



Annual Report 2018-2019

Tom Lehker, Ombudsman

Office Overview

The Office of the Ombuds, reporting administratively to the Vice President for Student Life, is a place where all students are welcome to talk in confidence about any campus issue, concern, problem or dispute. The Ombuds offers informal dispute resolution services, coaches students on dispute resolution skills, provides resources and makes appropriate referrals, and helps student consider options available to them. The office operates independently from other University entities, has no formal decision-making authority, and is a supplement to existing administrative and formal dispute resolution processes. The Office of the Ombuds is an advocate for fairness and does not take sides in a dispute.

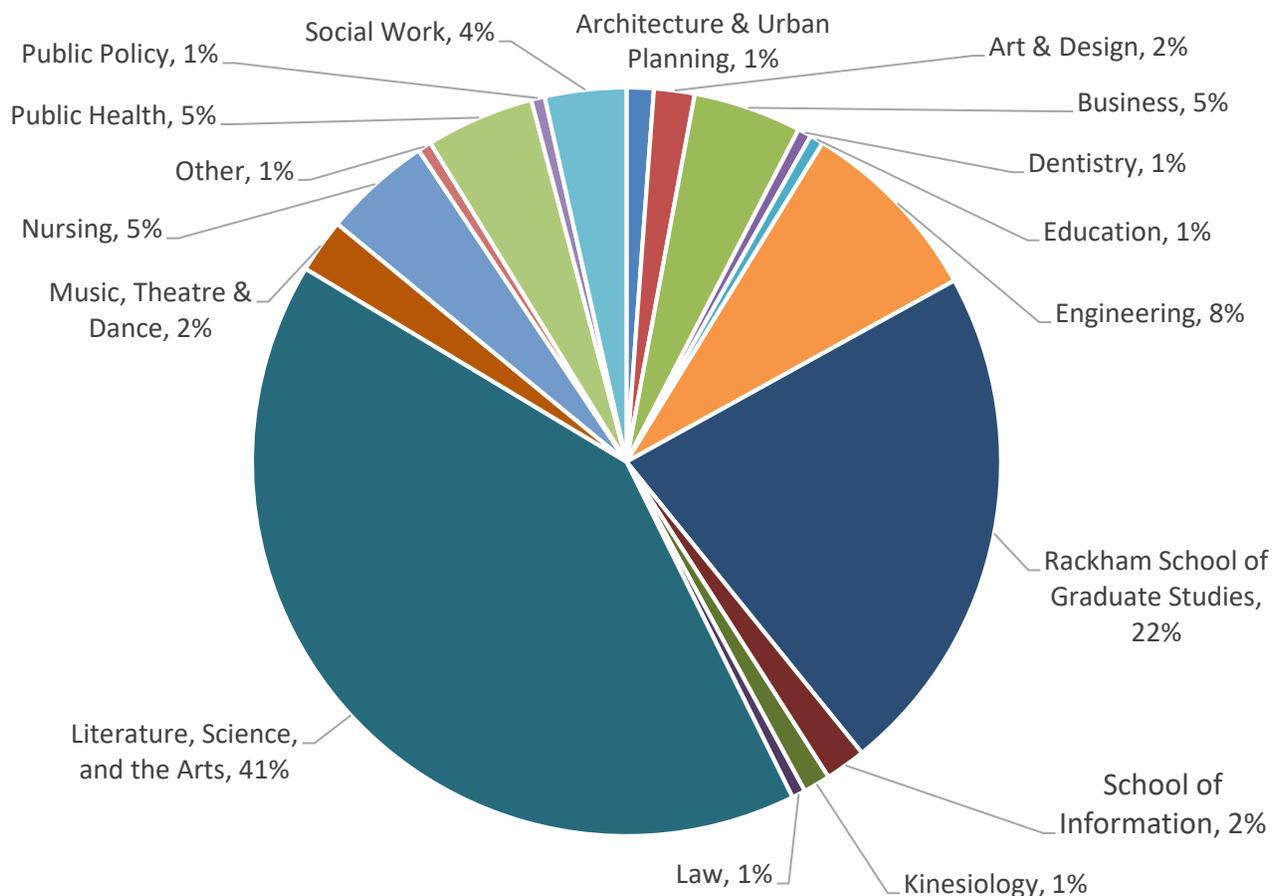
Individual Impact

The Office of the Ombuds offers unique resources to students and the campus based on the principles of confidentiality, impartiality, informality, and independence. Visitors to the Office of the Ombuds typically come from every school and college and represent all academic levels.

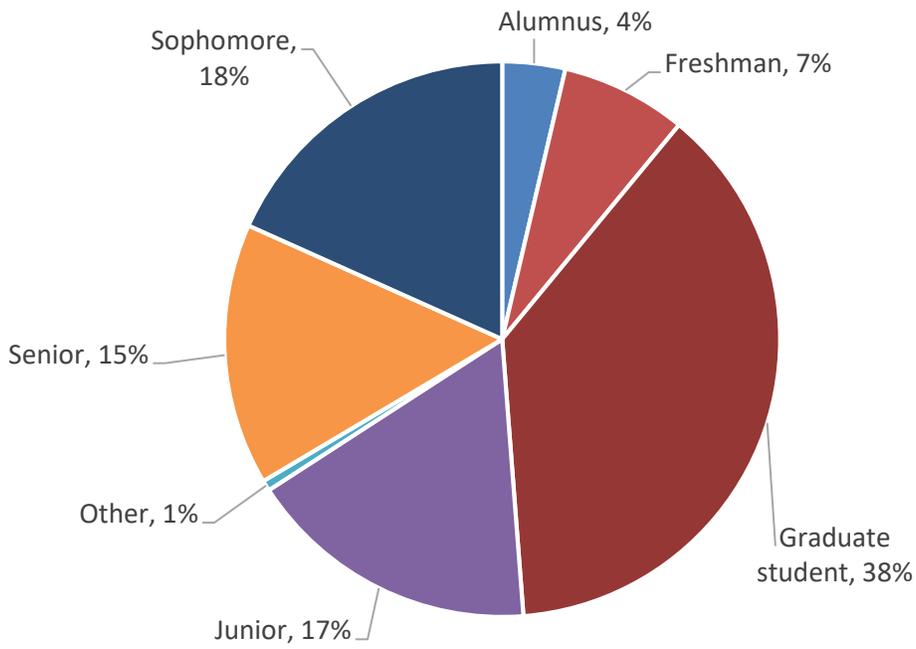
The following data provides an overview of the visitors to the Office of the Ombuds during the 2018-2019 academic year. In addition to this data, the value of the Ombuds function is defined by several themes:

- Ability to help students and others work on developing and maintaining strong relationships as they resolve their differences.
- Assisting students in navigating the campus in ways that can help them be successful.
- Offering a general sense of support, which students may not be receiving from other places, while remaining true to the principles and standards of the Office of the Ombuds.
- Offering basic skills, such as listening and providing empathy to help students progress in problem solving.

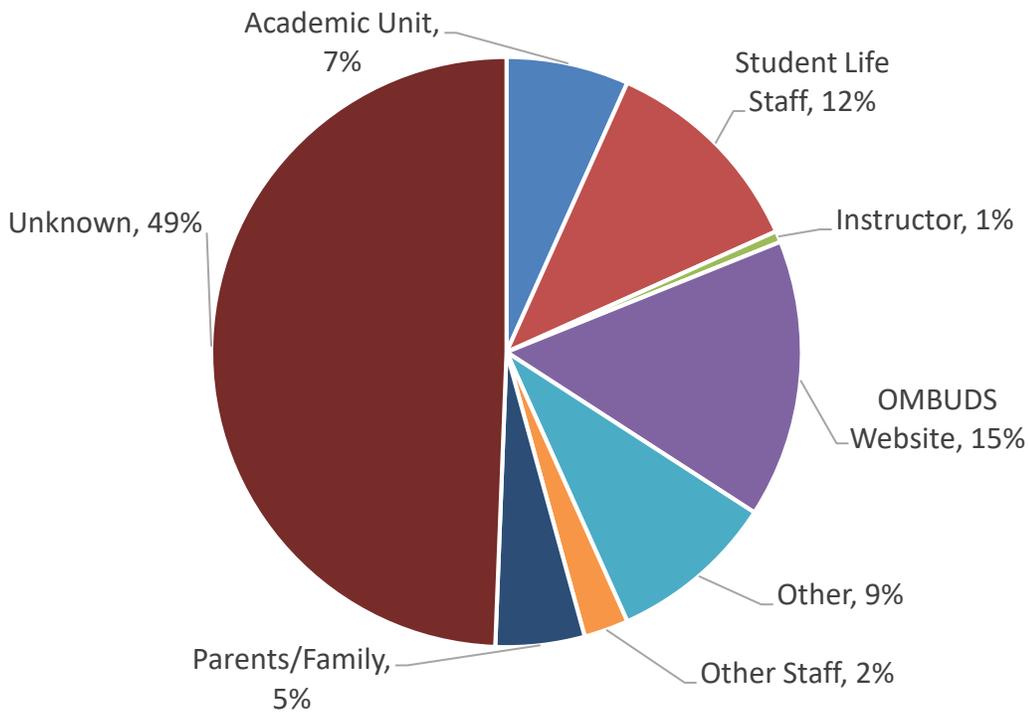
Visitors by School or College



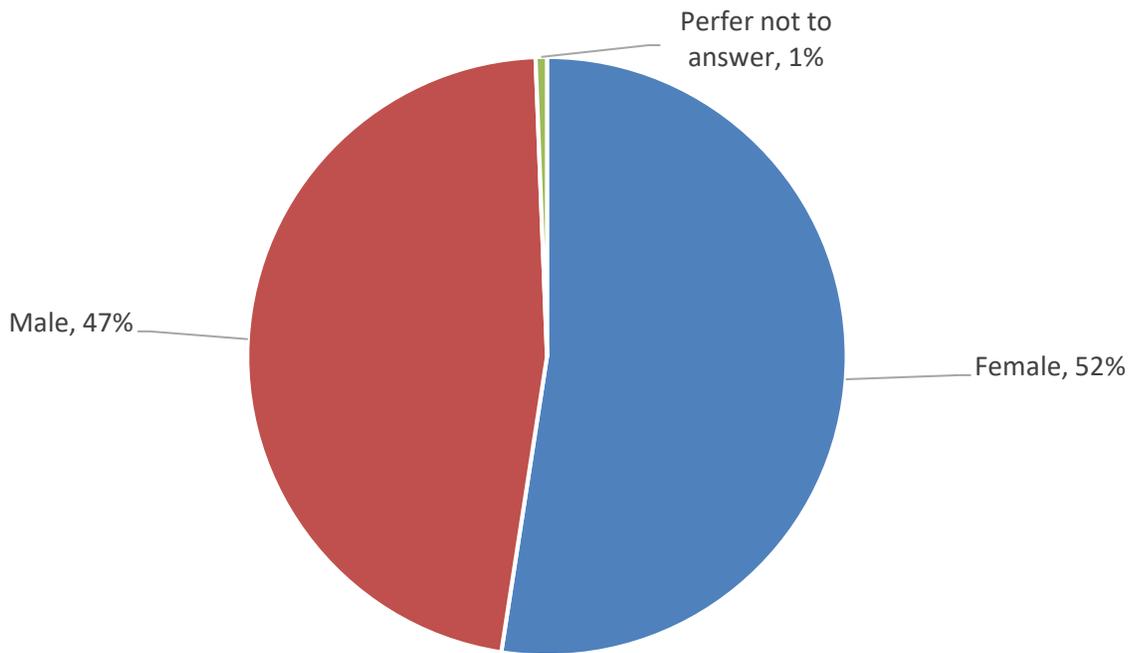
Visitors by University Affiliation



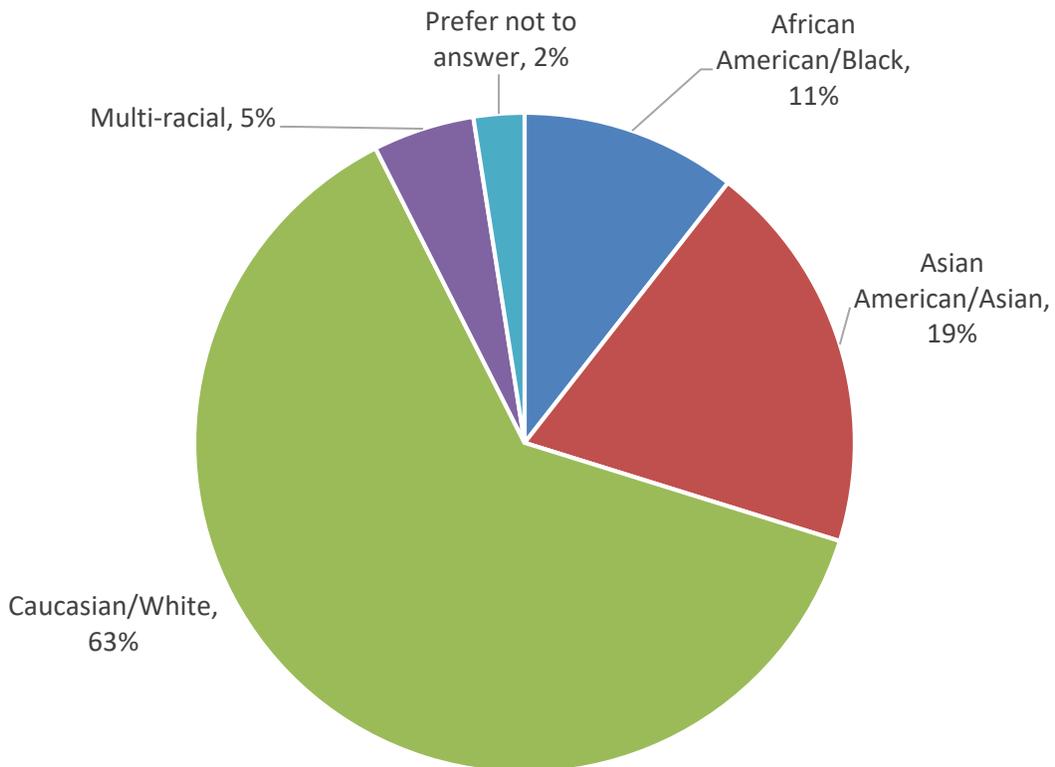
Visitor Referrals From



Visitors by Gender



Visitors by Race



Visitors Concerns: Academic Issues

Academic dishonesty	22
Problem with instructor	13
Grades and grading methods	11
Problems with advisor (graduate student)	8
Progress to degree	8
Enrolling in desired course	7
Academic Requirements	4
Re-Admission	3
Cross-campus transfer	2
Instruction	2
Poor academic advising	2
Probation/dismissal/suspension	2
Transcript, diploma	2
Transfer credits, repeat credits	2
Course content and instruction	1
Exams	1
Voluntary/Medical withdrawal	1

Visitors Concerns: Non-academic Issues

Conflict with supervisor/colleague	8
Past due balance/hold credit	7
Residence halls (undergrad)	7
Sexual	7
Harassment and Discrimination	6
Lack of access to aid resources	6
University Facilities and Services	6
Employment	5
Off-campus	5
Gender	4
Residency	4
Graduate/Family housing	3
Health service/hospital	3
Billing problem	2
Unfair termination	2
Aid not disbursed as expected	1
Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)	1
Computing/info technology	1
Police/traffic/parking	1
Racial	1
Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD)	1

Systems Changes

The Office of the Ombuds believes that disputes and conflicts are “gifts” to the University, aiding the institution in better understanding how systems, policies and procedures can change and improve. The Ombuds promotes positive organizational change by facilitating these improvements for the betterment of students. While the Office of the Ombuds does not have authority to make policy and system changes, it does collaborate with units across campus to talk about potential changes in other areas. Listed below are some themes of systems work in 2018-2019:

- The Ombuds worked with a number of units to revise and revamp problematic student employment policies and procedures.
- The Ombuds has done significant work with a variety of units to address student technology concerns.
- The Ombuds has worked with several academic units to create and/or update policies and procedures to better serve student needs.