

The University of Iowa Office of the Ombudsperson

JULY 2024–JUNE 2025

FY25 Annual Report

INCLUDING DATA FROM FY23 AND FY24

**No problem too big or small.
Let's talk!**

Chanelle Reese, MS, NCPM

IAF Endorsed™ Facilitator

Candidate for CO-OP®

University Ombudsperson

Meenakshi Gigi Durham, PhD

Faculty Ombudsperson

Corey P. Pass, MS, NCPM

Senior Assistant Ombudsperson

IOWA

Office of the
Ombudsperson

Ombudspersons

Chanelle Reese, MS, NCPM



Chanelle Reese, MS, NCPM, IAF Endorsed™ Facilitator, Candidate for CO-OP®, was appointed as the full-time University Ombudsperson and began on June 21, 2022. Chanelle previously served as the Associate Ombudsperson at the University of California, Merced, and the Senior Associate in the Office of the Corporate Ombuds for the American Red Cross. She specializes in conflict analysis and data reporting in conflict management and dispute resolution areas. She is trained in negotiation, mediation, conciliation, facilitation, and arbitration and utilizes the tools from each alternative dispute resolution method to effectively provide informal conflict management services to the campus community. Chanelle holds a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Old Dominion University and a Master of Science in Negotiation and Conflict Management from the University of Baltimore. She is a member of the International Ombuds Association, has completed the Foundations of an Organizational Ombuds Practice training, is an IOA Foundations Instructor, and was credentialed by the International Ombuds Association's Board of Certification for Certified Organizational Ombuds Practitioners as a Candidate for Certified Organizational Ombuds Practitioner (CO-OP®). Chanelle is also 3Practice Circle Leader, an IAF Endorsed™ Facilitator, and a Nationally Certified Professional in Mediation. In addition, she is a member of the Association of Conflict Resolution, American Bar Association Dispute Resolution Section, International Association of Facilitators, California Caucus of College and University Ombuds, and OmbudsBOND.

Meenakshi Gigi Durham, PhD



Meenakshi Gigi Durham, PhD, was appointed as the half-time faculty University Ombudsperson on July 1, 2021. She is a Professor and Collegiate Scholar in the University of Iowa's School of Journalism and Mass Communication. She holds affiliate appointments in the Department of Gender, Women's and Sexuality Studies and the Department of English. Her research focuses on representations of gender and sexuality in the media, with an emphasis on the politics of the body, intersectional identities, and youth cultures. Her articles have appeared in leading peer-reviewed communication journals, and she serves on the editorial boards of many journals, as well, including *Feminist Media Studies* and *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, among others.

She is the author of the books *MeToo: The Impact of Rape Culture in the Media* (2021), *Technosex* (2016) and *The Lolita Effect* (2008), and the co-editor of *Media and Cultural Studies: KeyWorks* (2012). She is a former journalist with magazine and news reporting experience in the U.S. and overseas, including with the *Times of India*, *Science Today*, and the *Pensacola News Journal*. She is the recipient of the 2014 Teresa Award for the Advancement of Feminist Scholarship from the International Communication Association. She has also received major honors from the University of Iowa, including the Michael J. Brody Award for Faculty Excellence in Service (2023), the May Brodbeck Distinguished Achievement Award for Faculty (2019), and the President and Provost Award for Teaching Excellence (2017).

Corey P. Pass, MS, NCPM



Corey P. Pass, MS, NCPM, is the full-time Senior Assistant Ombudsperson; he joined the office on October 12, 2023. Corey's 35 years of law enforcement in Colorado started at the University of Northern Colorado. Later, he worked his way up the ranks at the Estes Park Police Department and recently retired as a police captain. Corey brings strong experience in conflict resolution and restorative justice. He holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and a Master of Science degree in organizational leadership with a focus in change management. Corey is also a graduate of Northwestern University's School of Police Staff and Command. He has worked with a variety of non-profit organizations throughout his career and most recently served as the board chair for the Estes Valley Crisis Advocates and as president of the local Salvation Army. Corey is a member of the International Ombuds Association, the American Bar Association Dispute Resolution Section, and the Association for Conflict Resolution. He is a Nationally Certified Professional Mediator and a certified leader in 3 Practice Circles.

The Ombuds Office serves the UI community by providing **confidential, impartial, informal, and independent** problem solving and conflict resolution services.

This year, **455** new visitor appointments were conducted. It is important to note that that an increase or decrease in the number of contacts does not necessarily indicate growing or reduced concerns in the organization.

Our Code of Ethics

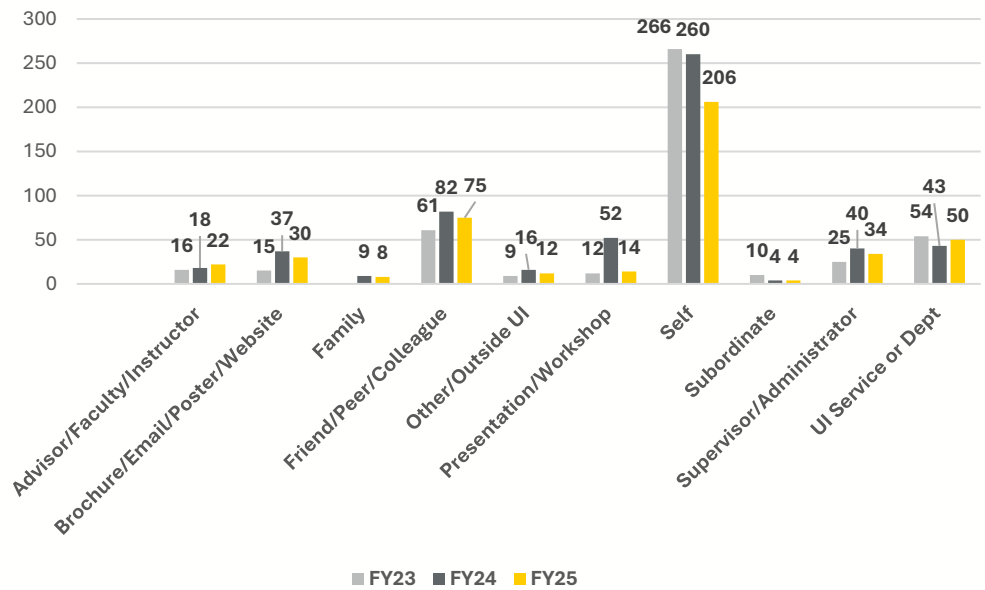
Confidentiality	Impartiality	Informality	Independence
The ombudspersons will not discuss a visitor's concerns with anyone on or off campus without his/her permission. The only exceptions to this are: • If we learn that there is a risk of physical harm to anyone. • If we are ordered by a court or required by law to disclose information.	The Ombuds Office is impartial and does not represent individuals on either side of a conflict, though the office does advocate for fairness throughout the university. The office tries to help everyone involved in a situation.	The office tries to help visitors resolve conflicts as early as possible and at the lowest possible level. The office does NOT: • Maintain formal written records. • Conduct formal investigations. • Play any role in formal hearing, grievance, complaint, appeal, or legal proceedings.	The Office of the Ombudsperson is independent from other university departments. The office reports to the President but does not provide information on individual visitors' cases to the President.



"I value the confidentiality of the Ombuds office. If I had to reach out to another resource, I would not have been able to describe the issue with as much transparency and, thus, might not have found the best solution". ~Anonymous Visitor

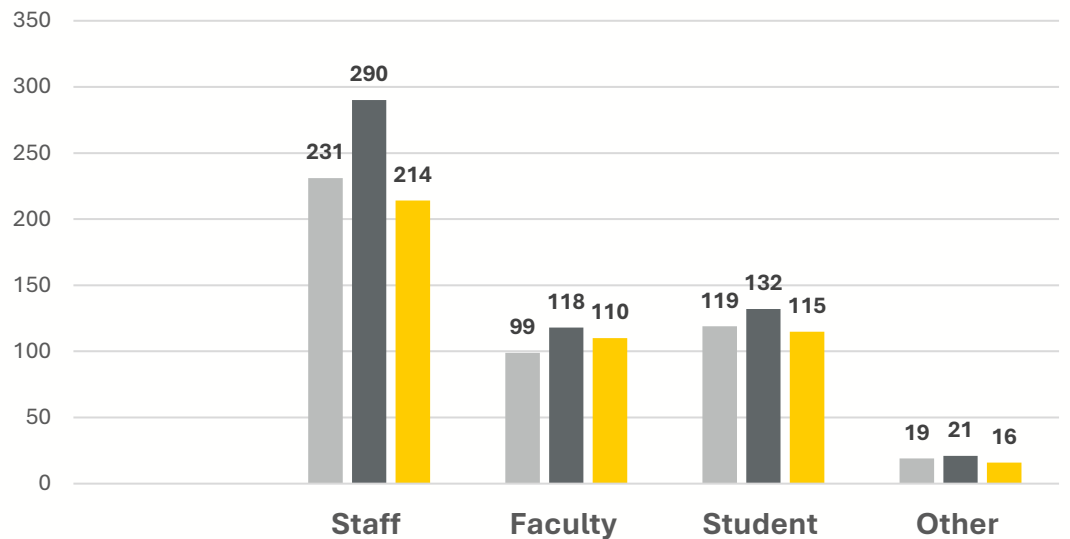
Referrals

Of the **455** new visitors this fiscal year, **45%** sought out assistance from the Office of the Ombudsperson on their own based on prior experience and/or prior knowledge of the office itself.



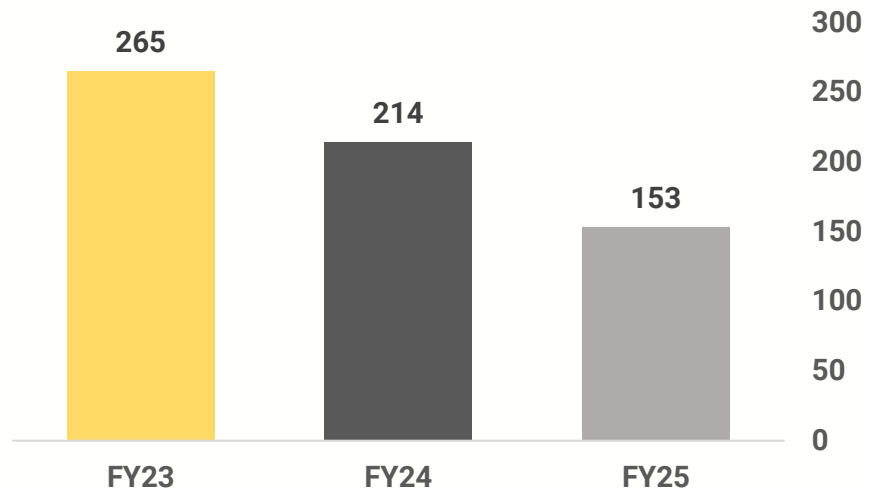
Visitor Position

Professional & Scientific Staff accounted for **42%** of the total visitors assisted this fiscal year.



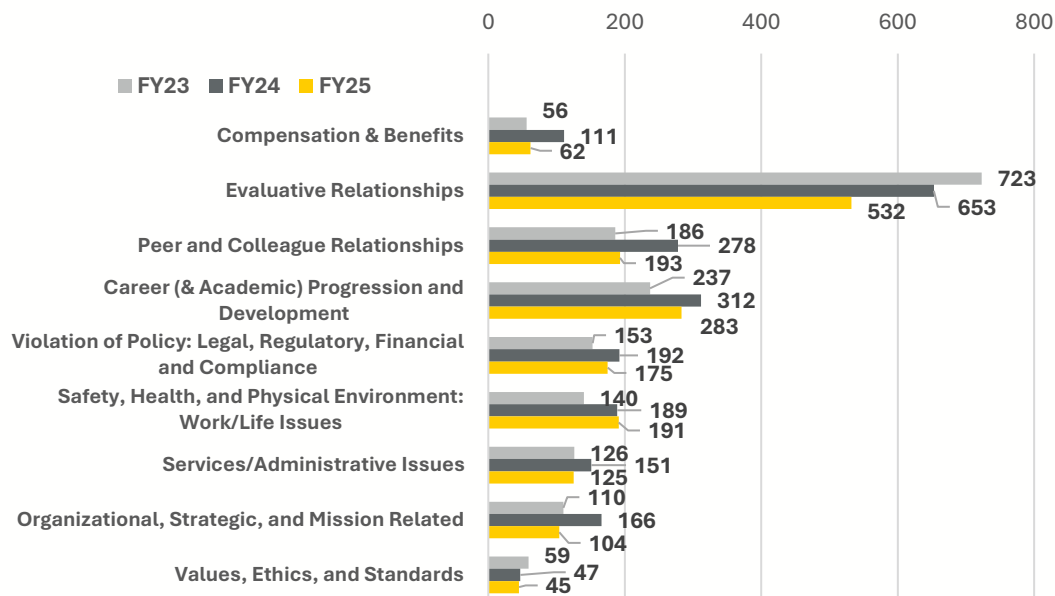
Revisits

Of the total new visitor appointments this fiscal year, **34%** of visitors returned to the office to discuss the initial concern in a follow-up capacity.



Concerns

A total of **1,710** concerns were captured this fiscal year. This total reflects individual contacts to the office raising multiple concerns and a restriction of **four** allowable selections per visitor. It is important to note that the Office of the Ombudsperson tracks visitor concerns using an adapted version of the IOA Uniform Reporting Categories.



Top Sub Concerns

The top sub concerns captured by the Ombuds office during visitor appointments each fiscal year are:

Communication – Evaluative (**FY23**)-**18%**
 Performance Appraisal/Grading (**FY24**)-**15%**
 Work Related Stress/Work-Life Balance (**FY25**)-**16%**

FY23	FY24	FY25
Communication-Evaluative	Performance Appraisal/Grading	Work Related Stress/Work-Life Balance
Performance Appraisal/Grading	Work Related Stress/Work-Life Balance	Communication-Evaluative
Respect/Treatment-Evaluative	Compensation	Health Concerns
Supervisory Effectiveness	Communication-Evaluative	Administrative Decisions & Interpretation/Application of Rules
Administrative Decisions & Interpretation/Application of Rules	Supervisory Effectiveness	Assignments/Schedules

Top Sub Concerns by Position

The top **two** sub concerns captured by the Ombuds office during visitor appointments this fiscal year are:

Faculty

Job/University/Program/Selection/Admission/Recruitment Processes-**15%**
 Communication-Evaluative-**15%**

Staff

Work Related Stress/Work-Life Balance-**19%**
 Communication-Evaluative-**16%**

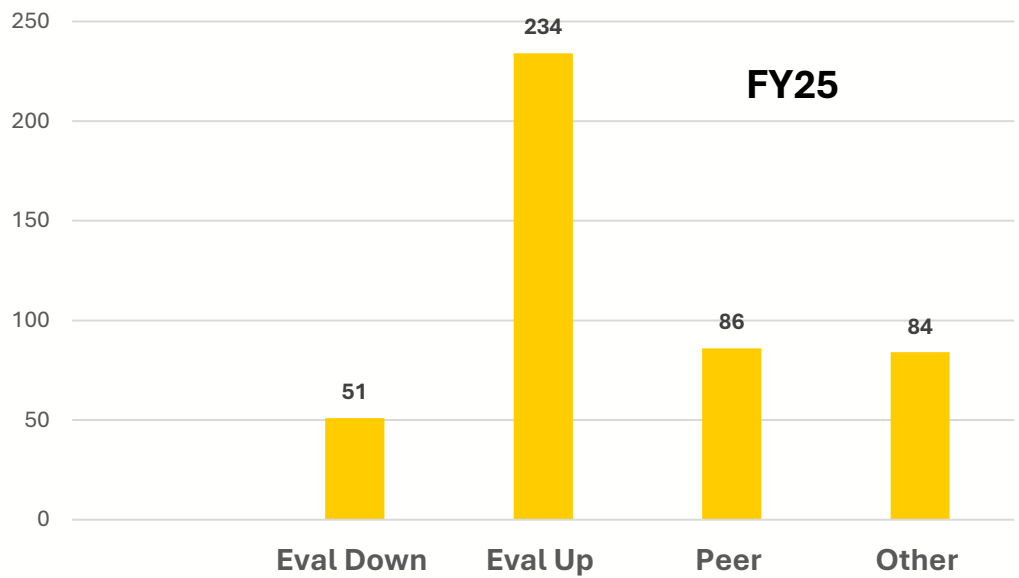
Students

Performance Appraisal/Grading-**17%**
 Program Requirements-**17%**

	FY23	FY24	FY25
FACULTY	Consultation Communication-Evaluative	Consultation Communication-Evaluative	Job/University/Program/Selection/Admission/Recruitment Processes Communication-Evaluative
STAFF	Communication-Evaluative Supervisory Effectiveness	Compensation Work Related Stress/Work-Life Balance	Work Related Stress/Work-Life Balance Communication-Evaluative
STUDENTS	Program Requirements Respect/Treatment-Evaluative	Performance Appraisal/Grading Health Concerns	Performance Appraisal/Grading Program Requirements

Relationship Type

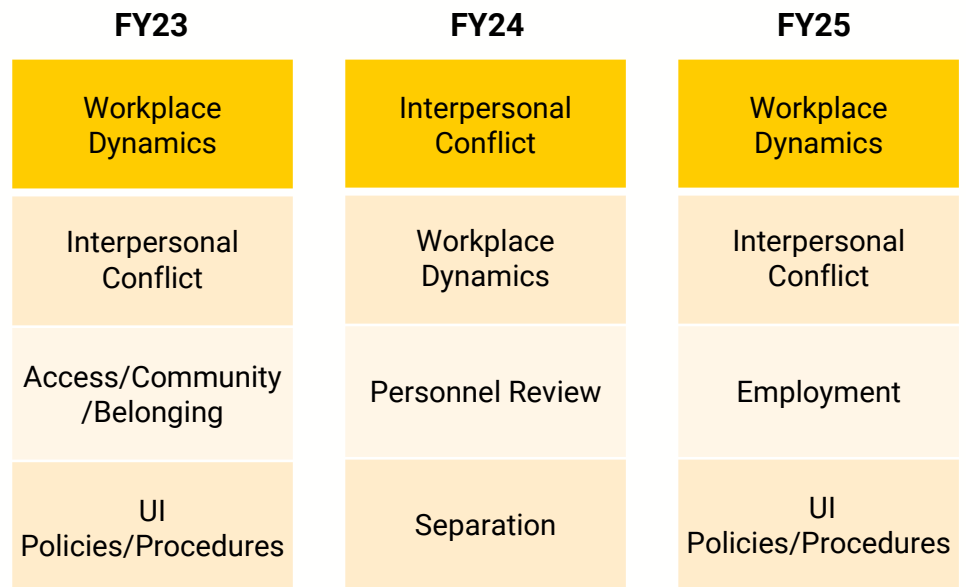
51% of visitors had concerns about a superior in an evaluative relationship this fiscal year. These can range from something direct and straightforward, such as supervisor ineffectiveness, to something more nuanced and diplomatic, such as communication style.



Themes

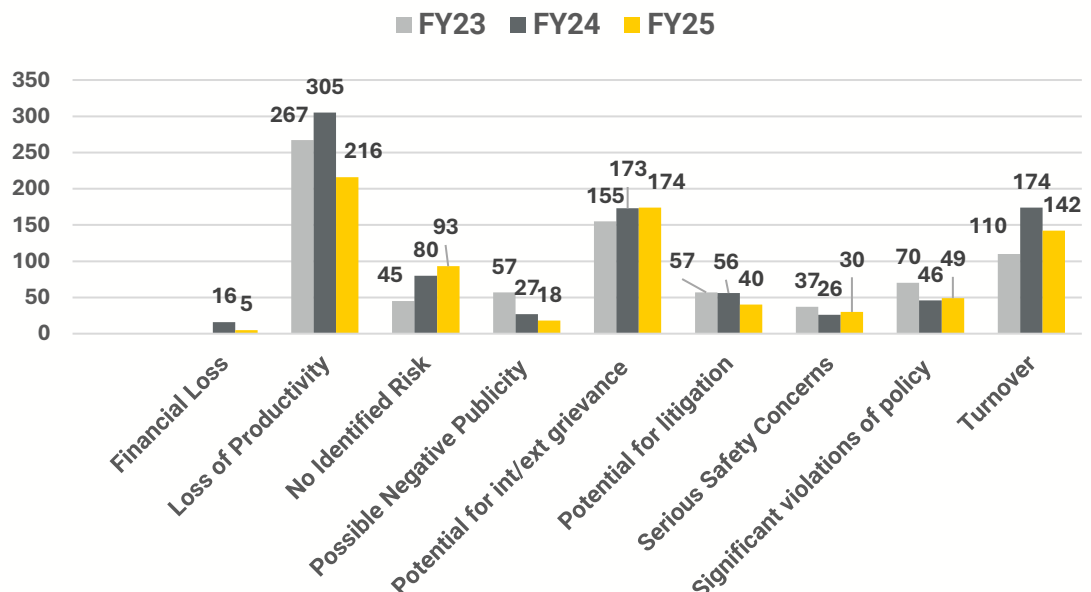
The top themes captured by the Ombuds office during visitor appointments this fiscal year are:

Workplace Dynamics-18%
Interpersonal Conflict-15%
Employment-8%
UI Policies/Procedures-8%



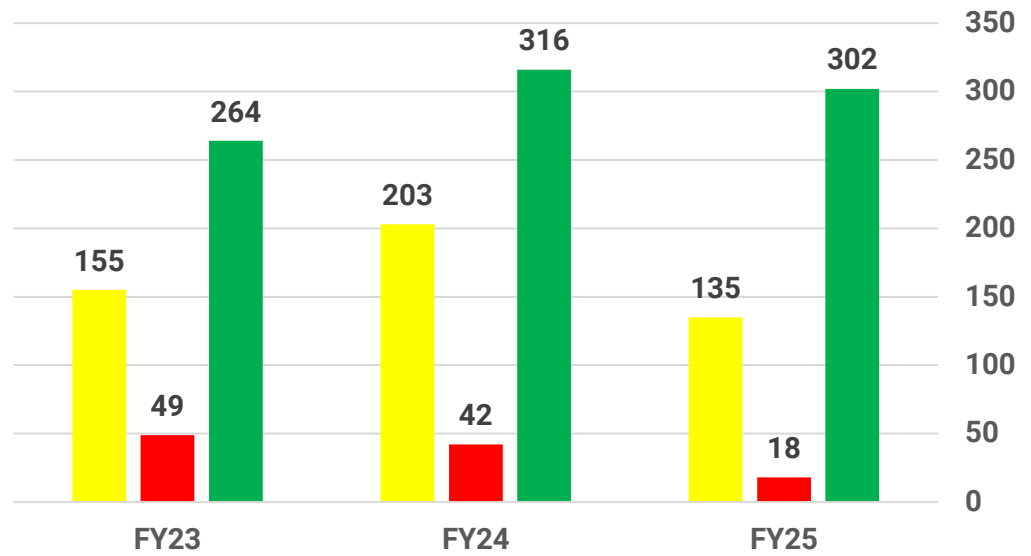
Risk Categories

Loss of Productivity is a risk that accounted for 28% of the visitor appointments this fiscal year. As such, it remains the largest risk assessment to campus. It is important to note that a visitor may have multiple risks or none at all.



Case Complexity

Green cases are fairly straightforward and mostly interpersonal conflicts involving fewer than four people. **Yellow** cases typically have more people involved with multiple issues and increasingly serious consequences. **Red** cases are highly complex with high stakes, often lasting several months or impacting multiple parts of the organization.



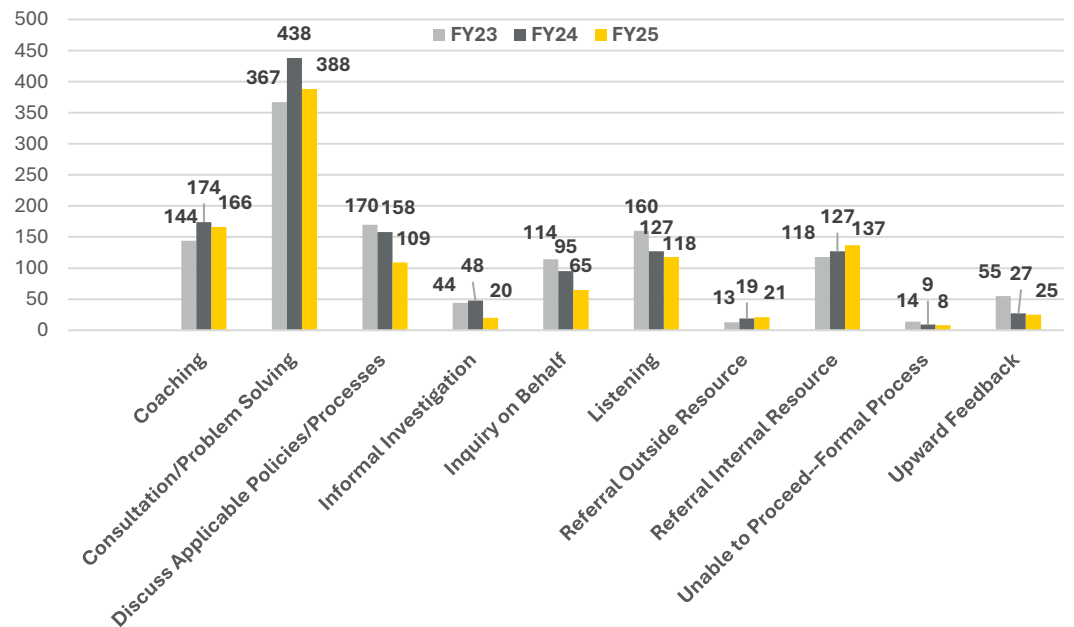
Ombudsperson Actions

The top actions by the Ombuds office this fiscal year consisted of:

Consultation/Problem Solving-**37%**

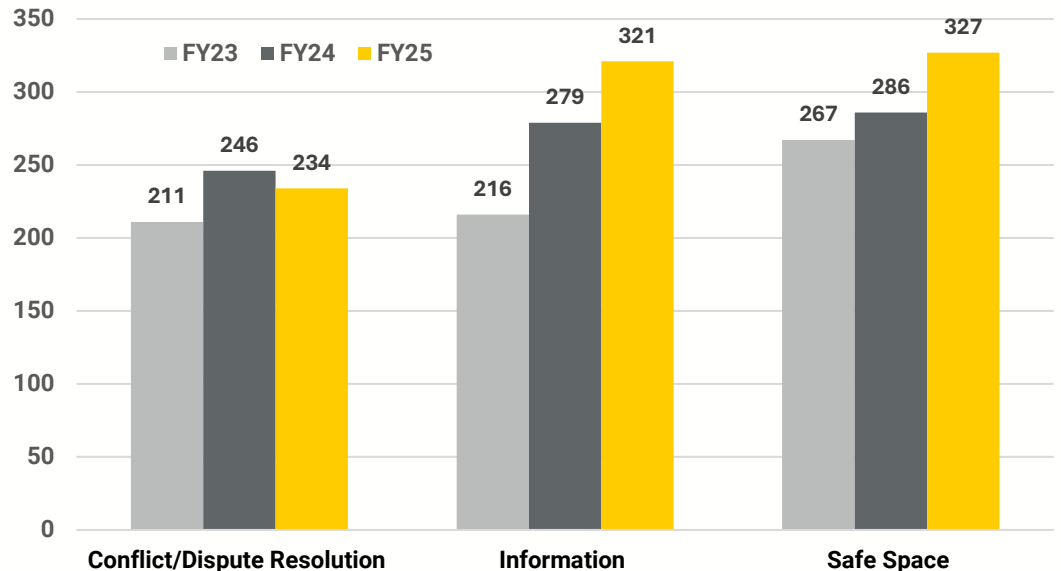
Coaching-**16%**

Referral to Resource-**13%**



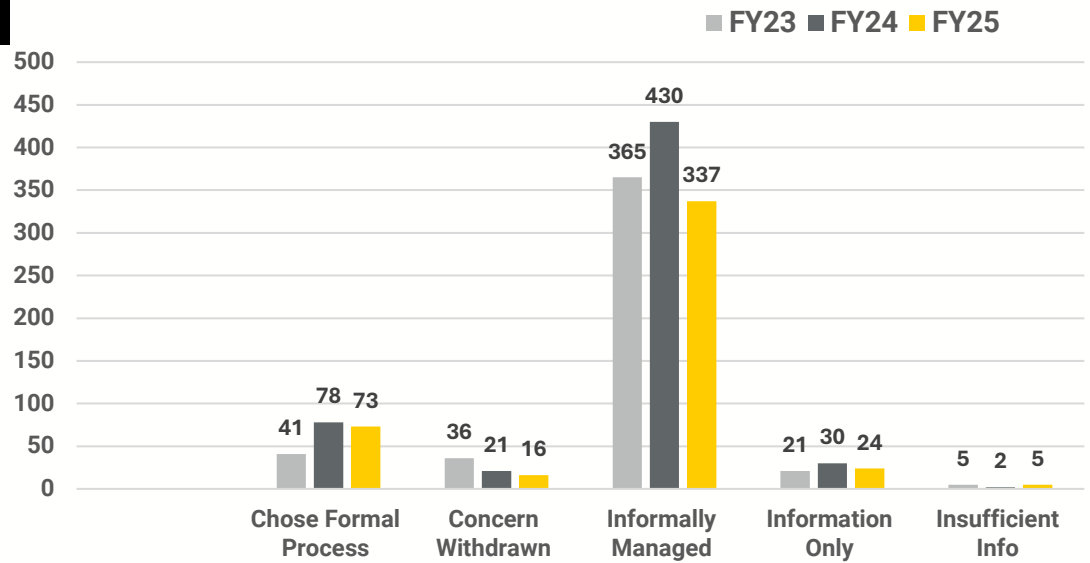
Services Provided

This fiscal year, **37%** of **visitors** came to the office to have a safe space to share concerns. In contrast, **36%** of **visitors** were seeking information and **27%** were seeking some form of conflict and/or dispute resolution services. It is important to note that a focus of a visitor appointment may encompass **one, two or all three** of the overall services listed.



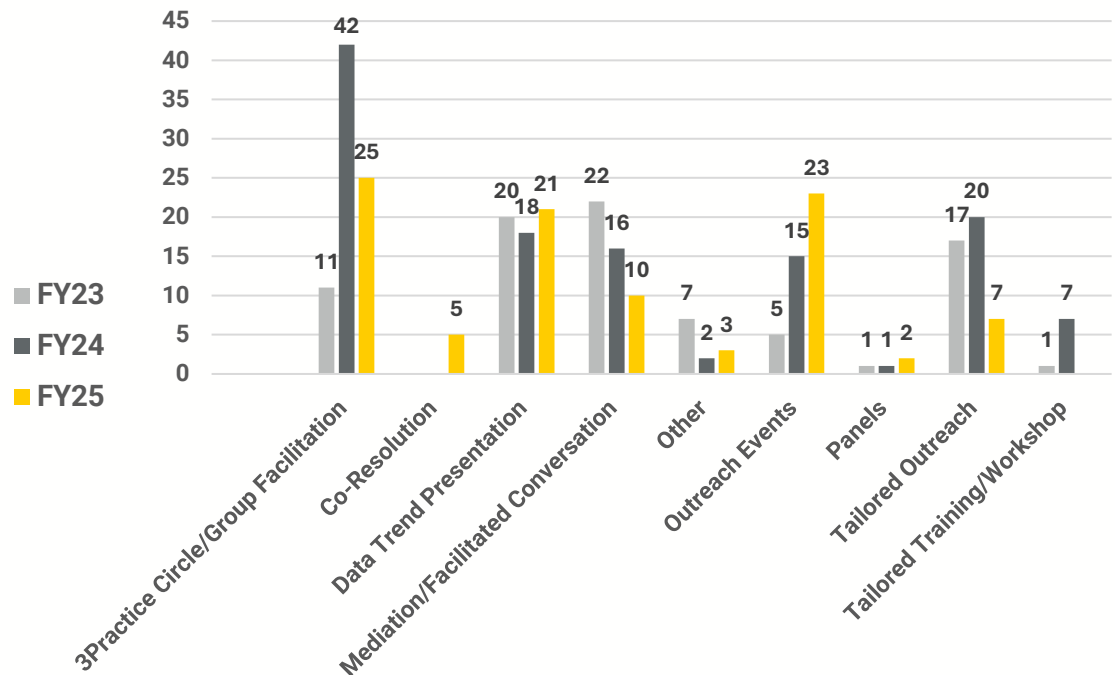
Outcomes

Of the **455** new visitor appointments conducted this fiscal year, **74%** of them were managed informally with the help of an Ombudsperson in some capacity.



Additional Services

Over the last **three** fiscal years, Ombudspersons reached approximately **7,180** individuals through the **301** Additional Services conducted by the Office of the Ombudsperson.



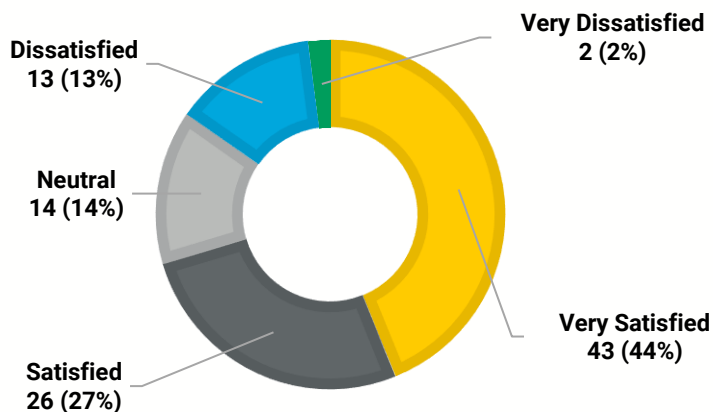
"I'm thrilled that the University of Iowa and the President's Office make the Ombudsperson office available and possible. It is an indispensable resource, and I greatly appreciate and value it". ~Anonymous Visitor

FY25 Satisfaction Survey Results

I would rate my overall satisfaction with the Office of the Ombudsperson as:

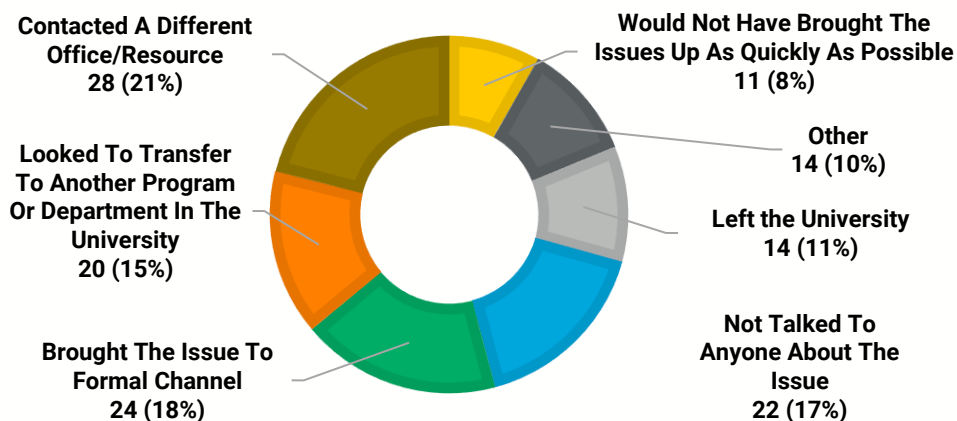
71% of visitors who responded are satisfied with the office.

N=98



If I had not contacted the Office of the Ombudsperson, I would have (Select all that apply):

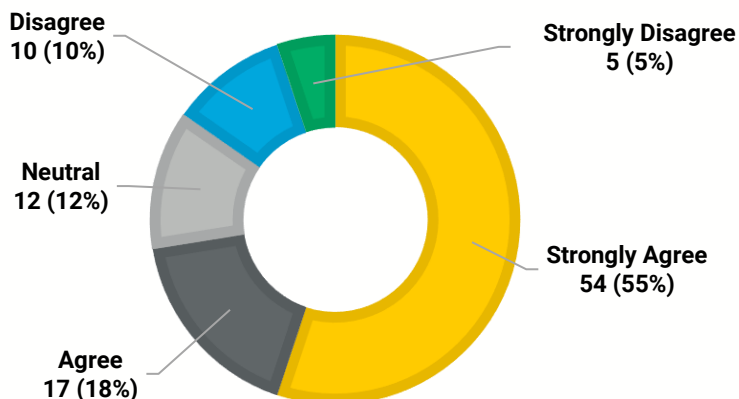
N=133



If the need arose in the future, I would contact the Office of the Ombudsperson for help.

73% of visitors who responded agreed they would contact the office for help in the future.

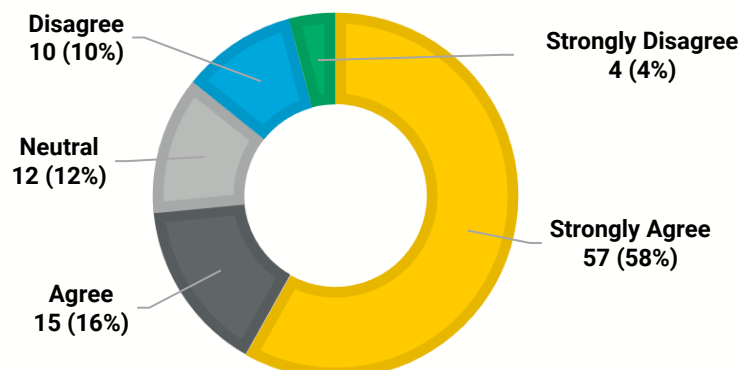
N=98



I would refer others to the Office of the Ombudsperson for assistance.

74% of visitors who responded agreed they would refer others to the office for assistance.

N=98



***"I am deeply grateful for the ways the Ombuds team has helped me navigate an ongoing and complex issue with care and discretion".
~Anonymous Visitor***

Phone: 319-335-3608

Email: ombudsperson@uiowa.edu

Website: <https://ombudsperson.org.uiowa.edu/>

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***"An amazing experience. They were helpful, attentive, and provided honest feedback. Whenever someone is having an issue they are not entirely sure about, I always recommend they speak with an Ombudsperson".
~Anonymous Visitor***

"Somebody to turn to when there is nobody to turn to. The office was very helpful". ~Anonymous Visitor

"Just simply reassuring, educational. Took action on our behalf to find answers I couldn't find". ~Anonymous Visitor

"I used the office as a sounding board and to learn about other UI resources". ~Anonymous Visitor



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