



# Office of the Ombudsperson

The Office of the Ombudsperson is a resource for any member of The University of Iowa community—including students, staff and faculty—with a problem or concern.

We provide informal conflict resolution and work to promote fair treatment and fair process.

Four principles guide our work: confidentiality, neutrality, informality, and independence.

## **Confidentiality**

We maintain strict confidentiality. The only exceptions to this are:

- If we learn that there is a risk of physical harm to anyone.
- If we are ordered by a court to disclose information.

This makes the Office of the Ombudsperson a safe place to talk about any concerns—even those involving harassment, discrimination, violation of policies or laws, or unethical or criminal behavior.

## **Neutrality**

We are impartial. We do not represent individuals on either side of a conflict, though we do advocate for fairness throughout the university.

## **Informality**

Our services are informal. We try to help visitors resolve conflicts as early as possible and at the lowest possible level.

## **Independence**

We are independent from other university departments.

### *We Can:*

- Serve as a sounding board and provide an opportunity to discuss concerns openly.
- Provide relevant information, including University policies and procedures.
- Assist in developing possible solutions and implementing the chosen course of action.
- Help identify other available options and resources.

### *Services we offer include:*

- Coaching on effective conflict management.
- Referral to other campus resources.
- Informal investigation.
- Shuttle diplomacy, or serving as a go-between to resolve problems.
- Facilitation of group discussions.
- Mediation.
- Workshops in conflict management.

