

# **WPI Ombuds Office Annual Report AY 2020-2021**

## **Staff conflict between one or more staff and manager (1)**

- Concern about returning to work after COVID remote working ended and release time for medical appointments. Addressed by listening and coaching. Staff conflict between two managers or employees in different departments

## **Staff conflict between two or more staff members in same department**

## **Staff issue with department climate**

## **Staff issue with personal matter**

## **Staff issue with service/process**

## **Staff physical space issues**

## **Staff safety issue**

## **Staff concern for well-being of another staff**

## **Staff conflict with faculty**

## **Faculty issue about department climate (1)**

- Long-term dispute with department head Addressed by listening and coaching.

## **Faculty issue over process**

## **Faculty issue with advisees/students**

## **Faculty issue with department administration (1)**

- Dept Manager conflict with supervisor. Addressed by listening and coaching.

## **Faculty issue with staff behavior**

## **Faculty issue with work environment**

## **Faculty issue with faculty colleague (4)**

- Department Head conflict with faculty.
- Addressed by listening and role-playing.
- Academic Freedom in grading. Addressed by listening and brainstorming strategies.
- Interpersonal disputes between faculty of the same rank (2). Addressed by listening and coaching.

- Interpersonal faculty dispute between the ombuds visitor and a faculty colleague of higher rank. Addressed by listening, close reading of the Faculty Handbook, and strategizing.

### **Dept Head issue with faculty member**

### **Faculty issues with University Administration (2)**

- Concern about benefits. Addressed by research and coaching.
- Concern about non-tenure-track faculty contracts. Addressed by research about policies, conversation with Provost's office.

### **Student issue with another student**

### **Student/parent issue with grading or graduation (1)**

- Parent concern about student not graduation. Addressed by ombuds research into policies, and "shuttle diplomacy" between parent and administration.

### **Student issue with professor/advisor (9)**

- Concerns raised by students involving grading (3)
- workload (2)
- classroom climate (2)
- accusations of academic dishonesty (1)
- safety in physical education classes (1)
- Addressed variously by listening, feedback to provide context for the visitor's concerns, and advice about how to approach faculty or Department Heads, including assistance with preparing an effective letter.

### **Student issue with third party**

### **Student issues with campus climate**

### **Student issues with facilities (1)**

- Student complaint about Food Service (quality of meals) Addressed by listening and coaching.

### **Student personal matter (1)**

- Mental health concern. Addressed by referral to Student Mental Health, and subsequent follow-up.

### **Student/parent issue with service/process/policy (2)**

- Parent concern academic dishonesty process. Addressed by research into policies, and reassurance about consequences.

- Parent concern about WPI COVID management. Addressed by listening, resource-finding, and conveying concern to relevant university contact.

**Parent concerned about student (3)**

- Parents concerned about students struggling due to physical difficulties (2)
- mental health problems (1)
- Addressed by resource-finding for parents and/or follow-up meetings with students.

**Alumni issue**

**Outside WPI: concern about hiring process**

**Outside WPI: concern about employee behavior**

**Frivolous (2)**

- Visitors choosing not to pursue their initial contact.