts independently of all other offices.
- Confidentiality – no action is taken without the visitor's permission and limited information is collected.
- Justice – the Ombuds is committed to justice and fair play.
- Accessibility – the Ombuds is readily accessible, however, this is not considered an office for the resolution of immediate crisis.

SOLVING PROBLEMS ON YOUR OWN

- Don't be afraid to ask questions.
- Don't hesitate to call University offices for help. Start with procedures which are already in place.
- Be prepared. Be informed. Gather your information and documentation ahead of time.
- Remember to be civil; rudeness and accusations rarely help any situation.
- Make sure that you are talking to the right person to answer your question, handle your issue, or make a decision.
- Read all information available to you concerning your issue. Searching the University's website will provide you a gold mine of information. FAU makes a conscientious effort to inform the campus community of its deadlines and procedures. You are responsible for knowing University policy and University deadlines.
- Before you sign contracts such as housing/meal contracts or before you agree to financial aid, read the fine print. Know what you are agreeing to, what your obligations are and when they are due.