



Quarterly Summary of Activities

January 1, 2023 to March 31, 2023

Introduction

This report summarizes the activities of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) Ombuds Office in the first quarter of calendar year 2023.

In this quarter, top concerns brought to the office were around the subject of evaluative relationships: communication, respect, priorities, and departmental climate. Peer communication, diversity, organizational climate, and compensation were also among the issues voiced by visitors.

The office's primary functions are to listen to concerns, educate on options and conflict resolution, provide mediation and facilitation services, and advocate for systemic change when needed. The [Ombuds Office website](#) has a complete list of the services and programs it offers; these range from informational sessions about the office itself to one-on-one conflict coaching to interactive workshops—in person or online—that promote productive conflict resolution.

UNLV's Ombuds Office is operated in accordance with the [International Ombuds Association's Code of Ethics](#) and [Standards of Practice](#). This entails embodying the fundamental principles of *independence* in structure and function; *impartiality*; *informality*, in not participating in any disciplinary or legal processes; and *confidentiality*.

My intention with this report is to increase awareness of the valuable services offered by the Ombuds Office. It is my hope that by sharing information about the office's functions and capabilities, more individuals will feel comfortable reaching out for assistance when needed. If you are uncertain about the office's scope or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. Our team is here to support and guide you through any challenging situations you may be facing.

Sincerely,

David G. Schwartz

David G. Schwartz, Ph.D.

Ombuds

University of Nevada, Las Vegas



Overview

This quarterly report includes a description of visitor trends and common elements of concerns received during the first quarter of calendar 2023 (January 1 to March 31).

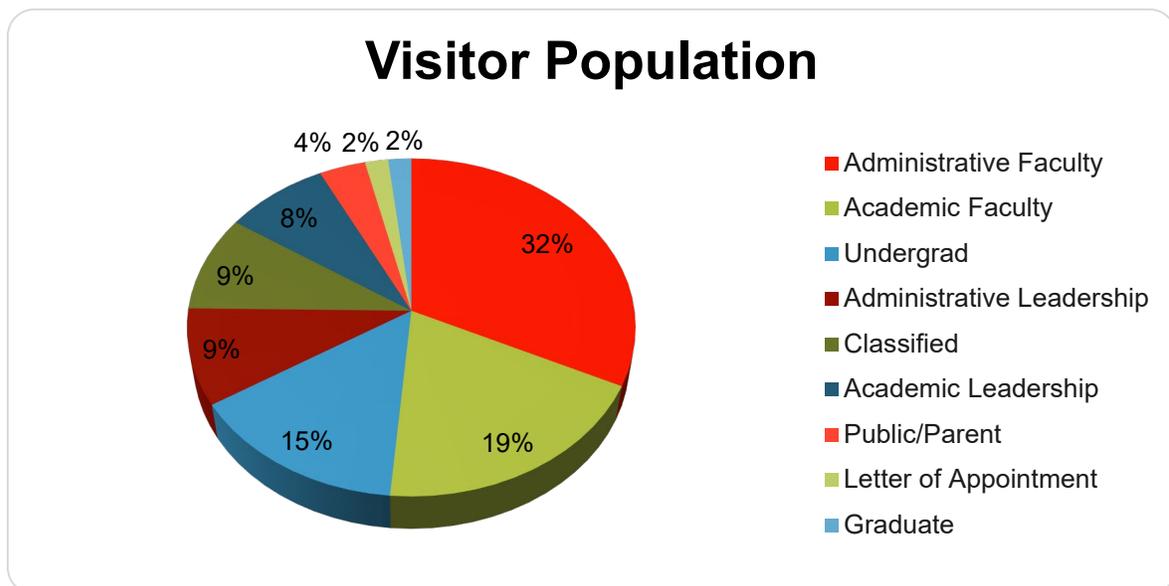
During this quarter, the Ombuds Office provided consultations for individuals and facilitated team-building activities, workshops, guided conversations, and mediations.

Visitors and Contacts

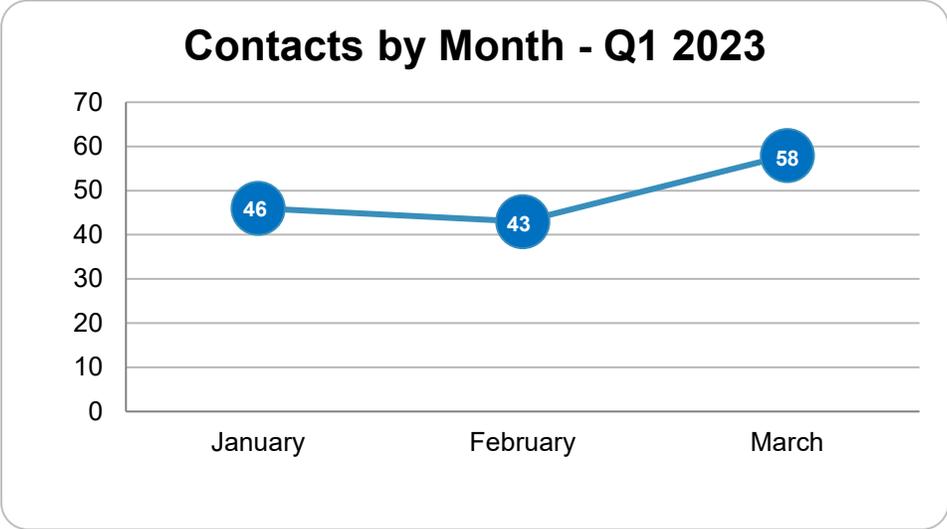
In this report, a visitor is defined as someone who utilizes the Ombuds Office for individual services, including one-on-one meetings, whether in person, by telephone, or remotely. Those who only interact with the Ombuds in a workshop are not defined as “visitors.”

In order to effectively track its engagement with visitors, the office considers any interaction or meeting - whether conducted in-person or remotely - as a "contact." It's worth noting that a single visitor may have multiple contacts with the office. By utilizing this method of tracking, the office can better understand the frequency and types of interactions taking place, and ensure that visitors are receiving the support and guidance they need. Visitors were categorized as follows:

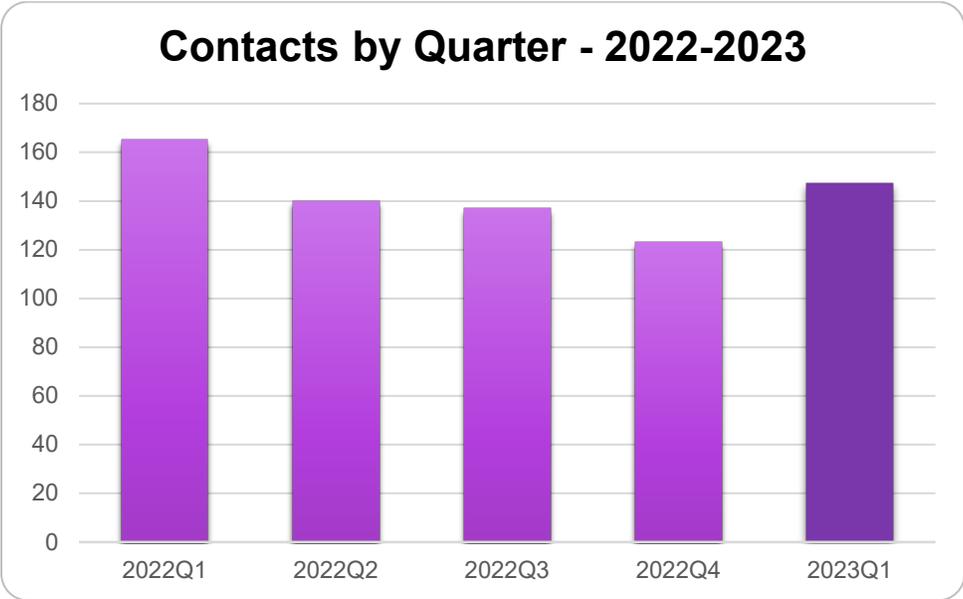
- 32 percent Administrative Faculty
- 19 percent Academic Faculty
- 15 percent Undergraduate Students
- 9 percent Administrative Leadership
- 9 Percent Classified Staff
- 8 Percent Academic Leadership
- 4 Percent combined Letter of Appointment Employees and Graduate Students
- 4 Percent Community Members and Parents.



During this quarter, the office logged 147 contacts. Twenty five percent of visitors were returning individuals who had previously used the office this year. This compares well with the previous year, showing a steady use of the office by the UNLV community. Individuals who have previously utilized the office are returning to discuss their concerns and seek additional information, which is a positive indication of their satisfaction with the services provided.



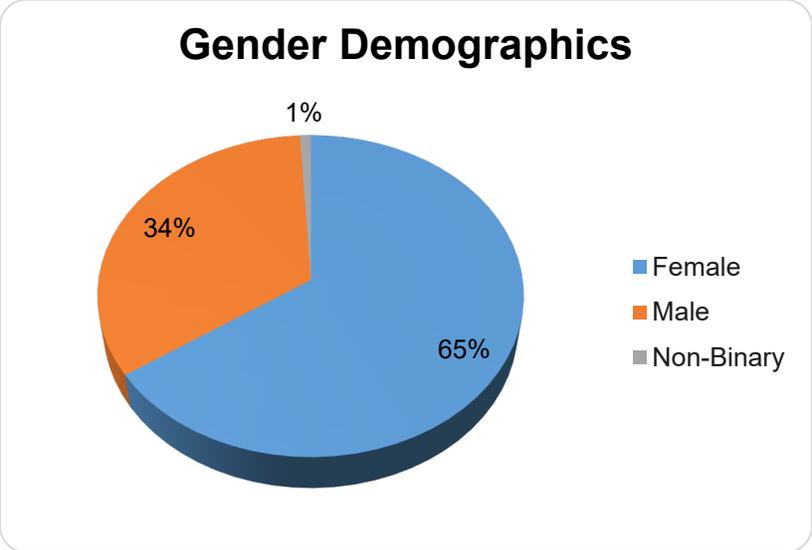
The average number of contacts per month was 49 which is a slight increase from the previous quarter. One possible reason is that the Spring 2023 semester started and faculty, staff, and students returned to the campus. Another possible factor could be issues related to upcoming annual evaluations. It is also possible that more people are aware of the informal conflict resolution resources provided by the office.



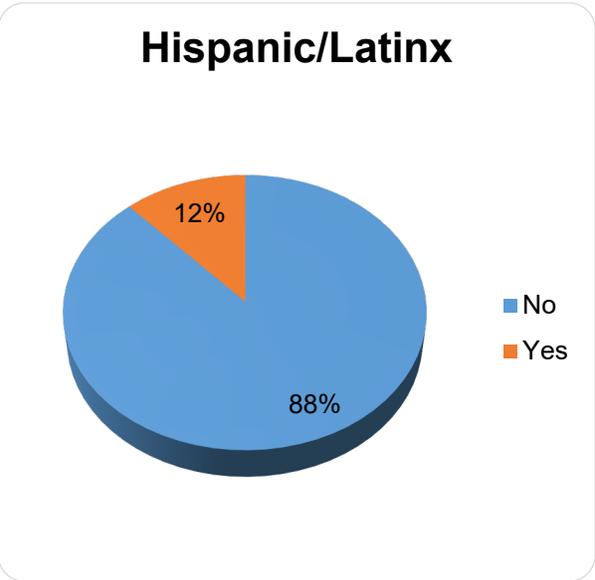
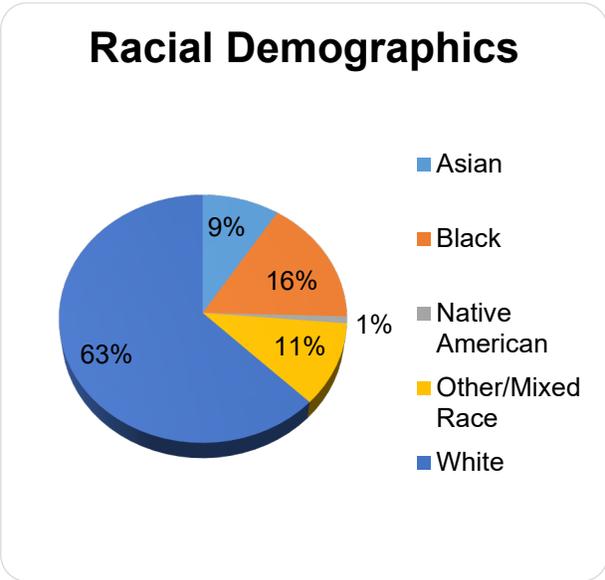
When comparing to last year’s first quarter, this year’s numbers show a slight decrease which can be attributed to less uncertainty about the merit process.

Office Visitors Served: Demographics

Visitation to the office in the first quarter remained primarily female, making up 65 percent; males accounted for 34 percent; and one percent identifying on non-binary or other. This is in line with the usage of the office over the past year. The office continues to be a space that is open to all in the university community.

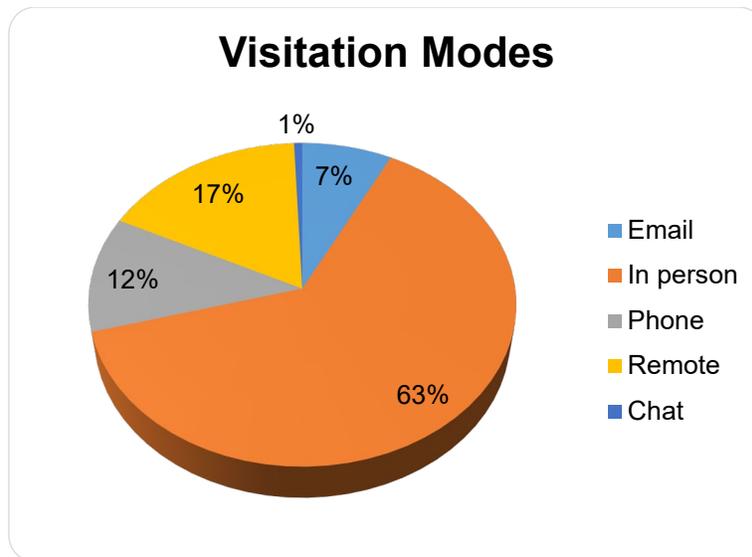


Out of the total visitors to the office, 63 percent identified themselves as White, which was the highest percentage. The second highest demographic was Black, making up 16 percent of the visitors. Eleven percent of the visitors identified themselves as belonging to other or mixed-race ethnicity. Visitors who identified themselves as Asian comprised nine percent of the total visitors while one percent of the visitors identified themselves as Native American. Additionally, 12 percent of the visitors reported their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latinx.



Visitation Modes

This year 63 percent of contacts elected to meet in person, a significant increase over previous quarters. Remote visits accounted for 17 percent, followed by 15 percent choosing to reach out via telephone. Seven percent of contacts utilized email and one percent via chat, both of which are generally discouraged as a medium for a confidential discussion. Overall, the office has remained flexible to meeting preferences and varying work schedules.



Top Visitor Concerns by Category

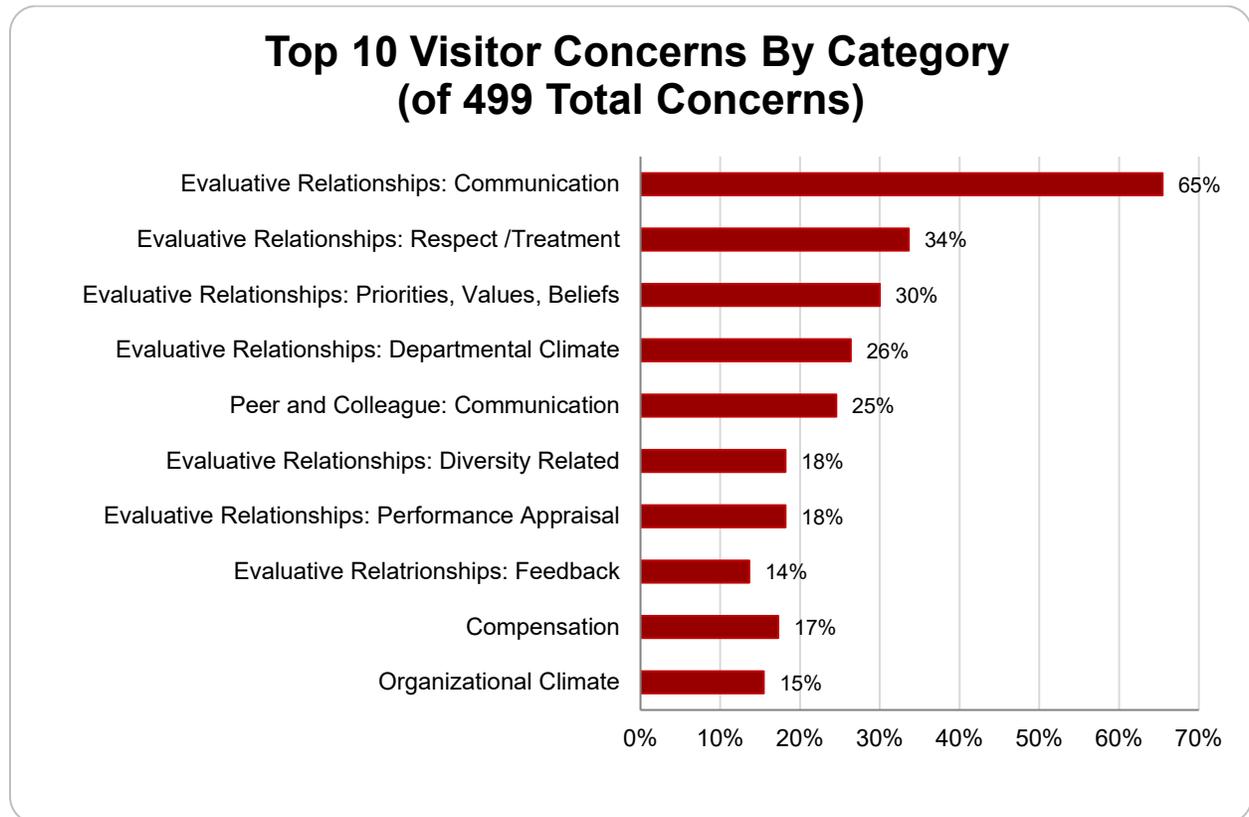
To safeguard the confidentiality of its visitors, the Ombuds Office tracks the concerns brought forward through non-specific demographics, for purposes of identifying common concerns within the campus community.

Following International Ombuds Association (IOA) best practices, the Ombuds logs those concerns using the IOA's Uniform Reporting Categories (URC). The URCs reflect concerns typically brought to ombuds offices around the world. These issues are classified under nine main categories:

1. Compensation & Benefits
2. Evaluative Relationships
3. Peer and Colleague Relationships
4. Career Progression and Development
5. Legal, Regulatory, Financial, and Compliance
6. Safety, Health, and Physical Environment
7. Services/Administrative Issues
8. Organizational, Strategic, and Mission Related
9. Values, Ethics, and Standards

Within those groupings, concerns are further organized into dozens of discrete classifications. For example, an issue relating to an employee’s job classification is identified as **1.a**; a concern about communication between an employee by their supervisor is **2.e**; comments and behaviors perceived as insensitive by peers is **3.g**; questions about career development, coaching and mentoring are **4.k**.

Visitors often report multiple concerns, in which case multiple category codes are recorded.



The most prevalent visitor concern categories were related to communication and respect/treatment primarily in supervisory relationships. **Communication with Supervisors** accounted for 65 percent of cases, while **Respect/Treatment in Supervisory Relationships**, the second most reported issue, made up 34 percent of visitors. Thirty percent had concerns with their supervisor regarding **Priorities, Values and Beliefs**, 26 percent were related to **Departmental Climate**, 18 percent respectively had concerns related to **Diversity** and **Performance Appraisal**, and 14 percent reported concerns with **Supervisory Feedback**. Twenty Five percent of visitors reported issues **Communicating with Colleagues**. Visitors also expressed concerns regarding **Compensation** and **Organizational Climate**.

Workshops, Presentations Facilitated Discussions

During the first quarter, the Ombuds Office held 11 interactive workshops and guided discussions, and hosted five informational presentations. Topics included effective communication and listening, successfully managing changes within units and departments, recognizing different conflict styles, understanding leadership styles, and finding tools for resolving conflicts successfully. A full list of workshops and informational sessions is available on our [website](#).



Spotlight: Guided Discussions

Guided discussions are a method in which groups are provided with a confidential, structured environment to discuss important topics such as leadership, communication, departmental climate, change management, and other concerns in an informal yet moderated setting. These sessions are steered by the Ombuds and trained mediators who ensure that the discussions remain respectful, productive, and goal-oriented.

Facilitators help the participants to identify and clarify the issues at hand, to explore different perspectives, and to find solutions that meet everyone's needs. The ultimate goal of these discussions is to foster open communication, build trust, and create a positive and collaborative workplace culture.

In Closing

The Ombuds Office exists to serve UNLV by providing an informal channel for conflict resolution and strives to increase collegiality, happiness, and satisfaction on campus.

Our office adds value to campus by giving visitors a place to share concerns and explore options in a confidential setting, and helping surface systemic concerns. If you are having an issue, or know someone who is, please reach out today.

The Ombuds Office continues to develop ways to serve the UNLV community, through individual consultations, group work, and online resources. If you have any questions, or are interested in having the Ombuds work with you to develop a workshop, facilitated discussion, or other programs for your unit, please contact us at ombuds@unlv.edu.

For more information about Ombuds Office programs and services, please visit the [Ombuds Office website](#).

