



**STUDENT LIFE
OFFICE OF THE OMBUDS**

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Annual Report FY24
July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

Tom Lehker, Ombudsperson

Office Overview

The Office of the Student 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 Ombudsperson offers informal dispute resolution services, coaches students on dispute resolution skills, provides resources, makes appropriate referrals, and helps students 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 Student Ombuds is an advocate for fairness and does not take sides in a dispute.

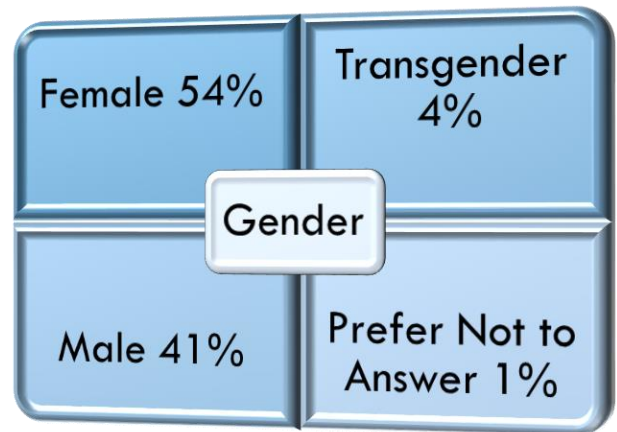
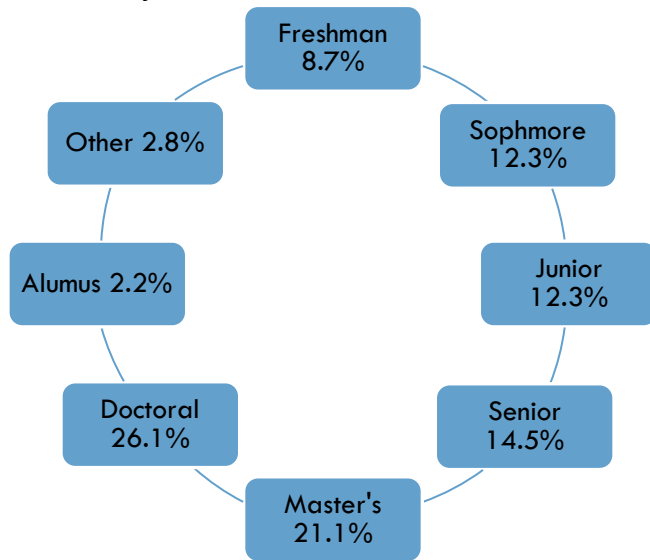
Individual Impact

The Office of the Student Ombuds offers unique resources to students and the Ann Arbor campus based on principles of confidentiality, impartiality, informality, and independence. In the 2023-24 academic year, the Office interacted with 181 unique visitors representing every school and college who brought forward 253 concerns, both academic and non-academic. Some of these interactions are one-off conversations, while others represent significant follow-up.

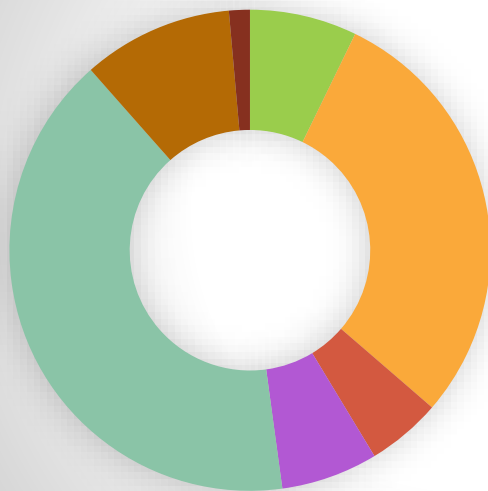
Who Visits the Student Ombuds?

Those requesting a meeting with Ombudsperson are sent an Intake Form that collects visitor data as well as provides insight to their concern(s). Most visitors complete the Intake Form; however, keeping with the confidential nature of the office visitors are not required to submit a form for a meeting to be scheduled. Of the 181 visitors, 138 chose to share their concerns and data with the office. So, who is using the Office of Student Ombuds . . .

University Affiliation



Race / Ethnicity



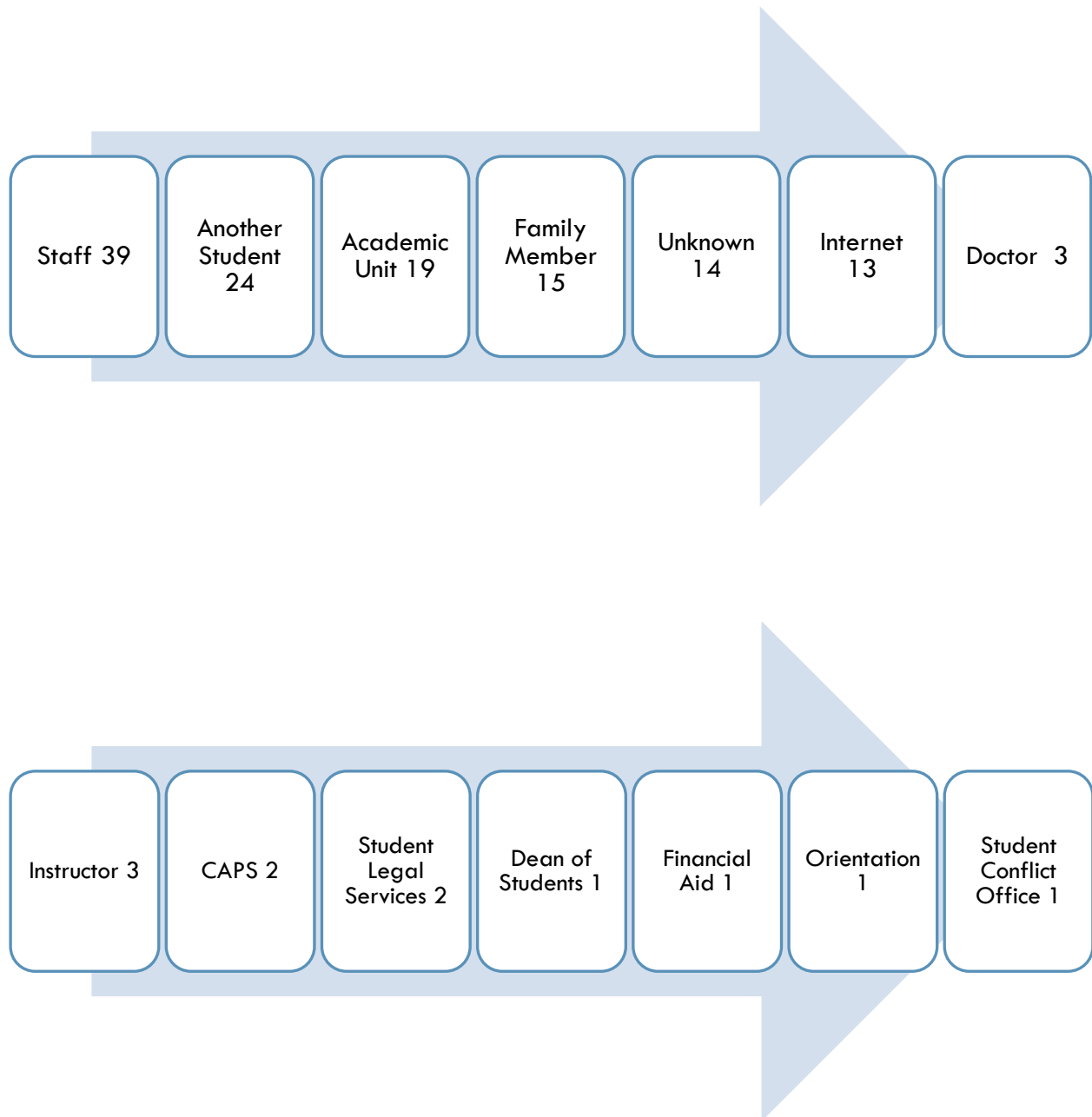
- African American / Black 7.2%
- Asian American / Asian 29.1%
- Hispanic / Lation/a 5%
- Multi-racial 6.5%
- American Indian / Alaskan Native <1%
- Caucasian / White 40.6%
- Native American or Pacific Islander <1%
- Prefer not to answer 10.1%
- Other 1.4%

Visitors by School or College

Art & Design	9%
Business	4.3%
Dentistry	1%
Education	1.4%
Engineering	18.9%
Environment and Sustainability	1%
Information	6.5%
Kinesiology	1%
Law	3.6%
Literature, Science, and the Arts	43%
Medicine	1%
Music, Theatre & Dance	1.4%
Nursing	2.1%
Pharmacy	0%
Public Health	4.3%
Public Policy	1%
Rackham Graduate School	8.7%
Social Work	1.4%

Visitors Referrals

The majority of visitors to the office of the Student Ombuds come by way of referral. We encourage all our campus partners to consider a referral when appropriate.



Visitors Concerns

Students bring a wide variety of concerns to the Office of the Student Ombuds. The most common areas of concern this year included:

- Harassment and Discrimination
- Grads and Grading Methods
- Academic Dishonesty
- Problems with Advisory (Grad Students)
- Progress to Degree
- Problems with Instructor
- Financial Aid Concerns
- Housing Issues

Additional Resources

In addition to this data, the value of the Ombuds 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 achieve success.
- ❖ 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.
- ❖ Offering basic skills, such as listening and providing empathy to help students progress in problem solving.