



# **Faculty Ombudsperson Annual Report**

**Indiana State University  
August 1, 2019—July 31, 2020**

## **Table of Contents**

Activity Overview.....	2
Visitor Profiles.....	2
Uniform Reporting Categories Overview.....	3
Concerns & Issues Summary.....	4
Looking Ahead.....	7

# Overview of Activities

- ◇ 30+ hours meeting with visitors and following up on questions/concerns
- ◇ Presentations
  - ◇ New Faculty Orientation
  - ◇ 2 Department Meetings
  - ◇ Faculty Senate
- ◇ American Association of University Professors, ISU Chapter
- ◇ Website and informational material development

## Visitor Profiles

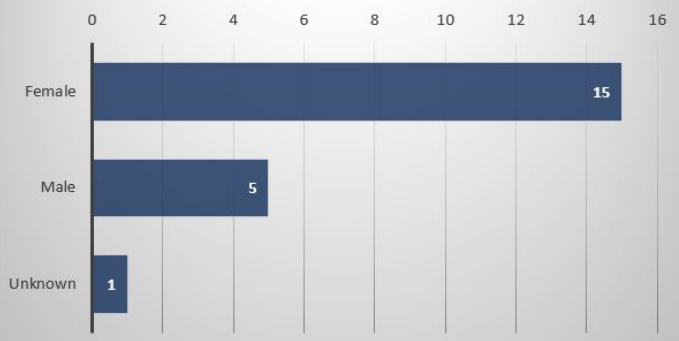
21 Visitors

Individuals and groups  
of 2-4

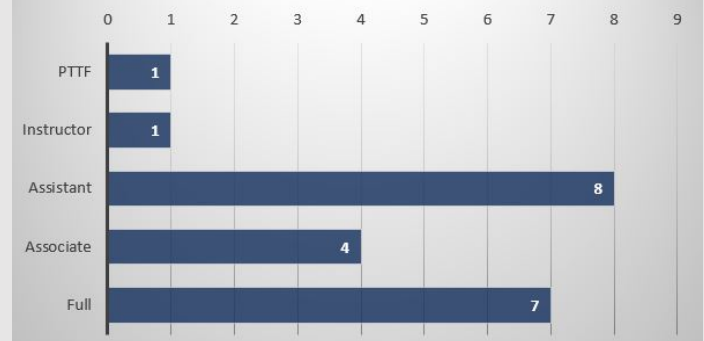
### Academic Units:

- ◇ Bayh College of Education
- ◇ College of Arts & Sciences
- ◇ College of Health & Human Services
- ◇ Library Services
- ◇ Scott College of Business

Visitors by Gender (N = 21)



Visitors by Rank (N = 21)



# Uniform Reporting Categories Overview

The International Ombudsman Association (IOA) recommends the use of 9 uniform reporting categories to describe the nature of visitor questions and concerns. Each category is further subdivided to provide as much specificity as possible in classifying issues. A brief description of the broad categories appears below:

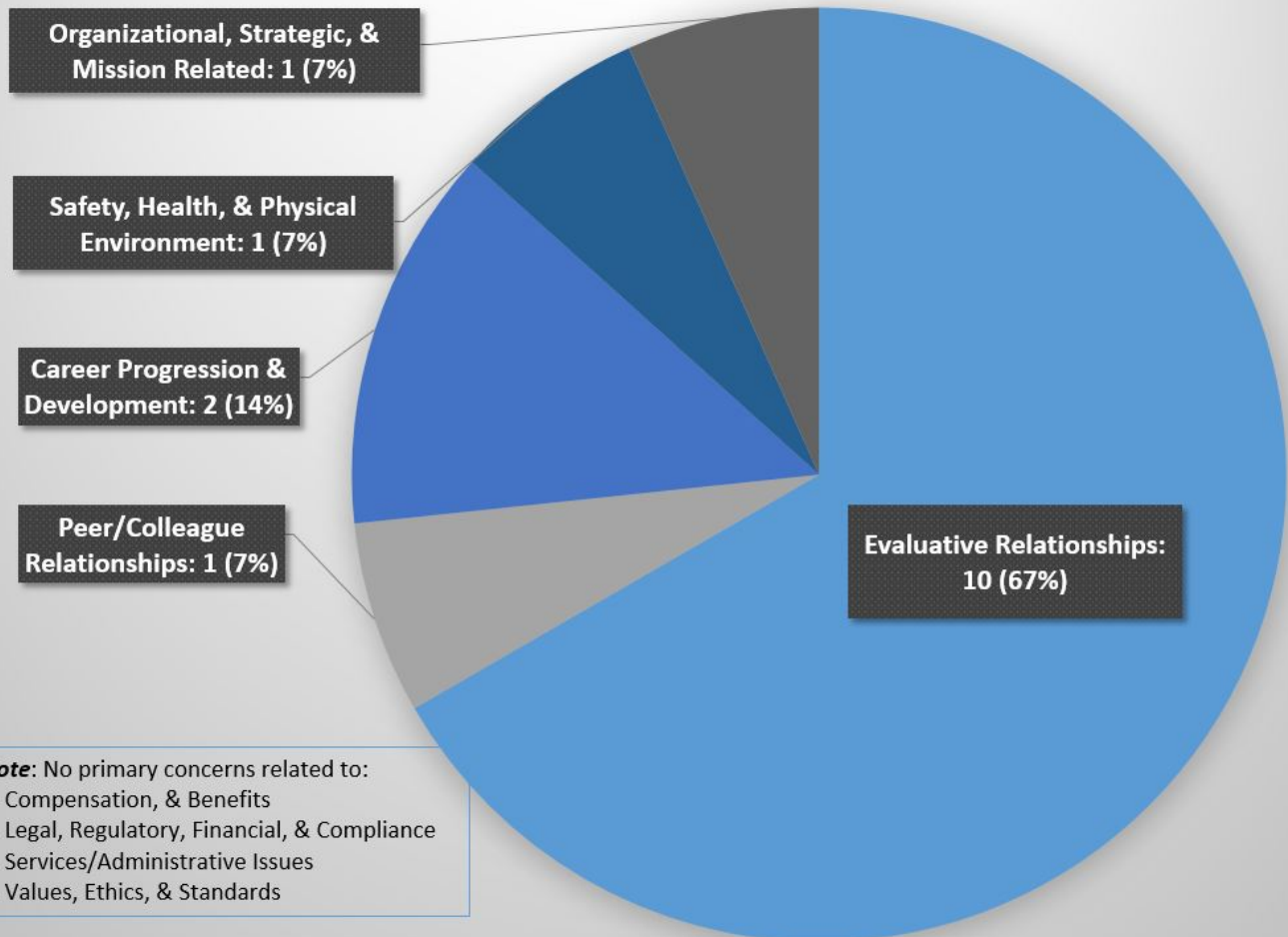
- 1. Compensation & Benefits**—equity, appropriateness, or competitiveness of salary or benefits.
- 2. Evaluative Relationships**—issues between people in evaluative or hierarchical relationships (e.g., chairs and faculty)
- 3. Peer & Colleague Relationships**—issues between people of equal status
- 4. Career Progression & Development**—appointment, re-appointment (e.g., promotion/tenure reviews, performance reviews), changes of assignment, non-reappointment (e.g., termination, position security/elimination), career development (e.g., coaching/mentoring), and separation (e.g., retirement, resignation).
- 5. Legal, Regulatory, Financial, & Compliance**—issues that may create a legal risk or liability if not addressed (e.g., waste, fraud, abuse).
- 6. Safety, Health, & Physical Environment**—infrastructure and safety/security.
- 7. Services/Administrative Issues**—quality or professionalism of services provided by administrative offices and issues pertaining to the interpretation, application, and impact of administrative rules and policies.
- 8. Organizational, Strategic, & Mission Related**—issues related to the management, leadership, strategic direction, or decision-making, and priorities of the organization.
- 9. Values, Ethics, & Standards**—issues related to the equity and application of ethical and conduct standards of the organization and issues related to inequity in policy or procedure, or policies lacking/in need of revision.

International Ombudsman Association (2007). *International Ombudsman Association Uniform Reporting Categories, Version 2*. Author. [IOA Uniform Data Reporting Categories Desk Reference](#)

# Concerns & Issues Summary

Visitors brought **15 unique issues/concerns** for discussion.

Primary Concern of Visitors (N = 15)



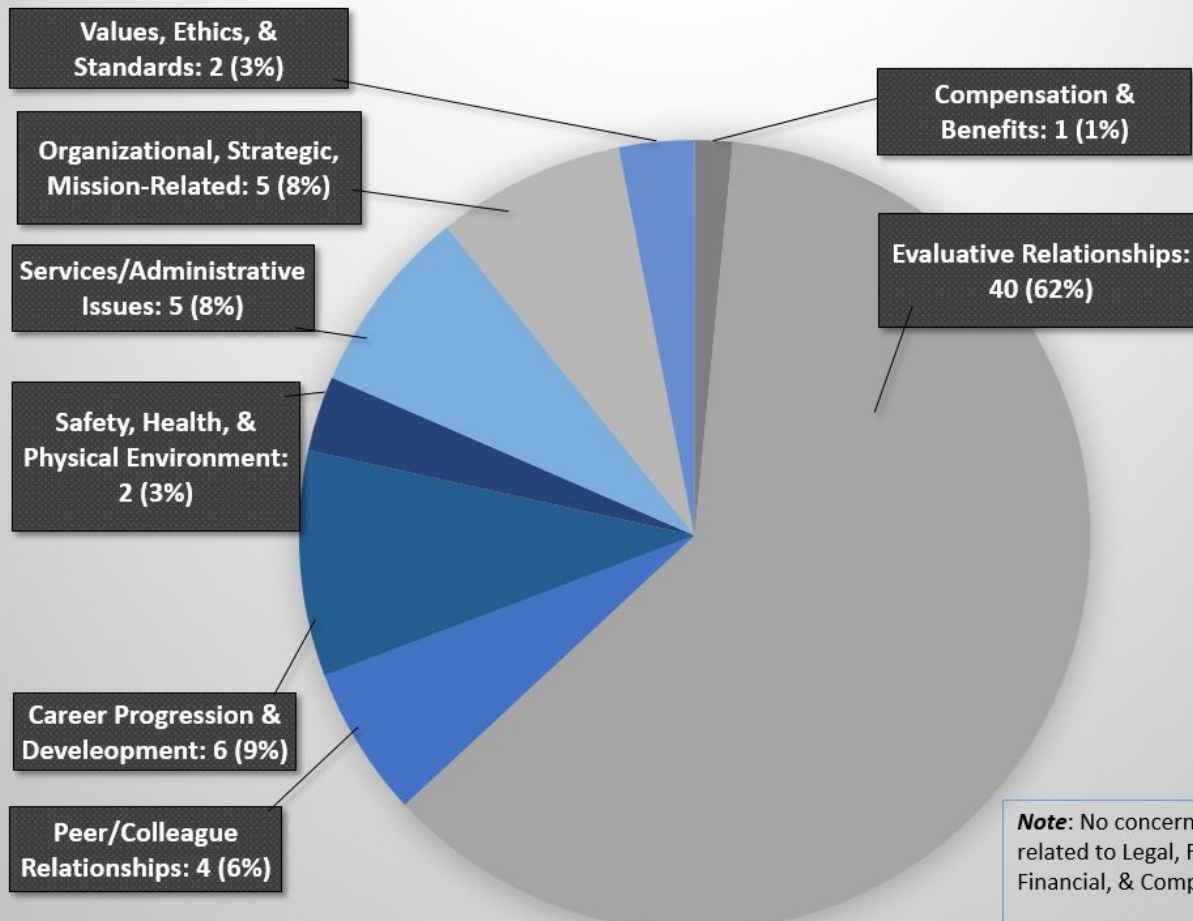
Each unique issue was coded for the *primary* category of concern.

**Summary:** Two-thirds of concerns primarily involved conflicts, disagreements, or perceived inequity in evaluative relationships. The remainder of concerns were distributed across issues pertaining to work assignments, career progression, colleague relationships, large-scale organizational concerns, and matters of safety and security.

# Concerns & Issues Summary, cont.

Most concerns comprised multiple, interrelated factors.

Comprehensive Concerns of Visitors (N = 65)

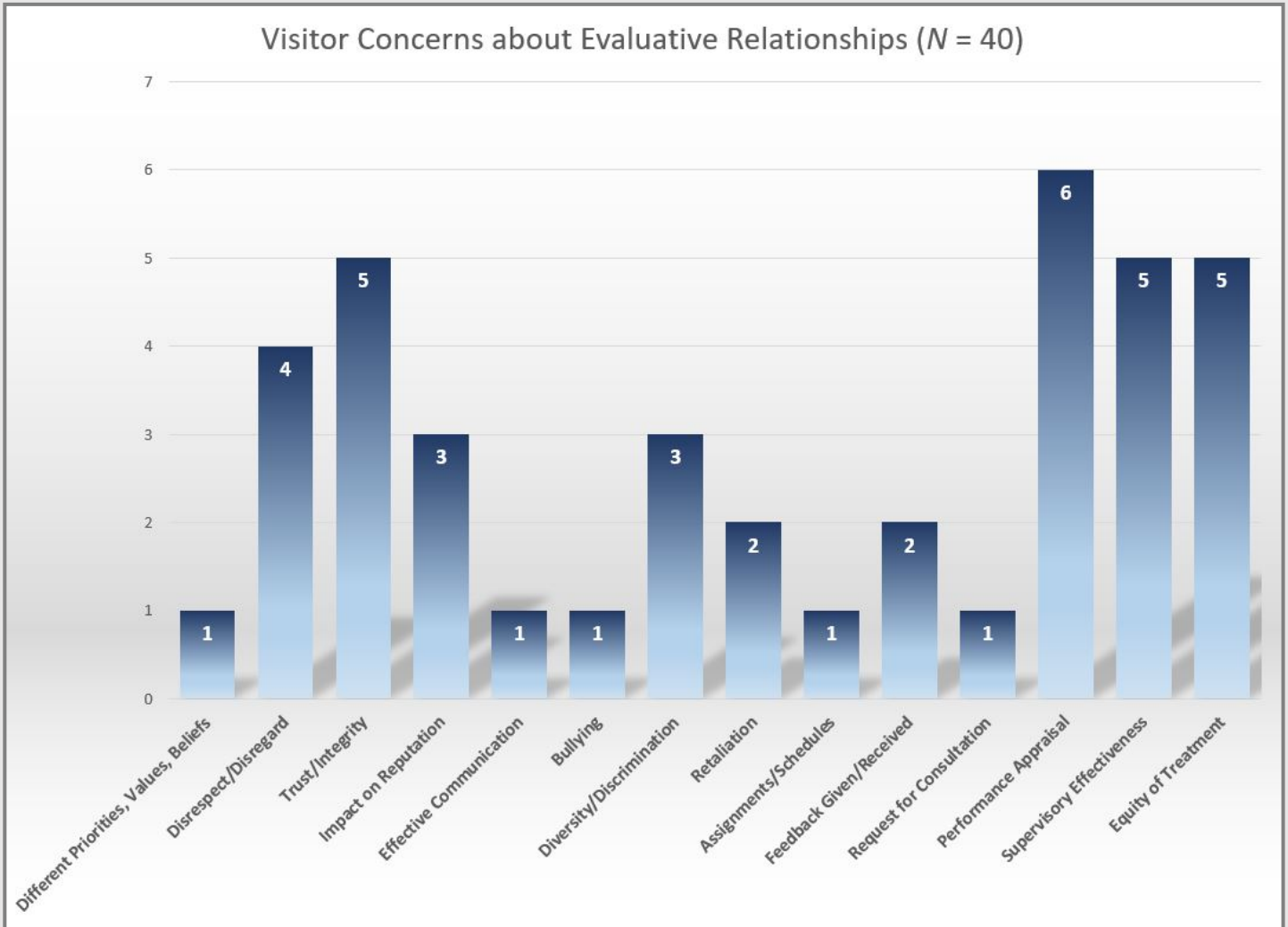


These concerns (N = 65) were also coded comprehensively for all relevant categories.

**Summary:** Over 60% of all concerns pertained to evaluative relationships, with most visitors reporting multiple concerns in this category. Career progression and development (e.g., assigned duties, promotion/tenure processes) also comprised almost 10% of concerns, and concerns related to equitable administrative services and procedures and issues pertaining to the overarching organizational leadership and mission each comprised 8% of total expressed concerns.

# Concerns & Issues Summary, cont.

Evaluative Relationships represented over 60% of all concerns.



These concerns (N = 40) were further disaggregated by subcategory to show areas of most frequent concern.

**Summary:** Perceived inequitable treatment was expressed in various forms including fairness in performance evaluations, overall equity of treatment, disrespect or disregard for concerns or individuals, bullying, retaliation, and perceived discrimination. Matters related to trust and integrity, communication, and supervisory effectiveness represented a secondary but significant cluster of expressed concerns.

# Looking Ahead

## Ombuds Office Priorities

**Priority #1:** Meet and follow up with individual visitors

**Priority #2:** Describe services and encourage use of the office through educational materials and presentations

**Priority #3:** Connect faculty with information and resources through “FAQ” and other guidance on the faculty ombuds webpage

**Priority #4:** Collaborate to develop trainings or resources appropriate for improving equity, fairness, and justice in the faculty workplace.

Questions and Concerns about this report may be directed to:

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## Possible Areas for Institutional Growth

### 1. Faculty/Administrator Relations

#### Mutual Needs:

- ◇ Trust
- ◇ Respect
- ◇ Humility/”Failing forward”

#### Potential Solutions:

- ◇ Conflict resolution training
- ◇ Diversity/sensitivity training
- ◇ Supportive mentoring for new faculty and administrators

### 2. Transparency and Consistency in Performance Appraisal and Decision-Making

#### Faculty Needs:

- ◇ Trust
- ◇ Clear guidance
- ◇ Open communication

#### Potential Solutions:

- ◇ Proactive communication and direction regarding policies, procedures, and appeal processes
- ◇ Written procedures for departmental decisions
- ◇ Consultation/resources to guide departmental decision-making
- ◇ Emphasis on informal resolution and amended decisions when appropriate

For more information about the Ombuds Office, visit the

[ISU Faculty Ombuds Webpage](#)