

OMBUDS DISPUTE RESOLUTION FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS



Ombuds/Dispute Resolution for Graduate Students helps graduate students navigate difficult conversations and manage conflict. By providing a safe space to discuss student concerns, Ombuds/Dispute Resolution for Graduate Students offers confidential, informal, impartial, and independent opportunities to share a myriad of concerns. Examples of concerns include, but are not limited to, conflicts with advisors, department chairs, faculty, staff, fellow grad students, and students in a class where graduate students serve as teaching assistant.

CONTACT THE OMBUDSPERSON

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Ombudsperson for Graduate Studies
Graduate Studies Office
Humanities (Bldg 81), room 137A
(505) 277-1135
abatool@unm.edu

Issues are often best handled with early intervention. Conflicts that are ignored tend to grow and become more difficult to manage. Reach out to our office as soon as you recognize the need for assistance in responding to your concern.

Students may email, phone, or visit the Ombudsperson. To promote confidentiality, refrain from providing specific details about your concern when you email for an appointment or leave a phone message.

DISCLOSURES

During visits to Ombuds/Dispute Resolution for Graduate Students, disclosures made by visitors are not considered notice to the University. The ombudsperson cannot accept formal complaints on behalf of the University.

Scope of Services



CONSULTATION

A meeting with the Ombudsperson is scheduled to discuss concerns, receive referrals, better understand relevant UNM policies, and assess the feasibility of mediation. Our aim is to discuss communication options that can be used to ameliorate conflict. Visitor identities and conversation content are kept confidential. No information regarding your dispute concern will be shared without your permission.

REFERRALS

UNM has a variety of resources to equip and support students. The Ombudsperson may refer you to other departments and officials on campus who are uniquely equipped to assist you.

MEDIATION

With your permission, the Ombudsperson can arrange an informal joint meeting between you and a disagreeing party. During the mediation, the ombudsperson will help facilitate a conversation that will give parties the opportunity to jointly arrive at mutually agreeable outcomes.

The ombudsperson is a third-party, neutral mediator who endeavors to address underlying conflicts/causes and promote possibility thinking. The mediator provides a structure for conversation, and offers impartial attentiveness. While the ombudsperson provides assistance in clarifying and summarizing to promote understanding, talking through possible options and fostering negotiations, disputants are responsible to decide their own outcomes.

AN OMBUDSPERSON:

- Actively listens to your concerns
- Provides an opportunity to discuss your concerns
- Assists you in exploring options
- Facilitates communication among persons in conflict
- Mediates disputes and works to resolve conflicts as early as possible and at the least adversarial level
- Provides information on graduate policies and campus resources
- Refers you to other appropriate offices

AN OMBUDSPERSON DOES NOT:

- Take sides or advocate on behalf of any individual, University unit or cause
- Conduct formal investigations
- Provide legal advice
- Settle or judicially determine disputes
- Issue findings, impose remedies or sanctions
- Make decisions on behalf of the University, its administrators, or the Board of Regents

HALLMARKS OF OMBUDS PRACTICE

We adhere to the principles and standards of practice established by the International Ombudsman Association. The Ombudsperson acts as an informal, impartial, independent party, who does not make decisions for the parties. By facilitating conversation, we foster mutually agreeable outcomes.

Information from all parties is confidential. Except in cases where an individual may be a threat to self or others, permission is required from the student before contacting any other persons. The use of our services is voluntary.