

Updated October, 2010

Ombuds for Students – Strategic Plan

Mission Statement

The Ombuds Office promotes each student's learning experience by fostering proactive education and resolution of students' academic concerns and personal concerns.

Vision Statement

The Ombuds Office will enrich the educational experience by empowering students to resolve their concerns in a proactive, professional manner with the goal of carrying these skills forward into their careers and communities.

The Ombuds Office is committed to the values of:

- Mutual respect and high ethical standards;
- Cooperation and communication;
- Creativity and innovation;
- Community service and leadership;
- Academic and intellectual freedom;
- Pursuit of excellence;
- Accountability; and
- Diversity.

As a member of the [International Ombudsman Association](#), the Ombuds Office is also committed to the values of: confidentiality; independence; informality; and neutrality.

Goals

Goal 1. Access and Diversity: The Ombuds Office will support the outcomes of retention and graduation to create an academically prepared and diverse student body.

1.1 OBJECTIVE: All students will learn that the Ombuds Office is a safe place to bring concerns and find solutions.

Rationale:

Achieving this goal involves assuring that students know the Ombuds Office is a safe place to bring their concerns and find solutions. A safe environment will help achieve Goal 1 because

- **this will create a more comfortable place for students to address issues**
- **students who feel they have a place to go with concerns are more likely to seek a resolution of disputes**
- **the Ombuds Office will strive to prevent early withdrawal and/or transfer due to interpersonal disputes, etc.**

Also, students who feel the peace of mind this office offers will be able to focus on their studies and improve over-all academic preparation. Lastly, by addressing the concerns of students from all walks of life with impartiality and confidentiality, the perception of Texas Tech University as a diversity-friendly campus will grow.

BENCHMARKS: Success in Goal 1 will be measured annually utilizing the following criteria:

- **A rating at 3.5 or higher of their overall experience with the Ombuds Office on the User's Survey.**
- **An annual comparative analysis report of usage rates with ombuds offices at comparable universities.**

Strategies:

- **Maintain a consistent educational outreach program.**
- **As part of the educational outreach program, emphasize "a safe place to bring concerns and find solutions."**
- **Continue to inform campus of 742-SAFE phone number.**

Goal 2. Graduate and Professional Education: Enhance graduate and professional education opportunities.

2.1 OBJECTIVE: The Ombuds Office will work with colleges to foster graduate student employment and internship opportunities.

BENCHMARKS: Success in Goal 2 will be measured annually utilizing the following criteria:

- The Ombuds Office will host an exit interview with students who have worked or interned for the office.
- The Ombuds Office will track outreach efforts made to graduate programs and student organizations (HESA, etc.).

Strategies:

- Meet consistently with graduate programs of interest.
- Present and outreach to student groups of interest.

Goal 3. Engagement: The Ombuds Office will provide learning opportunities through outreach that contribute to students' learning, and that benefit communities, state, and nation.

3.1 OBJECTIVE: Each student who visits the Ombuds Office or its web site will gain communication and problem solving skills.

BENCHMARKS: Objective 3.1 will be measured annually utilizing the following criteria:

- The user's survey will rate students' ability to identify and resolve problems.
- Indirect feedback from campus community stakeholders using an informal log/record.

Strategies: To accomplish Objective 3.1, the Ombuds Office will employ the following strategies:

- Engage student in open communication related to their problem.
- Request clarification from students to promote understanding.
- After the visitor's problem is stated and discussed
 - Provide students with information on campus and community resources and/or
 - Recommend problem-solving skills related to their problem.
 - Discuss the pros and cons of available options so that students better understand choices and how certain options and/or behaviors may affect outcomes.
- Students will end their visits with options to consider in an effort to form an action plan to address their concerns.

3.2 OBJECTIVE: The Ombuds Office will provide outreach programs to students throughout their college careers.

BENCHMARKS: Success in Objective 3.2 will be measured annually utilizing the following criteria:

- Number of programs presented during the year.
- Number of program attendees.
- Informal check for student understanding of programs in a question and answer and/or comment session immediately following the presentation.

Strategies: To accomplish 3.2, the Ombuds Office will continue to employ the following strategies:

- Programs offered contain specific outlines and learning objectives: e.g., 1) Services of the Ombudsman, 2) Civility in the Classroom, 3) Managing Conflict and Professional Etiquette.
- Identify and report audiences reached through all programs.

Goal 4. Partnerships: The Ombuds Office will build and maintain strategic partnerships and alliances with community, government, business, industry, and schools in an effort to support the overall Mission of Texas Tech University.

4.1 OBJECTIVE: The Ombuds Office will create a positive learning environment through the use of the universal syllabus template for faculty.

BENCHMARKS: Success in achieving 4.1 will be measured annually or, as appropriate, throughout the year, using the following procedures and criteria:

- Successful universal syllabus template completion.
- Monitoring of requests for syllabus guide and/or questions about the template.

Strategies: The Ombuds Office has and will continue to employ the following strategies in achieving this Objective:

- Periodically update Syllabus Guide.
- Meet TTU Information Technology programming and publishing requirements.