

## OMBUDSPERSON

The Office of the Ombudsperson was established at the University of Nebraska at Omaha in the fall of 1970. The purpose of the office is to receive and investigate complaints. Anyone (students, faculty, staff, visitors, etc.) may request the service.

There are three ombudspersons on the UNO campus. The ombudspersons are appointed by the Chancellor and report directly to the Chancellor's Office. They are not considered part of the administration, but are "independent." They do, however, work through the administrative processes that have been established in attempting to cut red tape and to provide assistance in obtaining equity to all who bring a grievance to the Office's attention. The Ombudsperson's Office rotates periodically; staff members may call Information at 554-2800 for the names of the current ombudspersons. The ombudspersons have no official authority to impose a solution to a situation. It is their responsibility to look into the conditions that have caused someone to lodge a complaint, to determine whether an injustice has occurred, and to work with those concerned to attempt to resolve the problem. The ombudspersons' powers are restricted to inquiry and recommendation. The Office is not a short cut for normal administrative processes or student/faculty relations. Requests for the services of the ombudspersons should not occur unless the normal bureaucratic process has failed to function properly, causing undue hardship to one or more members of the University community.

No person can be penalized in any way for seeking the assistance of the ombudspersons, and all inquiries are considered confidential. No problem is considered too small or insignificant for consideration by the ombudspersons if it is important to the individual. The ombudspersons are ordinarily able to suggest a procedure for pursuing a remedy within the system. However, if no procedure is available or adequate, the Ombudspersons can provide assistance in seeking other methods of resolution. The ombudspersons cannot assure that everything sought/requested will or should be granted; they will try to reach a fair resolution of the problem.