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## Auburn University Job Description

Job Title: **Associate University Ombudsperson**                      Grade AA14: \$80,500 - \$144,900  
Job Code: **AB70**  
FLSA status: Exempt  
Job Family: Academic Services and Administration  
Job Function:

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### Job Summary

Reporting to the University Ombudsperson, the Associate University Ombudsperson provides the Ombuds Office resources for confidential complaint handling and neutral, informal conflict resolution to all Auburn University students, faculty, and administrative & professional (A&P) members and staff persons. The Ombudspersons may work with individuals or groups to facilitate communication and collaborative dispute resolution, by offering options for self-help or by mediating mutually agreeable outcomes. The Associate Ombudsperson takes leadership responsibility in gathering anonymous aggregate data and other information for upward feedback to administrators when patterns of concern brought to the office indicate problem areas or trends. While maintaining impartiality, the Ombuds Office may serve as an organizational resource to recommend improvements in policy and procedures.

### Essential Functions

1. Provides the Ombuds Office resources for confidential complaint handling and neutral, informal conflict resolution to all Auburn University students, faculty, and administrative & professional (A&P) members and staff persons. Assists visitors by identifying problems and presents resolution options; facilitates the visitor's assessment of the pros and cons of options. Upholds the integrity of the office through best practices including independence, fair process, neutrality, impartiality, confidentiality, and timely attention to the resolution of issues while treating all office visitors with dignity, honor, and respect. Maintain independence, neutrality, informality, and exercise good judgment throughout the process.
  2. While maintaining confidentiality, conducts an informal inquiry to better understand all perspectives on a particular concern. Offer impartial and confidential consultations to campus members who seek assistance with grievances or concerns.
  3. Facilitates group meetings, shuttle diplomacy, and negotiations to encourage multi-party participation and guide them towards mutually acceptable resolutions.
  4. Develops and implements innovative conflict resolution models.
  5. Promotes equitable processes without advocating for any specific individual.
  6. Empowers visitors by coaching them on negotiation skills and positive approaches to resolving conflicts
  7. Conducts confidential inquiries to gain a comprehensive understanding of all perspectives on a given concern. Consult with all parties involved, foster communication, and develop mutually agreeable strategies and cooperative processes for complaint resolution, with permission.
  8. Provides referrals and facilitate access to appropriate resources, including information on formal grievance procedures. Provides guidance and assists in interpreting University policies and procedures.
  9. Provides on-going education and communication about the Ombuds Office role to all potential visitors and to leadership and decision-makers. Designs and conducts training programs for the campus community in dispute resolution, negotiation skills, respectful communication, and related topics. Keeps up to date on all changes and developments within the schools and programs of the complex, multi-layered University.
  10. Serves as a resource for administrators in identifying areas in need of improvement, formulating or modifying policy and procedures, raising issues that may surface because of a gap between the stated goals of the institution and actual practice or incidents. Makes appropriate recommendations
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for policies or practices that would reduce or prevent recurrence of grievances. With permission, acts as a liaison between individuals or groups and the campus administrative structure, serving as a communicator or informal facilitator. Functions as a sensor within the campus community to surface problems or trends; if appropriate, recommends creative ways to address these concerns.

With the University Ombudsperson, provides early warning of new areas of organizational concern, upward feedback, critical analysis of systemic need for improvement, and makes system change recommendations.

11. Oversees the collection and recording of aggregate anonymous data on ombuds cases, with identification of general categories of concerns brought to the ombuds office, as well as broad demographic information about office activities. Analyzes patterns indicated by the data, including the resolution process and other information to evaluate the effectiveness of the Ombuds Office. Prepares reports based on the data and other information to identify opportunities for systemic improvement, drafts the annual report in collaboration with the Ombudsperson.
12. Assists the University Ombudsperson in budget projections, programs, and service enhancements. Supports the University Ombudsperson with planning and adherence to office operational protocols and standards of practice.

### **Supervisory Responsibility**

May be responsible for training, assisting or assigning tasks to others. May provide input to performance reviews of other employees.

*The above essential functions are representative of major duties of positions in this job classification. Specific duties and responsibilities may vary based upon departmental needs. Other duties may be assigned similar to the above consistent with the knowledge, skills and abilities required for the job. Not all of the duties may be assigned to a position.*



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### Minimum Required Education and Experience

	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Focus of Education/Experience</u>
<b>Education</b>	Master's Degree	Degree in Conflict Resolution, Organizational Development, Psychology, Sociology, or related field.  If a candidate has a Juris Doctorate or a PhD, the degree can be substituted for 1 year of experience towards the 3 years required.
<b>Experience (yrs.)</b>	3	Experience in conflict resolution, mediation, resolving conflicts, or navigating complex issues in a fair and impartial manner. Experience working in a higher educational academic research institution is desired preferably as a conflict resolution practitioner.

#### **Substitutions allowed for Education:**

Indicated education is required; no substitutions allowed.

#### **Substitutions allowed for Experience:**

Indicated experience is required; no substitutions allowed.

#### **Minimum Required Knowledge**

Ability to listen actively and empathically to understand, respect, and support each office visitor. Strong active listening skills and the ability to communicate effectively with a diversity of individuals, both orally and in writing.

Ability to problem-solve collaboratively, to gather and analyze information impartially, to negotiate or help negotiate effectively while protecting confidentiality, and to offer options for conflict resolution that are responsible, constructive, and creative.

Understanding of the impact of procedures and decisions for all stakeholders including the organization. Strong presentation skills, strong communication skills with tact and diplomacy. Has skills to identify root causes and recommend system change.

Skilled in effective negotiation, understanding of organizational development and change management.

#### **Certification or Licensure Requirements**

Must complete The Foundations of Organizational Ombuds Practice training within 6 months of hire. Must currently be, or willing to become, an active member of professional ombudsman organizations; must subscribe to and practice in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice of The International Ombudsman Association; expected to continually enhance professional skills through training courses within the profession and related fields, and to become a Certified Organizational Ombudsman Practitioner CO-OP® within 18 months of commencement of employment.

#### **Pre-Employment Screening Requirements**

None required.

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#### **Physical Requirements/ADA**

No unusual physical requirements. Requires no heavy lifting, and nearly all work is performed in a comfortable indoor facility.

Routine deadlines; usually sufficient lead time; variance in work volume seasonal and predictable; priorities can be anticipated; some interruptions are present; involves occasional exposure to demands

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and pressures from persons other than immediate supervisor.

Job frequently requires sitting, talking, hearing, .

Job occasionally requires standing, walking, and lifting up to 10 pounds.

Vision requirements: Ability to see information in print and/or electronically.

Date: 5/31/2023

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