UNL Faculty Ombud Team

Position Description

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln is establishing a two-person team of Faculty Ombuds to be a resource for faculty. A Faculty Ombud is someone who faculty members can talk to about workplace issues in complete confidence. An Ombud listens to concerns as a neutral party and serves as an advocate for fairness and equity. Ombuds assist faculty in working toward informal resolution of concerns prior to filing formal grievances and are not involved in the formal grievance process.

The responsibilities of each faculty Ombud include:

- Listening to faculty member concerns.
- Analyzing faculty concerns and exploring ways of addressing those concerns.
- Advising faculty on how to navigate concerns with relevant persons (i.e., Department leader, School Director, Center Director, Dean, colleagues, students, etc.).
- Serving as an advisor to faculty to assist them in determining how best to proceed.
- Directing faculty seeking their assistance to appropriate leaders, offices, committees, and university rules and policies.
- Serving when appropriate as an informal mediator of early-stage concerns.
- Facilitating problem solving between faculty and University offices.
- Partnering with university administration on concerns and issues related to faculty/staff/student interactions.

The Ombuds do not have authority to make changes to policies, procedures, and practices, but the Ombuds will contribute to a vibrant and healthy workplace for faculty by making recommendations surrounding policies, procedures, and practices. The Ombuds will meet once each semester with the Executive Vice Chancellor (EVC), the Vice Chancellor for the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (VC IANR), and the President of the Faculty Senate, or their designees, and will produce an annual report that will summarize the number of visits, the nature of faculty concerns, and recommendations.

Two Ombuds will be selected to increase the likelihood that every faculty member will have a choice of an Ombud that they feel can be an impartial resource. Eligible candidates must hold the rank of Associate or Full Professor in any track (research, practice, extension, or tenure-track) or have Emeritus status at one of those ranks. It is anticipated that the incumbents will be chosen from two different colleges, with one having, or if retired, having had an appointment with IANR and the other coming from outside the Institute. Successful candidates must possess excellent listening, conflict resolution, and decision-making skills, and be open to multiple perspectives. They must be able to keep information confidential. Preference will be given to candidates who have had broad experiences at the university, including some form of leadership role at the departmental, college, or campus level.
For current faculty members, the Ombud appointment will be approximately .20-.25 FTE, with the exact FTE being determined in light of faculty workload guidelines within their respective department and/or college, and their other work responsibilities. An administrative stipend of 5% will be provided, and summer compensation will be provided for successful candidates on academic year contracts. If the successful candidate is an Emeritus faculty member, the compensation will be equivalent to 20% of their 12-month base salary in the year that they retired; in the case of Emeritus academic year faculty, the 12-month base salary will be computed by taking 11/9 of the academic year salary.

Potential applicants should discuss this opportunity with their department chair and/or dean before applying. Applications should include a letter of interest, a CV, a brief letter of endorsement from the applicant’s department chair and/or dean, and a list of three professional references to executivevcoffice@unl.edu by December 3, 2018.