

D. Informality

The Office of the Ombuds shall be a resource for informal dispute resolution and mediation services.

B. Limitations on the Authority of the Office of the Ombuds

1. Receiving Notice for the College

Communication to the Office of the Ombuds shall not constitute notice to the College. The Office of the Ombuds shall publicize its non-notice role to the College. This includes allegations that may be perceived to be violations of laws, regulations or policies, such as sexual harassment, issues covered by the Whistleblower policy, or incidents subject to reporting under the Clery Act. Because the Ombuds does not function as part of the administration of the College

even if the Ombuds becomes aware of such allegations, the Ombuds is not required to report it to the College or to law enforcement.

If a user of the Office of the Ombuds would like to put the College on notice regarding a specific situation, or wishes for information to be provided to the College, the Ombuds will provide that person with information so that the person may put the College on notice.

2. Formal Processes and Investigations

The Office of the Ombuds shall not conduct formal investigations of any kind. The Office of the Ombuds staff shall not willingly participate in formal dispute processes or outside agency complaints or lawsuits, either on behalf of a user of the Office of the Ombuds or on behalf of the College. The Office of the Ombuds provides an alternative to formal processes for dispute resolution. All use of Ombuds services shall be voluntary and shall not impact filing requirements within the College or outside agencies. Because confidentiality, neutrality and informality are critically important to the Office of the Ombuds, all communications with the office are made with the understanding that they are confidential, off-the-record, and that no one from the office will be called to testify as a witness in any formal or legal proceeding to reveal confidential communications.

3. Record Keeping

The Office of the Ombuds does not keep records for the College, and shall not create or maintain documents or records for the College about individual cases. Notes, if any, taken during the course of working on a case are routinely destroyed at regular intervals and at the conclusion of a matter. All materials related to a case will be maintained in a secure location and manner, and will be destroyed once the case is concluded. The Ombuds may maintain non-confidential statistical data to assist the Ombuds in reporting trends and giving feedback to the College community.

