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TOA 1986-96 Anonymous Survey results
1994+1996

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS FROM A PILOT STUDY
OF CORPORATE OMBUDS PRACTITIONERS

June, 1986

Michael Baker, Lee Robbins, Mary Rowe, James Ziegenfuss
(This draft by Mary Rowe following notes by Lee Robbins)

The selection of a given ombuds practitioner is critical to the success of the office. Who the practitioner is powerfully influences the scope and direction of that practitioner's work. Formal disciplinary training appears not to matter a great deal by comparison to being a "natural mediator" with experience.

Ombuds practitioners appear to follow rather few standard rules. Their actions appear individualized for each client, following an ethos of "communication, consultation, co-determination." Practitioners appear participative and collaborative, rather than hierarchal and controlling, following an integrative, rather than distributive conflict resolution philosophy. This fact perhaps underscores why the ombuds function must lie outside normal management control structures.

Ombuds practitioners work in a highly personalized fashion. They cite as necessary skills:

- listening;
- patience;
- personal familiarity with the organization and its key people;
- experience with people (e.g., Personnel; line manager job, conflict resolution).

Among the principal conflicts handled are:

- person vs. person problems: meanness, harassment, personality conflicts;
- person vs. supervisor: terminations, evaluations, job assignments, salaries;
- person vs. "the system": interpreting/changing policies, procedures, structures, bureaucratic decisions;
- most typical case: worker & supervisor, or supervisor & worker.

How are cases handled?

- careful listening (often cited as having been absent in previous handling of the problem);

- developing individual options with the client;

- providing suggestions and perhaps coaching on specific contacts for the client (or ombuds practitioner) to make next;

- very rarely making binding decisions;

- rarely turning problem over to top management for decision;

- some generic intervention;

- some training of other helping personnel.

How is the function publicized?

- High case loads with lots of face-to-face contacts;

- Lots of individual phone calls;

- Getting to know managers very well;

- Some writing, articles, in-house publications, posters, etc.

What records are kept?

- Not many, sometimes not any, sometimes not even much aggregated data. We suggest this is partly because of confidentiality and partly because of the highly informal, individualized nature of high case load interactions;

- Few have forms for clients to fill out.

How are practitioners evaluated?

- Predominantly by word of mouth, intuition; ("happy client") letters;

- Some feel their formal, annual reports are given little attention by management;

- Some feel uncomfortable with lack of formalized evaluations; we suggest ceos may intuitively or explicitly prefer informal evaluations of the practitioner as an extension of the whole function.

- The community "votes with their feet;" (a good practitioner is heavily used).

What methods are used to affect policy?

- operative idea is "persuasion," not "control;"
- upward feedback of data, including anecdotal information, (not so much in Reports, but in personal visits to management);
- formal and informal training of managers (participative training more often than didactic).

Confidentiality

Ombuds practitioners lay heavy emphasis on privacy and confidentiality, sharing information only by joint agreement with the client, except in very extreme cases.

Ombuds practitioners are typically well-paid in relationship to either their supervisory responsibility or their formal decision-making authority. Management apparently sees this job as analogous to a senior psychiatrist or highest level management consultant. Salaries in our sample ranged from \$40K to several over \$100K.

We have a hypothesis that ombuds practitioners typically will practice best on their own (like psychiatrists) rather than in hierachal structures (like personnel officers). Linking practitioners in a network (one per plant in a big company) appears to work well. There are also very successful examples of large offices with linked services (EA, ombuds services being the most common linkages).

There are various modes of ombudsmanry: the lifetime professional, the very senior manager who becomes ombud as a "last career," the two-year or four-year stint on the way to other jobs.

The profession is highly integrated by rce, gender, age, and background (technical, non-technical; HR and other, etc.). Formal charges to corporate ombuds practitioners also vary widely (non-union, union-inclusive; with or without the right to adjudicate a matter internally; with or without aegis over senior mangers; with major or minor focus on systems change). Case loads are also highly integrated, typically reflecting closely the background population of the company, including managers and clients.

Ombuds practitioners perceive that top management support is critical, perhaps because the typical ombuds approach

is at least partially in conflict with traditional corporate norms. Most practitioners report to or have direct access to the highest level in their organization. Some practitioners believe that being perceived as having more power than they have would be helpful. Some would actually want more power, some would not.

Most companies with an ombuds practitioner also appear to have other "alterative channels." Practitioners typically report close working relations with these other colleagues.

1990 Ombudsperson Survey

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Wayne State University

Thanks to all of you who took the time to complete and return the questionnaire. It was sent to 134 university and college ombudsperson offices, one questionnaire to each office for which I had an address. Sixty-eight usable replies were received, one more than a 50% return.

First, a profile of the ombudsperson. Unless specifically noted, the characteristics of Canadian and U.S. ombudspersons and offices are very much alike. Unless otherwise indicated, N = 60 or more.

Over 80% of the respondents were full-time employees of their institution; about 20% were students, part-time employees and two retired faculty reincarnated as ombudspersons.

Excluding student ombudspersons, prior to becoming an ombudsperson, over a third of us were teachers, almost as many were administrators, and a fourth of us came from a variety of backgrounds including ministry and law.

Over half of all respondents continue to spend part of their working hours on non-ombuds activities. Turning that around, 43% of respondents now spend all of their time on ombuds activities. Canadian ombudspersons are much more likely to be purists (63%) than U.S. ombudspersons of whom only 36% work exclusively at ombudsing.

Excluding students, part-time employees, etc., the majority of ombudspersons are between 40 and 60 years of age. There were half as many male as female ombudspersons 40 to 49 years of age, and twice as many male as female ombudspersons over 60 years of age. However, males and females are equally likely to have had a teaching or administrative career prior to becoming an ombudsperson.

Excluding students, we range in service as ombudspersons from half a year to 21 years with a median of 3.5 years. Nine of 12 ombudspersons with 11 or more years of service were males.

Most of us like what we are doing and want to continue ombudsing. About 1 out of 5 of us would like to go on for over 5 more years. About a third of us don't know or (I suspect) don't want to say how long we want to continue. Of course, some of us may like what we are doing but are close to retirement. However, Canadians are more likely than U.S. ombudspersons to want to stay on for less than 2 more years.

So much for our profile. What about the office as such? Thirty-six respondent offices (over half the total) have existed for 11 years or more; 13 offices have existed for 20 years or more. (A community college claims to have had an ombudsperson office for 30 years.) The median existence of all respondent offices is 14 years.

The initial term for which an ombudsperson is appointed is unspecified for 4 out of every 10 ombudspersons.

Four out of every 10 ombudspersons report to the president (by whatever title) of their institution. Another 2 out of 10 report to a vice president. Others report to faculty or student senates, etc.

The median size of office staff is 1.275 persons and, as might be expected, is related to the number of cases handled. The data are highly variable but, on average, each ombudsperson handles about 300 cases. The larger the number of cases at a school, the more cases each ombudsperson is likely to handle.

What do we count as cases? Almost 1 out of 3 offices count every client they deal with. The rest of the offices are more conservative in counting cases. They may distinguish cases vs. non-cases on the basis of number of contacts (at least 2) made to resolve the case, or time spent on the "case." These offices would exclude from the case count clients who are merely provided information or referrals. If we consider only the offices which discriminate in what they count as cases, the median number of cases handled is (surprisingly) virtually the same as before, 331 vs. 335.

Total cases per reporting school (N = 41) ranged from 20 to 1363, with a median of 335 cases, almost precisely the same median whether Canadian or U.S. Three schools reported over 1000 cases, 8 schools reported less than 100 cases. The average full-time equivalent student body for schools reporting over 1000 cases was over 30,000 vs. a student body under 10,000 for schools with less than 100 cases.

About half the respondents reported using 10 or less categories to classify cases; 1 out of 5 used 11 to 25 categories; 1 out of 4 used 26 to 50 categories. The largest number of categories reported was 800.

About one-third of the offices maintain electronic files of cases, but two-thirds of the offices use computers for some purpose. About half the offices keep records 5 years or less.

The most frequent types of cases varied from school to school. Despite the fact that almost every respondent said they analyzed case load by type of problem, 1 out of 5 either could not or would not state what their most frequent type of case was. Despite the fact that 1 out of 3 respondents claim to use an electronic record keeping system, very few

respondents could (or would) state what percent their most frequent cases accounted for. Still, nearly two-thirds of all respondents said they wanted to be able to compare types and frequency of cases among different schools; only 15% did not.

Among those offices (N = 53) which did indicate what their most frequent types of cases were, academic problems, usually grading, topped the list. The second most frequent type of case involved administrative problems such as with registration or other student services.

Twenty-six schools, nearly 40%, claim to classify case outcome in a way which measures achievement (success) by the ombudsperson office. Conversely, half the respondents said client satisfaction with their office had never been measured, or they were unaware that it had ever been measured.

One out of 4 offices reported establishing written goals for the current academic year.

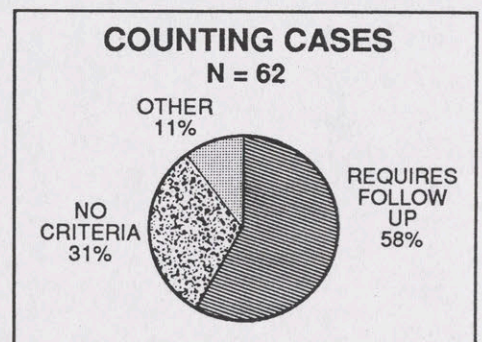
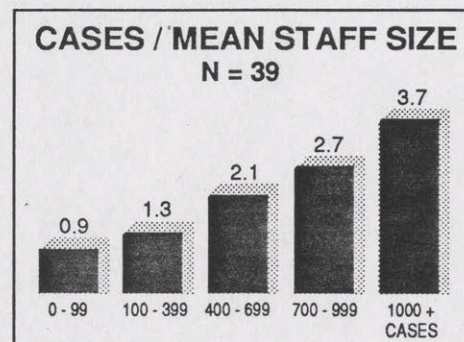
About 1 out of 3 offices reported they conducted some type of training (of non-ombudspersons); two-thirds of these offices said their own staff was involved in presenting the training. About 1 out of 4 offices received some type of training relevant to ombudsing during the last 3 years.

Although some schools reported growth in case load, or training more people to resolve their own problems, there appear to be no strong trends in ombudsperson mission or activities. On the other hand, the total number of ombudsperson offices appears to be increasing as indicated by the fact that 19 of 65 reporting offices (29%) were created less than 6 years ago.

What would help most to increase the effectiveness of ombudsperson offices? One out of 3 offices (N = 52) would like to have a larger staff. One out of 4 offices would like to have more high-level administrative support.

Finally, we asked what you would like to ask other ombudspersons. By a margin of 2 to 1 over anything else, you were concerned about professional technique; that is, how to deal with specific problems. Your second most frequent concern was how to effect policy change.

If I can draw one conclusion from this part of the survey, it is that you would like more communication with fellow ombudspersons.



1994 and 1996 Ombudsman Survey salary information
for classical and organizational ombudspeople in North America

This table shows the results of the 1994 and 1996 salary surveys updated to July 1997; the recent changes are to the US corporate salaries as more came in. The data show self-reports on FTE salaries from about 200 ombudsmen from late summer 1994 and more than 160 ombudsmen reporting data from late 1996/early 1997. These groups do not represent a scientific sample of organizational and classical ombudspeople; those who responded to the survey are simply active members of the various ombuds associations, who responded to anonymous surveys. There is, however, a high degree of consistency between the two surveys, lending some credibility to the data.

The data were collected by Mary Simon and Mary Rowe. (We very much hope this information may be of use to you.) We are adding data as they come in (if you still wish to fill out a survey, please do so -- please if so, report your salary as it was in December 1996 - January 1997). Copies of this table will be available at the TOA Conference, and at the ACCUO conference.

Feel free to take these data to your HR people if you wish. More information may also become available about the characteristics of those in each salary group; we will be working on cross-tabulations over the summer. I have corrected small errors in the 1994 data.

We are still looking for patterns, (although the data so far suggest a high degree of diversity among ombudspeople who answered the survey, and few patterns.) For example we cross tabulated to look for relationships between formal education and salary range. (As an illustration, those with highest corporate salaries have a variety of Bachelors and Master's degrees -- but not JD's and PhD's.) Those with highest corporate salary report many early educational disciplines (e.g. education, economics, humanities), and many different previous jobs (HR, line manager, VP, various staff positions). We are looking at the relationships if any, with size of organization, numbers of people served and so on. As of July 1997, no strong patterns have emerged. If you or your wage and salary people wish to ask questions, you/they could email to me or call me at MIT and make an appointment to talk.

We will be working on the cost-effectiveness indicators this summer and will report them as they emerge.

In answer to questions, the OTHER category includes many types of organizations, typically major institutions.

Salary Surveys for the US and Canada
for Organizational and Classical Ombudspeople

1994 survey	1996 survey
Canadians (in Canadian dollars)	
CA gov \$90's-100's = 100%	\$80's =60%
	\$90's =40%
CA acad \$20's = 8%	\$20's =9%
\$30's-40's = 46%	\$30's =36%
	\$40's =27%
\$50's-60's = 31%	\$50's =18%
\$70's-90's = 17%	\$70's =9%
CA other \$60's-80's = 100%	\$70's =100%

CA corp	\$60's-70's = 86%	\$60's =17%
		\$70's =33%
		\$80's =17%
	\$90's-100's = 14%	\$90's =17%
		\$200-\$249 =17%

US Americans (in US dollars)

US gov	\$20's = 8%	\$20's =8%
	\$30's-40's = 38%	\$30's =15%
		\$40's =12%
	\$50's-60's = 39%	\$50's =12%
		\$60's =19%
	\$70's-100's = 16%	\$70's =8%
		\$80's =4%
		\$90's =8%
		\$100's =12%
		\$160-\$179 =4%

US acad		\$20's =2%
	\$30's-40's = 27%	\$30's =13%
		\$40's =13%
	\$50's-60's = 37%	\$50's =21%
		\$60's =12%
	\$70's-100's = 33%	\$70's =10%
		\$80's =8%
		\$90's =13%
		\$100's =6%
		\$110's =2%

US other		\$20's =6%
	\$30's-40's = 25%	\$30's =6%
		\$40's =11%
	\$50's-60's = 23%	\$50's =11%
		\$60's =11%
	\$70's-100's = 52%	\$70's =22%
		\$90's =11%
		\$110's =6%
		\$120-\$139 =6%
		\$140-\$159 =6%
		\$160-\$179 =6%

US corp	\$30's-50's = 14%	\$40's = 2%
		\$50's =10%
	\$60's-80's = 44%	\$60's =10%
		\$70's =10%
		\$80's =10%
	\$90's-150's = 27%	\$90's = 7%
		\$100's = 2%
		\$110's = 5%
		\$120-\$139 =12%
		\$140-\$159 = 2%
		\$160-\$179 =12%
	\$200's-500 = 14%	\$200-\$249 =10%
		\$250+ = 7%

Some Preliminary Data from the 1996 Anonymous Survey of Ombudsmen

Mary Rowe, MIT 10-213, Cambridge, MA 02139

As of April 1997 a hundred and sixty-six ombudspeople had sent in surveys. Of these about one sixth are practicing in Canada, a few are practicing outside North America, and the rest are practicing mainly or entirely in the US. Many filled out only parts of the survey, so of course some of the answers to questions below pertain only to the subset who answered a given question. These are just the first very small bits of information.

Titles: The practitioners who answered the survey have various titles. Seventeen use the title ombud or ombuds. 69 are called ombudsman. 50 are called ombudsperson and 19 use other kinds of titles.

Work-hours: 105 are full-time; 44 are part-time practitioners. 67 are paid for 40 hour weeks, 10 are paid for 20-hour weeks, and others span from two hours paid per week to 55 hours paid per week. (73 practitioners however say that they actually work more than 40 hours per week.)

Job configuration: Eleven people work as an ombudsperson for more than one organization. 63 work in an organization with more than one ombudsperson; (103 work as sole ombudspeople for their employer.). 21 organizations have two ombudspeople; ten have three. Five organizations have ten or more ombudspeople.

17 work for private academic institutions.

53 work for public academic institutions.

41 work for corporations.

33 work for government agencies.

18 recorded their practice as "other".

Terms: 135 have no set term. 31 reported that they work for a set term. Of those who work for a set term, those terms were reported as: one year (11), two years (6), three years (6), four years (2), five years (5).

Reporting relationships: There will be more analysis of the reporting relationships of these ombudspeople. However, at least 66 reported to the CEO/COO/CO/head of the employment entity. Since not everyone answered this question, these 66 comprise by far the largest single mode, and this

reporting arrangement stands out as by far the most common. Notably also, for those who do not report directly at the top, most appear to report to someone who reports directly to the top person of the organization or entity.

Date Office began: Three of those surveyed reported that their offices started as early as 1967, and twenty offices had begun by 1970. However 70 started in offices that were founded after 1990.

Terms of Reference: 18 of those who responded said their offices were established by statute. Five have a formal contract. 74 have a formal job description. 37 have formal terms of reference. Seven reported no formal terms delineating their offices.

Confidentiality: In answer to a query on the circumstances under which the practitioner would break confidentiality, most replied with respect to: serious threats to safety, a life at stake, under the terms of the TOA Code of Ethics, serious threat of harm to the institution or national security, or in the event of criminal behavior. There were several dozen other variegated answers.

30 reported that they have no agreement with their employer that it will not call them in a formal proceeding. 75 reported that they do have an agreement with the employer that it will not call them into a formal proceeding. In addition 74 employers have an agreement with the practitioner to try to help get a subpoena against them quashed, in the case of a subpoena. (Note that this question is not or may not be important to the classical ombudspeople.)

Backgrounds: Five ombudspeople reported an Associates degree. 95 report a Bachelors, 36 report certificates of various kinds, 12 have JD's, 8 hold various licenses and two have special diplomas, 82 have Masters, two hold the MSW, 27 have PhD's. Many fields are reported. 56 have Humanities degrees, 44 hold degrees in counseling or psychology, 37 in business, 16 in administration, or social policy, 31 in dispute resolution or ADR, five in divinity, 29 in education, 11 in engineering, 14 in HR, 19 in law, 15 in science, and there were two dozen other fields reported.

46 people came out of other staff jobs for their employer. 13 came from HR/LR/IR. 25 had been managers. 13 had been teachers, six had been lawyers, a dozen had been counselors of various kinds. Other backgrounds were numerous.

Evaluations: 19 have an annual performance review. 18 are mentioned in the employee attitude surveys. 14 have no official evaluation. 58 solicit

feedback and/or use questionnaires. (Many other answers appeared once or twice.)

Cost-effectiveness and workload questions are still being analyzed, in fact we have just begun. But on the question of "**your greatest benefit to the employer**" the commonest answers were: to catch serious problems early; for litigation avoidance; for management information; to reduce the number of formal grievances; as a tangible symbol that management cares. The "**greatest benefit to those served**": providing a confidential resource; dispute resolution; affirming fairness; listening; providing a neutral resource; providing options and information; providing respect and support; helping with low morale.

Satisfaction for the practitioner: Early returns suggest that helping people help themselves and contributing to problem resolution are by far the most important. Affecting policy, having difficult problems work out and providing fairness were runners up (among many answers).

What is most difficult about your job? Isolation and the difficulty of maintaining neutrality came in first, with recalcitrant administrators, stress and overwork, and the struggle to effect change as runners up (among many answers).

Cases saving the employer the most money: Preliminary analysis shows discrimination of all types, keeping valuable people for the employer, and early warning of misconduct and violence are highest on the list. Individual cases were estimated to save \$10,000 each (10); \$50,000 each (13); \$100,000 each (16); \$500,000 each (8); with five cases potentially saving more than half a million each and many others at other sums.

Numbers of ombudspeople estimating the percent of contacts considered serious: 5-10% (29); 20-25% (25); 30-50% (29). **Cases considered serious:** answers varied very widely.

How do ombudspeople work? Modal hours on the phone: two; modal hours of email: one; availability on the phone: up to 22 hours per day (!); modal hours per day in person: two; modal hours per day answering notes and letters: one.

Salaries: The following table shows the results of the 1994 and 1996 salary surveys. The data show self-reports on FTE salaries from about 200 ombudsmen from late summer 1994 and about 160 ombudsmen reporting data from late 1996/early 1997. These groups do not represent a scientific

sample of organizational and classical ombudspeople; those who responded to the survey are simply active members of the various ombuds associations, who responded to anonymous surveys. There is, however, a considerable degree of consistency between the two surveys, lending some credibility to the data.

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Feel free to take these data to your Human Resource colleagues if you wish. More information may also become available about the characteristics of those in each salary group; we will be working on cross-tabulations over the summer.

We will be looking for patterns, (although a first glance suggests a high degree of diversity among ombudspeople who answered the survey, and not too many patterns.) For example we cross tabulated to look for relationships between formal education and salary range. (As an illustration, those with highest corporate salaries have a variety of Bachelors and Master's degrees — and not JD's and PhD's.) Those with highest corporate salary report many early educational disciplines (e.g. education, economics, humanities), and many different previous jobs (HR, line manager, VP, various staff positions). We are looking at the relationships if any, with size of organization, numbers of people served and so on. If you or your wage and salary people wish to ask questions, you/they could email to me or call me at MIT and make an appointment to talk.

We will be working on the cost-effectiveness indicators this summer and will report them as they emerge.

In answer to questions: the "Other" category includes many types of organizations, typically major institutions. Some errors which were previously reported in the 1994 data have been corrected. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding errors.

Salary Surveys for the US and Canada for Organizational and Classical Ombudsmen

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1996 survey

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	\$200's-500's = 14%		\$200-\$249 = 8%
			\$250+ = 8%

Update of the 1996 Ombudsman Survey Data Salary, Caseloads and Size of Population Served

**Mary Rowe (MIT)
Mary Simon (Lucent Technologies)**

A few months ago we published a list of salaries from the 1996 survey in comparison with 1994 data. These 1996 data included the data from the survey responses and data provided by a number of individuals through personal contact with us. We continue to hear from ombudspeople that the reporting of this salary data has been important in setting their salaries and in some cases in getting their salaries realigned to those of their counterparts.

Today, we are publishing more data from the complete survey responses. The next areas of interest raised by ombudspeople seemed to be sizes of caseloads and of populations served. This document is aimed at providing more information in these areas. We still have a lot of data to consider and are interested in your sense of what should be next.

Please note that all of the new tables printed below are based only on the written survey returns which is a slightly smaller number of respondents than included in the salary survey table comparing 1994 to 1996 salaries.

We wanted to provide you with as much data as possible, yet the number of responses in some sectors was so small that they could not be reported separately. This was especially true for Canada, so our best option was to report Canadian Academic responses in one group and then to sum all Canadian responses together. We hope in future surveys to get more information across the sectors and to be able to report each sector separately. Also, in the Full-Time and Part-Time Salary Table, there were not enough responses from part-time government ombudspeople to report separately on their salaries.

Salary Table

In the last issue of the Newsletter, the top U.S. corporate salaries were inadvertently left off the chart, so we are republishing these salary data at the end of this document (see page 6). We have also re-labeled the columns to identify the months and years to which the salary data refer. In the table, where the percentages do not add to 100% for a particular group, it is usually due to rounding errors. In the case of the 1994 U.S. academic data, the missing data are due to 3% who reported salaries under \$20,000 and who worked part-time for an unknown number of hours per week.

Full-time and Part-time Salary Averages

We also looked carefully at part-time and full-time salaries. We asked part-timers to convert their actual salaries to full-time equivalents, so their salaries could be compared to their full-time colleagues. We calculated the part-time and full-time average salaries and report them in the following table in those sectors with enough response. In all sectors in this table, the average salaries for part-time ombuds are slightly lower than the averages for full-time ombuds. But, there are cases where individual part-timers' salaries are substantially higher.

FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME OMBUDSMAN SALARIES

CANADIAN (in Canadian dollars)

<u>SECTOR</u>	<u>MEDIAN SALARY</u>	<u>AVERAGE SALARY</u>
All Canadian - Full Time	\$55,000-64,000	\$57,000-66,000
Part Time	\$40,000-49,000	\$68,000-84,000
Academic - Full Time	\$40,000-49,000	\$43,000-52,000
Part Time	\$30,000-39,000	\$33,000-42,000

UNITED STATES (in U.S. dollars)

<u>SECTOR</u>	<u>MEDIAN SALARY</u>	<u>AVERAGE SALARY</u>
Academic - Full Time	\$50,000-59,000	\$59,000-68,000
Part Time	\$50,000-59,000	\$54,000-63,000
Corporate - Full Time	\$80,000-89,000	\$106,000-122,000
Part Time	\$80,000-89,000	\$80,000-89,000
Government - Full Time	\$50,000-59,000	\$60,000-69,000
Other - Full Time	\$70,000-79,000	\$79,000-91,000
Part Time	\$70,000-79,000	\$64,000-73,000

Contacts and Cases Tables

These new tables present the first data about caseloads. Practitioners were asked to report only their own practice per year so that we could gain an understanding of individual ombuds workloads. A CONTACT is defined as a problem or issue that takes less than an hour and a CASE is defined as a problem or issue taking an hour or more. In each sector, the lowest reported response (the minimum) and the highest reported response (the maximum) are given. This gives the reader the range of reported responses. Then we calculated the median and the average. The median is the middle response – the one where half the responses are larger and the other half is smaller. And the average is the computed average (the sum of the responses divided by the number of responses). In all cases only non-zero responses are included. For the Contacts plus Cases table, each individual ombudsman's responses were added, and then the averages and medians were recalculated.

It is clear that medians, averages, and ranges do not offer all the information we would want, but it is at least a small beginning. We hope that our colleagues will look at their own contacts and cases and compare them to these numbers and let us know what they think. We anticipate that these data may bring some solace to people who are exhausted by their caseloads and can now see them in relation to the workloads of others. We would be very interested in reflections by readers about these contacts and cases data.

We know that these figures are approximate and that ombudspeople may keep their statistics in very different ways. We also know from conversations with colleagues that some contacts do not get recorded – like the queries that come from people as we are walking the hallways or at a lunch table or calls on those hopelessly busy days. We hope that in the aggregate and on the average, and over time, that these estimates have some use to practitioners. We would like to hear from you about if and how they are useful to you.

As we look at the data, we notice that ombudspeople in 1996 reported caseloads higher than those from earlier surveys. We also note that relatively high ratio of contacts to cases (1.25-2.5) in many sectors. We wonder with the rising number of contacts and cases whether ombudspeople feel they are able to spend the time that they need on serious problems. What should be the caseload for an individual practitioner and on what basis would it be determined?

CONTACTS				
SECTOR	MINIMUM	MEDIAN	AVERAGE	MAXIMUM
All Canadian	20	200	266	750
Canadian Academic	20	200	182	300
U.S. Academic	10	137	428	5,000
U.S. Corporate	8	100	236	1,200
U.S. Government	20	250	1,018	6,500
U.S. Other	5	150	552	5,000
CASES				
SECTOR	MINIMUM	MEDIAN	AVERAGE	MAXIMUM
All Canadian	40	110	186	525
Canadian Academic	84	120	233	525
U.S. Academic	5	230	286	1,200
U.S. Corporate	4	150	189	500
U.S. Government	20	175	408	2,500
U.S. Other	2	112	313	2,500
CONTACTS plus CASES				
SECTOR	MINIMUM	MEDIAN	AVERAGE	MAXIMUM
All Canadian	65	410	433	1,100
Canadian Academic	104	420	388	525
U.S. Academic	50	400	677	5,071
U.S. Corporate	5	297	415	1,500
U.S. Government	75	375	1,361	8,500
U.S. Other	11	265	825	7,500

Employees and Managers and Clients Tables

The following table reports on a) the numbers of employees and managers (i.e. everyone who is paid by your employer), b) the clients of the employer (i.e. students, patients, citizens, franchises, prisoners, vendors, customers, policy-holders, investors) served by the individual ombuds, and c) the totals of employees, managers and clients served by the ombuds. This last sum of the different potential visitors to the ombuds will be referred to as the size of the turf. Again, the minimum, maximum, median and average is reported for each sector with significant responses.

In these tables also, only non-zero responses are included. None of the Canadian corporate ombuds report serving clients of the corporation, so those numbers are zero. For U.S. corporate ombuds, only one fourth serve clients of the corporation and their numbers are reported in the table.

EMPLOYEES and MANAGERS				
<u>SECTOR</u>	<u>MINIMUM</u>	<u>MEDIAN</u>	<u>AVERAGE</u>	<u>MAXIMUM</u>
All Canadian	30	20,000	17,790	40,000
Canadian Academic	30	6,491	12,063	40,000
U.S. Academic	100	6,000	11,727	55,000
U.S. Corporate	200	9,000	27,101	180,000
U.S. Government	10	8,250	12,238	40,000
U.S. Other	11	1,600	3,922	24,500
CLIENTS				
<u>SECTOR</u>	<u>MINIMUM</u>	<u>MEDIAN</u>	<u>AVERAGE</u>	<u>MAXIMUM</u>
All Canadian	4,000	25,000	412,618	3,500,000
Canadian Academic	4,000	25,000	26,695	50,680
U.S. Academic	350	17,000	18,078	70,000
U.S. Corporate	100	3,000	13,122	50,000
U.S. Government	1,200	1,000,000	1,302,232	4,500,000
U.S. Other	150	4,472	727,274	2,900,000
EMPLOYEES and MANAGERS plus CLIENTS				
<u>SECTOR</u>	<u>MINIMUM</u>	<u>MEDIAN</u>	<u>AVERAGE</u>	<u>MAXIMUM</u>
All Canadian	650	209,495	209,495	3,525,000
Canadian Academic	650	23,500	25,838	60,861
U.S. Academic	400	20,000	24,910	90,000
U.S. Corporate	550	11,000	31,038	180,000
U.S. Government	250	11,250	726,018	4,540,000
U.S. Other	11	2,300	156,825	2,900,000

Number of Visits Per Thousand Table

This table shows the average number of visits (that is contacts plus cases) per thousand in their turf. For the U.S. academic ombudspeople, whose turf averages 24,910 people, with on average, 677 contacts plus cases a year, the average number of visits per thousand is 27. These calculations do not necessarily teach us very much since the size of the turf varies greatly from ombuds to ombuds and the same visitor might appear more than once in our contact numbers if they come repeatedly with different problems. However, we think they are worth considering.

SECTOR	VISITS PER THOUSAND
All Canadian	2
Canadian Academic	15
U.S. Academic	27
U.S. Corporate	13
U.S. Government	2
U.S. Other	5

Summary

As with all information that we will be reporting, we ask you to think with us about what (if anything) these data mean. Do the reports seem reasonable to you? Are there follow-up questions or different questions that you would like to have included in the next survey? And as you look at differences amongst the sectors, what do you think they mean? For example Canadian ombuds seem to spend a higher proportion of their time on cases than on contacts, by comparison with other ombudspeople. Does this mean that their caseloads are different, or that they manage them differently, or are these mere blips in the data?

We will continue to report data from this survey in future newsletters and look forward to your reflections.

SALARY SURVEYS FOR THE U.S. AND CANADA FOR ORGANIZATIONAL AND CLASSICAL OMBUDSPEOPLE

CANADA (in thousands of Canadian dollars)

	<u>Aug/Sept 1994 Salaries</u>		<u>Nov/Dec 1996 Salaries</u>	
	Salary Range	Percentage	Salary Range	Percentage
Government	\$90's - 100's =	100%	\$80's =	60%
			\$90's =	40%
Academic	\$20's	08%	\$20's =	09%
	\$30's - 40's =	46%	\$30's =	36%
	\$50's - 60's =	31%	\$40's =	27%
	\$70's - 90's =	17%	\$50's =	18%
		\$70's =	09%	
Other	\$60's - 80's =	100%	\$70's =	100%
Corporate	\$60's - 70's =	86%	\$60's =	17%
			\$70's =	33%
	\$90's - 100's =	14%	\$80's =	17%
			\$90's =	17%
		\$200 - \$249 =	17%	

UNITED STATES (in thousands of U.S. dollars)

	<u>Aug/Sept 1994 Salaries</u>		<u>Nov/Dec 1996 Salaries</u>	
	Salary Range	Percentage	Salary Range	Percentage
Government	\$20's =	08%	\$20's =	08%
	\$30's - 40's =	38%	\$30's =	15%
			\$40's =	12%
	\$50's - 60's =	39%	\$50's =	12%
	\$70's - 100's =	16%	\$60's =	19%
			\$70's =	08%
		\$80's =	04%	
		\$90's =	08%	
		\$100's =	12%	
		\$160-\$179 =	04%	
Academic			\$20's =	02%
	\$30's - 40's =	27%	\$30's =	13%
	\$50's - 60's =	37%	\$40's =	13%
	\$70's - 100's =	33%	\$50's =	21%
			\$60's =	12%
			\$70's =	10%
		\$80's =	08%	
		\$90's =	13%	
		\$100's =	06%	
		\$110's =	02%	
Other			\$20's =	06%
	\$30's - 40's =	25%	\$30's =	06%
	\$50's - 60's =	23%	\$40's =	11%
	\$70's - 100's =	52%	\$50's =	11%
			\$60's =	11%
			\$70's =	22%
		\$90's =	11%	
		\$110's =	06%	
		\$120 - \$139 =	06%	
		\$140 - \$159 =	06%	
		\$160 - \$179 =	06%	
Corporate	\$30's - 50's =	14%	\$40's =	02%
	\$60's - 80's =	44%	\$50's =	10%
	\$90's - 150's =	27%	\$60's =	10%
			\$70's =	10%
			\$80's =	10%
			\$90's =	07%
			\$100's =	02%
			\$110's =	05%
			\$120 - \$139 =	12%
			\$140 - \$159 =	02%
			\$160 - \$179 =	12%
\$200's - 500's =	14%	\$200 - \$249 =	10%	
		\$250+ =	07%	

1990 Ombudsperson Survey

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Wayne State University

Thanks to all of you who took the time to complete and return the questionnaire. It was sent to 134 university and college ombudsperson offices, one questionnaire to each office for which I had an address. Sixty-eight usable replies were received, one more than a 50% return.

First, a profile of the ombudsperson. Unless specifically noted, the characteristics of Canadian and U.S. ombudspersons and offices are very much alike. Unless otherwise indicated, N = 60 or more.

Over 80% of the respondents were full-time employees of their institution; about 20% were students, part-time employees and two retired faculty reincarnated as ombudspersons.

Excluding student ombudspersons, prior to becoming an ombudsperson, over a third of us were teachers, almost as many were administrators, and a fourth of us came from a variety of backgrounds including ministry and law.

Over half of all respondents continue to spend part of their working hours on non-ombuds activities. Turning that around, 43% of respondents now spend all of their time on ombuds activities. Canadian ombudspersons are much more likely to be purists (63%) than U.S. ombudspersons of whom only 36% work exclusively at ombudsing.

Excluding students, part-time employees, etc., the majority of ombudspersons are between 40 and 60 years of age. There were half as many male as female ombudspersons 40 to 49 years of age, and twice as many male as female ombudspersons over 60 years of age. However, males and females are equally likely to have had a teaching or administrative career prior to becoming an ombudsperson.

Excluding students, we range in service as ombudspersons from half a year to 21 years with a median of 3.5 years. Nine of 12 ombudspersons with 11 or more years of service were males.

Most of us like what we are doing and want to continue ombudsing. About 1 out of 5 of us would like to go on for over 5 more years. About a third of us don't know or (I suspect) don't want to say how long we want to continue. Of course, some of us may like what we are doing but are close to retirement. However, Canadians are more likely than U.S. ombudspersons to want to stay on for less than 2 more years.

So much for our profile. What about the office as such? Thirty-six respondent offices (over half the total) have existed for 11 years or more; 13 offices have existed for 20 years or more. (A community college claims to have had an ombudsperson office for 30 years.) The median existence of all respondent offices is 14 years.

The initial term for which an ombudsperson is appointed is unspecified for 4 out of every 10 ombudspersons.

Four out of every 10 ombudspersons report to the president (by whatever title) of their institution. Another 2 out of 10 report to a vice president. Others report to faculty or student senates, etc.

The median size of office staff is 1.275 persons and, as might be expected, is related to the number of cases handled. The data are highly variable but, on average, each ombudsperson handles about 300 cases. The larger the number of cases at a school, the more cases each ombudsperson is likely to handle.

What to we count as cases? Almost 1 out of 3 offices count every client they deal with. The rest of the offices are more conservative in counting cases. They may distinguish cases vs. non-cases on the basis of number of contacts (at least 2) made to resolve the case, or time spent on the "case." These offices would exclude from the case count clients who are merely provided information or referrals. If we consider only the offices which discriminate in what they count as cases, the median number of cases handled is (surprisingly) virtually the same as before, 331 vs. 335.

Total cases per reporting school (N = 41) ranged from 20 to 1363, with a median of 335 cases, almost precisely the same median whether Canadian or U.S. Three schools reported over 1000 cases, 8 schools reported less than 100 cases. The average full-time equivalent student body for schools reporting over 1000 cases was over 30,000 vs. a student body under 10,000 for schools with less than 100 cases.

About half the respondents reported using 10 or less categories to classify cases; 1 out of 5 used 11 to 25 categories; 1 out of 4 used 26 to 50 categories. The largest number of categories reported was 800.

About one-third of the offices maintain electronic files of cases, but two-thirds of the offices use computers for some purpose. About half the offices keep records 5 years or less.

The most frequent types of cases varied from school to school. Despite the fact that almost every respondent said they analyzed case load by type of problem, 1 out of 5 either could not or would not state what their most frequent type of case was. Despite the fact that 1 out of 3 respondents claim to use an electronic record keeping system, very few

respondents could (or would) state what percent their most frequent cases accounted for. Still, nearly two-thirds of all respondents said they wanted to be able to compare types and frequency of cases among different schools; only 15% did not.

Among those office (N = 53) which did indicate what their most frequent types of cases were, academic problems, usually grading, topped the list. The second most frequent type of case involved administrative problems such as with registration or other student services.

Twenty-six schools, nearly 40%, claim to classify case outcome in a way which measures achievement (success) by the ombudsperson office. Conversely, half the respondents said client satisfaction with their office had never been measured, or they were unaware that it had ever been measured.

One out of 4 offices reported establishing written goals for the current academic year.

About 1 out of 3 offices reported they conducted some type of training (of non-ombudspersons); two-thirds of these offices said their own staff was involved in presenting the training. About 1 out of 4 offices received some type of training relevant to ombudsing during the last 3 years.

Although some schools reported growth in case load, or training more people to resolve their own problems, there appear to be no strong trends in ombudsperson mission or activities. On the other hand, the total number of ombudsperson offices appears to be increasing as indicated by the fact that 19 of 65 reporting offices (29%) were created less than 6 years ago.

What would help most to increase the effectiveness of ombudsperson offices? One out of 3 offices (N = 52) would like to have a larger staff. One out of 4 offices would like to have more high-level administrative support.

Finally, we asked what you would like to ask other ombudspersons. By a margin of 2 to 1 over anything else, you were concerned about professional technique; that is, how to deal with specific problems. Your second most frequent concern was how to effect policy change.

If I can draw one conclusion from this part of the survey, it is that you would like more communication with fellow ombudspersons.

