



The **ORGANIZATIONAL OMBUDS** in **HIGHER EDUCATION:**

An approach to assist individuals AND
institutions from & within the University

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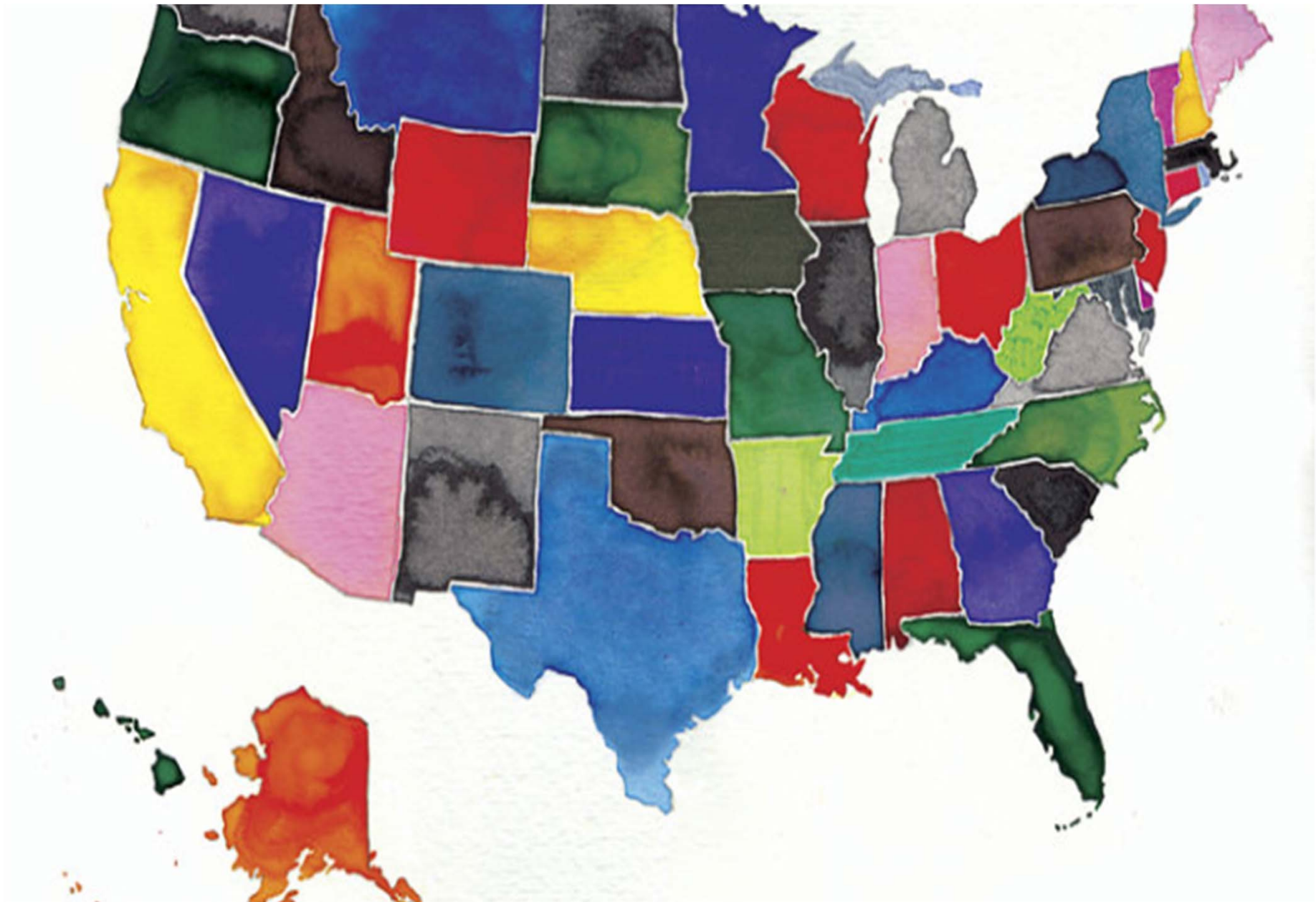
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Format

- Overview
- Case presentations
- Response and reaction





Classical antecedent transformed by social forces.

- Social upheaval & campus unrest
- Alternative to formal channels
- Voluntary
- Confidential

Ombudsman concept adapted to the university setting

Core principles:

- Impartiality
- Independence
- Confidentiality
- Informality



Organizational Ombuds: internal, impartial problem-solving office

- Communications and outreach
- Issue resolution
- Issue prevention and systemic change

Case 1: Issue Resolution

- Student has job with University but complains about unequal treatment.
- Student's job not renewed and student withdraws from University.
- Student files complaint at University but is unsatisfied with financial outcome.
- Student contacts Ombuds.
- Ombuds identifies another office that can address outcome to student's satisfaction.

Case 2: Issue Resolution

- Parents contact Ombuds.
- Student contacts Ombuds.
- Ombuds helps students understand what they are being told, who to contact, and what to expect.
- Ombuds remains in contact with student until student on track.
- Ombuds debriefs with University office.

Case 3: Issue Resolution & Systemic Change

- Student contacts Ombuds.
- Parents unhappy about course grade and advise different strategies.
- Ombuds helps student understand policy, procedure and what to expect.
- Ombuds surfaces underlying issue, initiates conversations with University offices.

Case 4: Issue Resolution & Systemic Change

- Student is notified that University is investigating reports of unwanted contact.
- Student believes expulsion will occur and makes remarks of concern to university.
- Student and faculty mentor contact Ombuds.
- Ombuds contacts University office in charge of notifying students of investigations.



Reference

Howard, Charles L.

“The Organizational Ombudsman: Origins, Roles and Operations: A Legal Guide.”

American Bar Association (USA), 2010.

Response & Reaction

General

- Institutions are for developing, not cast in marble.
- The core principles of Organisational Ombuds – Confidentiality and Informality – require ‘cashing in’ in practice.
- ‘*Quis custodiet ipsos custodes*’ ?
- Organisational Ombuds are preventive in ambition

Cases

- Case 1 – issue of Ombuds remit.
- Cases 2 and 3 – the ‘tyranny’ of the parent representative. And the management of expectations.
- Cases 4 – jurisdiction and unwanted conduct.