

**Hunter College of the City University
Office of the Ombuds
Roseanne L. Flores - Ombuds Officer
September 29, 2021**

The Ombuds Office is an independent, informal resource, designed to be neutral, holding all communications with those seeking assistance in strict confidence, not disclosing confidential information unless given permission to do so.

Academic Year (2021/2022) - January 2021- September 2021

Reporting Cycle

This report is based on the activities of the Hunter College Ombuds Office, which includes data from January 2021 through September 2021. Over the next academic year, all reports will be released on a semesterly basis. This reporting structure will be a change as the Ombuds Office has been reporting on an annual basis. The office will continue to update the format of the report to identify opportunities for constructive changes and ongoing conversations across the Hunter College community. Previous reports are posted on the Ombuds webpage.

Contact the Office

For information on how to schedule an appointment, please use the following link Ombuds@hunter.cuny.edu. All meetings will be scheduled for the remainder of the semester on Zoom at a time that works best for the visitor.

Information and Highlights

Visitors	2018/2019	2019/2020	Spring 2021
Students	44	33	13
Faculty	4	2	0
Parent/Relative	0	0	1
Administrator	2	0	1
Other	0	0	1
Totals	50	35	16

During the Spring 2021 semester, the total number of visitors was 16, approximately half of the total number of visitors during the 2019/2020 academic year. The number of sessions per visitor ranged from 1- 4 visits, with each visit ranging from 30 minutes to 1 hour.

Trends and Recommendations

This section provides an overview of the trends and issues raised by visitors over the semester. For this report, an issue became a *trend* when multiple visitors from across the College came to the office about the same topic/problem/concern.

Student Related Issues

During the Spring 2021 semester, both undergraduate and graduate students visited the Ombuds Office about issues related to grade appeals, completion of degree requirements, and graduation. Many reported being emotionally and financially stressed and worried whether they would be able to complete their respective degrees. In addition, as in the past, the office was also copied on emails sent to other areas in the College with the individuals not directly requesting to meet with the Ombuds Office.

Whenever possible, students were referred to Student Services or provided guidance about the grade appeal process. However, as not all issues raised by visitors had definitive answers, such as how to handle job loss, illness, and housing insecurity, what the office provided was a space to listen and affirm that we are indeed living in unprecedented times. The office also provided visitors with resources and assured them that they were welcome to return in the future should the need arise.

As the College transitions from virtual learning back to in-person and hybrid courses, the Ombuds Office will continue to observe issues raised by visitors and, where appropriate, share that information with the Hunter College community.

Current State of the Ombuds Office and Plans for the 2021-2022 Academic Year

The Ombuds Office adjusted its operations during the Spring 2020 semester. The office went from allowing visitors to meet privately in the Ombuds Office - located contiguously with the Senate offices to meeting on Zoom. During the Fall 2021 semester, the Ombuds Office will continue to meet with all visitors virtually on Zoom. As the College continues to transition to in-person meetings, classes, and events, it is hoped that on-campus visits will resume in Spring 2022. That said, the office will continue to leverage the use of technology for those visitors unable to schedule in-person meetings.