



MWI Ombuds Data Categories

These categories are designed to represent the variety of issues or concerns that visitors most commonly bring to the ombuds. Ombuds should select the category or categories that best represent the prominent issues, concerns, questions, or feedback *as shared by the visitor*. One Matter may contain multiple issues, and due to the complex nature of conflict, this is often the case.

1. Academic/Research	Issues specific to the academic or research environment for students and/or employees in the academic or research space.
2. Comp and Benefits	Issues related to the administration of, type, amount, and fairness of the total compensation package.
3. Departmental/Organizational	Issues stemming from the departmental or organization-wide level and impacting the entire department or organization.
4. Employment	Issues related to the structure, scope, and support of employment within the organization.
5. Policy/Legal/Compliance	Issues that may rise to a formal level - may include accusations, alleged violations of policy/law, questions about policy/process, etc.
6. Interpersonal	Issues related to behaviors between individuals or groups that may not rise to a formal, legal, or policy level.
7. Services/Administrative	Issues related to the services provided within the organization - HR, Compliance, EAP, Student Affairs, Registrar, other support services, etc.
8. Physical Conditions	Issues with or involving the physical space and/or equipment used during engagement within the organization.
9. Work/Life Intersection	Issues not originating from the institution/organization but that are impacting the visitor's experience at the institution/organization.

1. ACADEMIC/RESEARCH

Issues specific to the academic or research environment for students and/or employees in the academic or research space.

1a. Academic Funding/Financial Aid

Fairness of distribution, availability of, and/or process issues related to grants, designated funding, and financial aid.

1b. Academic Honesty/Integrity

Plagiarism, using faulty data, unethical research/writing practices, etc.

1c. Academic Discipline

Fairness, procedural issues etc. in discipline related to academic work.

1d. Authorship

Authorship issues including level of contribution, authorship order, acknowledgment of work, recognition, etc.

1e. Grading

Academic performance in formal or informal evaluation, including fairness, accuracy, process, appeals, etc.

1f. PELP/Leave of Absence

Academic leave - process, impact on academic advancement, etc.

1g. Quality of Teaching

Professor or TA engagement with students, clarity of assignments and expectations, workload, etc.

1h. Research Methods

Ethical concerns, process issues, or disagreements around gathering data, reporting on data, monitoring experiments, etc.

1i. Tenure

Tenure process, security of position or contract.

1j. Other-Academic/Research

Academic/research issues not covered elsewhere.

2. COMP/BENEFITS

Issues related to the administration of, type, amount, and fairness of the total compensation package.

2a. Benefits

Fairness, adequacy, availability, and/or administrative process related to medical, dental, life, vacation/sick, education, worker's compensation insurance, etc.

2b. Compensation

Rate of pay, salary amount, job salary classification/level, and fairness of pay.

2c. Payroll

Administration of pay.

2d. Retirement

Eligibility, calculation of amount, and/or administrative process related to retirement/pension benefits.

2e. Other-Comp and Benefits

Comp and Benefit issues not covered elsewhere.

3. DEPARTMENT/ORGANIZATIONAL

Issues stemming from the departmental or organization-wide level and impacting the entire department or organization.

3a. Budget/Financial

Budget allocation, cuts, appropriate financial support to meet needs, etc.

3b. Change Management

Making, responding or adapting to organizational changes, and/or the quality of leadership in facilitating organizational change.

3c. Cross-Department Relationships

Interdepartmental conflict related to departmental jurisdiction, scope of work, relative resource allocations, or organizational structure, including complex or split reporting structures in interdisciplinary teams.

3d. Org/Leadership Communication

Content, style, timing, amount, quality, and impact of communication by org/departmental leadership about strategic issues.

3e. Re-Organization/Layoffs

Change in organizational hierarchy or structure including issues with layoffs.

3f. Staffing

Adequacy or quality of staffing including understaffing, lack of skill in staff required for the role, etc.

3g. Strategic/Mission Related

Principles, decisions and actions related to where and how the organization is moving.

3h. Values/Ethics/Culture

Beliefs, attitudes, and practices that are tolerated and/or encouraged.

3i. Other- Dept/Org

Dept/Org issues not covered elsewhere.

4. EMPLOYMENT

Issues related to the structure, scope, and support of employment within the organization.

4a. Assignments/Schedules

Fairness and appropriateness of tasks, scheduling, shifts, etc.

4b. Career Progression/Development

Opportunities for advancement, mentorship, career ladder, professional development opportunities, promotions, etc.

4c. Disciplinary Action

Implementation, clarity of process and/or fairness of formal or informal disciplinary action related to employee performance.

4d. Hiring Process

Recruitment and selection processes, criteria and decision making.

4e. Job Classification/Description

Appropriateness of level and scope of work, alignment of actual work with written job description.

4f. Insubordination

Refusal to do what is asked by supervisor.

4g. Leave of Absence

Impact of, response to, and/or process issues related to employment leaves of absence - medical, parental, FMLA, etc.

4h. Onboarding

Equipping a new employee with what they need to succeed - effectiveness of the process, sharing of information, support, access, etc.

4i. Performance Evaluation

Accuracy, process, method, and/or frequency of informal/formal performance evaluation.

4j. Remote/Flex Work

Remote work agreements, fairness of implementation, impacts of remote/in-person work.

4k. Reporting Structure

Clarity about reporting lines, alignment of work/role and reporting lines.

4l. Resignation

Concerns about whether or how to voluntarily terminate employment or how such a decision might be communicated appropriately.

4m. Role Clarity

Scope of role, overlap with others' roles, duties different than job description, etc.

4n. Supervisory Effectiveness

Effectiveness of direct managers/supervisors, including communication, transparency, addressing employee and departmental issues, availability, responsiveness, trust, etc.

4o. Workload

Volume and distribution of work.

4p. Other-Employment

Employment issues not covered elsewhere.

5. POLICY/LEGAL/COMPLIANCE

Issues that may rise to a formal level - may include accusations, alleged violations of policy/law, questions about policy/process, etc.

5a. Accessibility

Physical or virtual barriers for those with disabilities.

5b. Application of Policy/Procedure

Fairness, clarity, communication, and process issues related to how a policy is applied to a given situation.

5c. Business and Financial Practices

Actions that abuse or waste organizational finances, facilities or equipment

5d. Clarity of Policy/Procedure

Wording, structure, purpose, scope, timeline, etc.

5e. Disability Accommodation

The administration, availability, process, and/or implementation of formal accommodations for those with disabilities.

5f. Discrimination

Different treatment compared with others or exclusion from some benefit based on a protected class.

5g. Harassment

Unwelcome physical, verbal, written, e-mail, audio, video psychological or sexual conduct based on a protected class that creates a hostile or intimidating environment.

5h. Illegal/Criminal Activity

Threats or crimes planned, observed, or experienced.

5i. Intellectual Property Rights

Copyright, patent infringement, etc.

5j. Physical Violence

Actual or threats of bodily harm to another.

5k. Privacy and Security of Information

Release or access to individual or organizational private or confidential information.

5l. Property Damage

Personal or organizational property damage, liabilities.

5m. Retaliation

Punitive treatment in response to previous actions or comments, including informal or formal reporting.

5n. Violation of Policy

Involving an alleged or actual violation of policy.

5o. Other- Policy/Legal Compliance

Formal/Legal/Compliance issues not covered elsewhere.

6. INTERPERSONAL

Issues related to behaviors between individuals or groups that may not rise to a formal, legal, or policy level.

6a. Abrasive Behavior/Bullying

Abrasive, threatening, and/or coercive behaviors such as yelling, aggressive behavior, actively ignoring and excluding, etc.

6b. Bias/Differential Treatment

Treating an individual or group differently, showing bias or favoritism not based on a protected class.

6c. Communication

Quality and/or quantity of communication between individuals.

6d. Feedback

Quality, frequency, timing and/or method of feedback and response to feedback.

6e. Microaggression

Comment or action that expresses a prejudiced attitude toward a member of a marginalized group.

6f. Micromanagement

Excessive and intrusive control over someone else's work.

6g. Use of Power

Misuse or abuse of power provided by individual's position.

6h. Priorities, Values, Beliefs

Differences about what should be considered important and how that impacts behavior - includes issues stemming from differences such as generational, political, cultural, religious, etc.

6i. Reputation

Rumors, gossip, negative publicity, incorrect or damaging information being shared about professional or personal matters.

6j. Respect/Civility

Demonstrations of inappropriate regard for people such as not listening, interrupting, rudeness, crudeness, etc.

6k Psychological Safety

Experience of not being able to show up authentically, freely share input, and make/admit to mistakes.

6l. Other - Interpersonal

Interpersonal issues not covered elsewhere.

7. SERVICES/ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

Issues related to the services provided within the organization - HR, Compliance, EAP, Student Affairs, Registrar, other support services, etc.

7a. Quality of Services

How well services were provided by administrative and operational units such as HR, benefits, IT, facilities, etc., including availability, accuracy or thoroughness of information, and competence of personnel or service representatives.

7b. Responsiveness/Timeliness

Time involved in getting an initial or complete response from an organizational resource.

7c. Other-Services/Administrative

Services/Administrative related issues not covered elsewhere.

8. PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

Issues with or involving the physical space and/or equipment used during engagement within the organization.

8a. Cleanliness

Sanitary conditions and/or tidiness, of designated areas such as workspaces, living quarters, community areas, etc.

8b. Physical Safety

Safety of buildings, furniture or equipment (does not include concerns about physical safety due to threats from a person).

8c. Security

Physical security issues such as adequate lighting in parking lots, metal detectors, guards, limited access to the building by outsiders, locks, etc.

8d. Space Allocation

Amount, quality, adequacy or fairness of space allocation.

8e. Supplies/Equipment

Type, functionality, availability, and/or access to necessary supplies and equipment to safely and effectively complete duties.

8f. Other-Working Conditions

Physical condition-related issues not covered elsewhere.

9. WORK/LIFE BALANCE

Issues not originating from the institution/organization but that are impacting the visitor's experience at the institution/organization.

9a. Work/Life Balance

Balancing work with commitments at home, such as family, personal life, health, etc.

9b. Local/World Events

War, shootings, uprisings, political activity, etc.

9c. Mental Health

Diagnosed or undiagnosed mental health condition of the visitor or others involved in the issue.

9d. Personal Life Stress

Death or illness of loved one, financial concerns, moving, stress at home, etc.

9e. Physical Health

Injury or illness not originating from the organizational environment.

9f. Other - Work/Life Intersection

Work/life intersection issues not covered elsewhere.

RELATED IDENTITY/DIMENSION OF EXPERIENCE

This field helps modify the concern categories where there is an added component related to a particular experience or identity. For example, if there was a racial discrimination issue, you would select "5f. Discrimination" as the category and "Race/Ethnicity/Nation of Origin" as the modifier. Or if there were generational or cultural differences, you would select "6i. Priorities/Values/Beliefs" as the category and "Age/Generation" or "Culture/Style" as the modifier.

- Ability
- Age/Generation
- Gender
- Culture/Style
- Medical Status
- Parental Status
- Political Affiliation
- Race/Ethnicity/Nation of Origin
- Religion
- Sexuality
- Other